

LIFE OF MONTY

71

APRIL 21, 1987

20 PAGES

~~65c~~ 60c

ALL NEW and EXCITING TOO

All of you who thought that issue 70 was unreadable, raise your hands. Just for you, here is the much more legible issue 71 of LIFE OF MONTY, brought to you by Don Dei Grande, 142 Ellsee Drive, Greenbrae, CA 94904-1339, phone (415) 481-2692, but only phone from 5 PM to 11 PM Pacific time (midnight on Friday and Saturday).

For those of you wondering what the problem was last time, apparently the documentation for this word processor did not make it clear at all that the proper fonts must be manually loaded in order for proper printing to come out. Anyway, now that the problem is solved, and there are slightly newer versions of the font (Helvetica) to boot, here is a readable issue without the letters that obviously look like they are from a computer. Not only that, but SoftLogik did not charge an "upgrade fee" for the new disks - they just mailed them out to the registered owners.

And now for something completely coherent . . .

MONTY'S NEWS AND COMMENT is brought to you by persons like me who know that, without CompuServe, it would take forever to get decent software to be supported properly.

COMMUNIST DINER is on the lookout for subscribers. Openings in Diplomacy, Car Wars, and Third Reich for \$10 each (I assume that includes a sub for the length of the game); samples are available for \$1 each (which is a lot for 16 digest-sized pages). Those of you who are interested can contact David Berk, 1319 Washington, Wilmette, IL 60091.

Speaking of which . . . how many of you saw ABC's AMERIKA in February? Those of you who did . . . why? (Meanwhile, shows like The Young Ones go unwatched by the masses. Even if it is only on MTV at 11:30 (Eastern) Sunday nights, it rates almost as high as Python on my list.) Now, had it been called Latvia or Czechoslovakia, and set in the appropriate times and places, it might have been watchable - but you can't say "what if it does happen here?" because it can't. (Those of you who receive DAGON - strange as it may seem, I actually agree with John Boardman on something political.)

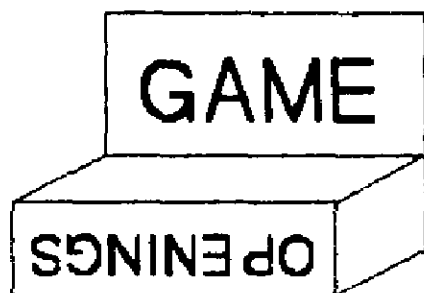
XENOLOGIC

Conrad von Metzke is NOT short on cash - he's rolling in money - he's absolutely and positively rich. And Ronald Reagan was on vacation during "Iran-Scam". Actually, Conrad has told me that COSTAGUANA has gone broke - It is no more - It has ceased to be - It has rung down the curtain - vis-a-vis the Diplomatic processes, it's had its lot - It is an ex-'zine. Sorry to see COSTA go, especially like this.

Issue 73 of LOM, due out in late May, may have to be delayed due to my vacation plans this year. After previous adventures in Washington/New York, Baltimore/New York, and Los Angeles (across the street from LAX), I've decided to give America a break this year and go to Europe - Great Britain, to be exact. The necessary precautions have been taken (i.e. Pete Doubleday has been warned, and at this moment is probably either building up the British defenses to combat this invasion or planning his strategy to become the next Prime Minister by being elected to Parliament and preventing either the Conservatives or Labour from getting a majority), but no date has been set as of yet (I may delay until July and appear at Manorcon - somebody has to restore our honor after Malcolm Smith's DIPCON win). If any of you have big long lists of places that "I just have to see while I'm there", keep them to yourselves. However, you know that I will try to get to Portmerlon, Wales, at least once. (Portmerlon is the site of "The Village" in The Prisoner. You DOCTOR WHO fans should note that it was also the site of "The Masque of Mandragora".)

Well, the Runestone Poll ballot has come out again, and one should be enclosed in this issue. Bruce Linsey has included two new things; first, Linda Courtemanche's "Diplomacy Alliance Against Cancer" is holding a pledge drive in which sponsors donate an amount per poll ballot cast (e.g. a pledge of one cent per ballot means that the person owes \$2.50 if 250 ballots are cast) and the proceeds go to the American Cancer Society. Well, that's one way to increase the incentive to vote.

The other is also a good idea, but I feel it's being done in the wrong way. Thomas Franke has donated a new German Diplomacy set, and Bruce will select a name from those voters who correctly guess which 'zine finishes first in the poll. This could influence some voters into giving "their guess" a higher rating than they normally would have, while giving other 'zines (especially those expected to challenge for the top) a lower score than they would have. (I think it should have been a selection from all voters without having to guess - that "\$30 option" could be too much of a temptation.)



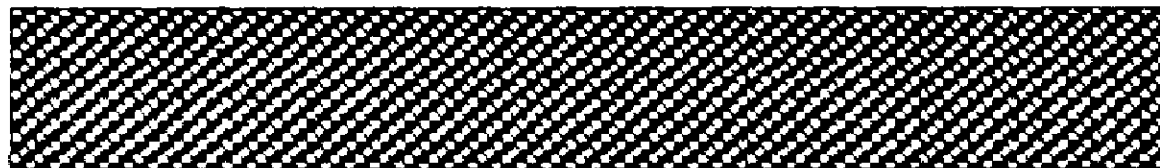
DIPLOMACY . . . Signed up: Dorneman, Hopcroft, Slaughter, Holley, Casey, Kayatl - need one more.

KINGMAKER . . . Signed up: Coufal, Hopcroft, Ozog, Fielschman - need 1 - 2 more. (I may decide to wait until the current game is near the end, but probably not.)

1830 . . . Signed up: Geryk, Gooda. Need 2 - 4 more. House rules on request.

PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS II . . . Signed up (party in parentheses): Ellis (R), Wilcox (R), Halverstadt (D), Anderson (D), Holley (D), Hopcroft (D), Billenness (R?), Brown (D). As soon as I get at least 5 in one party and 4 in the other, I will begin.

NOTE: I do not have Doug Brown's address, and he needs a copy of Presidential Politics II. Does anybody know where he lives?



THE ARLINGCON TO END ALL ARLINGCONS - literally - will be April 2 - 6 at the residence of Pete Gaughan and Tom Hise, 3121 East Park Row #165, Arlington, TX 76010-3744. What with Pete engaged and moving back to California, this will be the last Arlingcon, complete with Diplomacy, Junta, Titan, Circus Maximus, Snowball Fighting (the board game), and Snit's Revenge, plus a special engagement party for Pete on Sunday. Phone (817) 633-3208 or write for more details. Congratulations to Pete for catching the disease - forging the ball and chain - getting some trouble and strife - what's going on with the bachelors in the hobby?

KINGMAKER

PARLIAMENT has been summoned by the White Duchess at Preston. But before beginning, a correction: the White Duchess also has Berkeley in attendance, and so that faction has 8 Lords votes (the total in attendance is now 27).

There is also a RULES CHANGE concerning Parliament: it is just too hard to have all of the nominations done in one round (the Jihad method). Instead, each round of nominations will be separate (the Envy method), but, in order to speed things up, the second round of nominations are at the same time as the first round of voting, so some conditional orders may be necessary.

FIRST ROUND OF NOMINATIONS, by the White Duchess

Earl of Westmorland - HASTINGS

Earl of Kent - BERKELEY

Earl of Essex - HOWARD

Duke of Exeter - STANLEY

Constable of Dover Castle - (HOWARD)

Treasurer of England - (STANLEY)

Warden of the Northern Marches - (BERKELEY)

Marshal of England - NEVILLE

Steward of the Royal Household - POLE

Chamberlain of County Pal. of Chester - (HASTINGS)

Archbishop of Canterbury - NEVILLE

Archbishop of York - BERKELEY

Bishop of Carlisle - BERKELEY

Bishop of Lincoln - STANLEY

King's Pardon - NEVILLE

NOTE that some names are in parentheses. These nobles must have titles elected by this parliament before they can receive the offices. If a noble does not have a title, the vote for "his" office does not take place.

Remember that the four church positions (Archbishoprics and Bishoprics) are voted in the House of Lords only.

Here are the vote totals once again:

KRIKKIT KONFEDERATION (Miller) - 20 Commons, 10 Lords

**SACRED ORDER OF THE MIRACULOUS PANTY-HOSE (Mazzer)
9 Commons, 9 Lords**

**GRAY KNIGHTS OF LANCASTER (Thornsberry) - 20 Commons,
zero Lords**

WHITE DUCHESS (Ozog) - 31 Commons, 8 Lords

DEADLINE IS APRIL 23

Your next orders should include the following:

1) Your votes (yes or no) for each of the nominations. An NMR counts as a NO vote in Commons and an "absent" in Lords.

2) Cathy, you get the second round of nominations, so please send in your nominees. Your nominees may be conditional on what happens in the first voting round, or in the "previous" votes of the second round. (Please specify the order in which the individual nominations will take place.) I have your second round nominations if you want to use those.

3) All players, specify which of your nobles, if any, will be returning to their home castles (and, if there is a choice, specify which castle) after the parliament. (If it goes additional rounds, you can make changes.) A noble will remain at the site unless I have orders that specify a specific home castle at the end of the parliament.

No room for the press - for that matter, no press. But who is this Sylvester McCoy guy, anyway?

(TIME) LORDING IT. . .

A subzine by
Michael Hopcroft
2190 W. Burnside #108
Portland, OR 97210

I don't know whether this will be in on time. I've been very busy this month with, among other things, nuclear-winter Shakespeare. Yes, nuclear-winter Shakespeare. A post-holocaust production of ROMEO AND JULIET, in which I am playing Friar Lawrence. That has had me running around like a wet hen, because the play is in Forest Grove and I am in Portland. That means I've been spending three hours a day on the bus commuting, which is not my idea of a good time.

Time for

RUMORS AND REPORTS

Tegan had fled from England to Australia after receiving some pictures of a red snake in the mail. The red snake is, if you remember, the sign of the Mara. The Doctor has taken off to Australia in pursuit, and not only is he taking the Brigadier along but now he's run into Tegan's skeptical uncle Gordon.

The Doctor has agreed to play a rematch with the Toymaker. His task is to negotiate a maze. There are, of course, obstacles. . .

NEW DOCTOR?

The BBC has decided on the next Doctor. Brace for it; here's the big name. . .

SYLVEST MCCOY!!!

Sylvest McCoy? Who is Sylvest McCoy? I'd never heard of him when the news came in Saturday, and I'm trying to get as much information as I can.

This is a scant issue, because as I said I am busy. I will make up for it next month, with more information about the new Doctor and more game stuff.

I also want letters on just about anything. Drop me a line to the address above.

I've seen Sylvester McCoy -
reminds me of Wally Cox.

But can he be a Doctor?

MEETING OF MINDS # 7

This is number 7 of MEETING OF MINDS, the voice of the International Tournament Ratings organization (ITR), formerly known as the NATR.

Yes, formerly the NATR. 1987 will be the first year in which ratings participation will be in "sanctioned" tournaments and not just limited to North America. The new set of rules and regulations, which includes two corrections in the scoring system, are included in this issue. The current list of sanctioned tournaments is also included, although more may be added.

As of this moment, the sanctioned tournaments for 1987 are:

MARYCON - June 5, 6, 7 at Mary Washington College, Fredericksburg, VA. This Diplomacy-only event has been very popular with the east coast crowd in past years.

DIPCON - this year at Madcon, June 5, 6, 7 in the Student Union of the University of Wisconsin. In the past, Midcon was more of a "social event", but Marc and Debi Peters should be able to run a full-fledged Diplomacy tournament quite well.

MANORCON - June 24, 25, 26 at Birmingham University in Birmingham, United Kingdom (NOT the one in Alabama, if there is one). This is the British Team Championship, but an individual tournament is also held. An estimated 150 persons will be competing, so a lot of ITR points will be at stake.

ORIGINS - this year at Atlanticon, July 2, 3, 4, 5 at the Baltimore Convention Center. "The Diplomatic Congress of Baltimore" will be headed by Robert Sacks, possibly with John Boardman. The addition of Origins to this year's Atlanticon will make this a popular event.

PEERICON - tentatively set for June 19, 20, 21 in San Diego. Normally, Peericon is held later in the year, but Larry Peery is considering holding it in June this year. This is one of the largest tournaments in the west.

PACIFICON - September 5, 6, 7 in San Mateo, CA. Jim Bumpas runs this annual west coast event which draws some of the best players from the west.

MIDCON - sometime in November, place not exactly known (but it's somewhere in England, presumably near London and/or Birmingham). The major British tournament of the year, and also the last one in the year that's on the sanctioned list (so far).

I am currently waiting for word on major tournaments in Europe (outside of the United Kingdom) and Australia, as well as any other large Diplomacy tournaments in North America. (I have not heard much about the Texas area, but I have been told that there are no major Canadian tournaments.

Did all of you notice that Dipcon and Marycon are at the same time this year? This may cause a split in the east coast crowd, resulting in both tournaments getting a substandard attendance, which is a shame as both of them deserve large crowds. As a matter of fact, most of the tournaments are in the June / early July period this year, with Peericon moving from its August position; this, in turn, leaves Pallcon and Gateway (in Los Angeles, although I have not heard of any Diplomacy tournament going on there - they did not list one when they ran ORIGINS) as the Labor Day cons to pick up the western slack.

More information on the June / July conventions in North America will appear in future issues. For information on MANORCON 87, contact Richard Walkerdine, 13 Offley Road, Hitchin, Herts, SG5 2AZ, U.K.

Last-second Academy Award predictions . . . PLATOON will beat out HANNAH AND HER SISTERS for Best Picture because (a) HANNAH . . . is a comedy, and (b) PLATOON's Oscar will be a message from the Academy to the Government concerning Central America (and I will be surprised if Central America is not mentioned in the acceptance speech). As for the other awards - well, they're usually not based on talent, so who cares?

INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT RATINGS 1987 RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. Only face-to-face tournaments dealing with the game DIPLOMACY (created by Allan Calhamer; American copyright by The Avalon Hill Game Company) that are sanctioned by the ITR will be considered in this rating system.
2. For a tournament to be sanctioned, the ITR must be convinced that (a) it is an "open" tournament, (b) it is capable of drawing a large number of participants or is otherwise considered as a "major" tournament by the ITR, and (c) it does not change the rules of Diplomacy in a major way. (Allowing draws in which one or more "survivors" are not in the draw, or playing with the 1971 and/or 1976 rules, are not major changes; playing with a non-standard map is one.)
3. It is not within the authority of the ITR to determine the results of a tournament; however, if a tournament's results are reported by score rather by placing and two or more persons have an equal score, those players will be considered to have finished tied with each other.
4. In order for a sanctioned tournament to be rated, the following information must be supplied to the ITR: the total number of players in the tournament, and the names of (at least) the top fifty percent of the players, in order of how they finished. (Any ties must be specified.)

5. The ITR has the authority to award no points for playing in a sanctioned tournament if not enough information is given to the ITR as stated in rule 4, or if the ITR has sufficient reason to question the validity of the tournament's results.
6. The following procedure is used to convert placings in a tournament to an ITR score:
 - a) Divide the number of players in the tournament by 2, dropping any fraction. Call this result "A".
 - b) Divide the number of players in the tournament by 3, dropping any fraction. Call this result "B".
 - c) The top B players receive points using the following formula, where P = 1 for first place, 2 for second place, and so on:

$$(A - 1) \times \left(\frac{B + 1 - P}{B} \right)^2 + 1$$

Note that the first-place finisher always receives $(A - 1) + 1$, or A, points.

- d) The top A players who are not in the top B receive one point each.
- e) The remaining players receive no points.
- f) In case of a tie for any position, those persons tied each receive the sum of the points they would have received had there not been a tie, divided by the number of persons tied in that position. For example, in a two-way tie for second place, the two persons each receive one-half of the sum of the second-place and third-place points. (Note that the next position after a two-way tie for second is fourth, not third.)

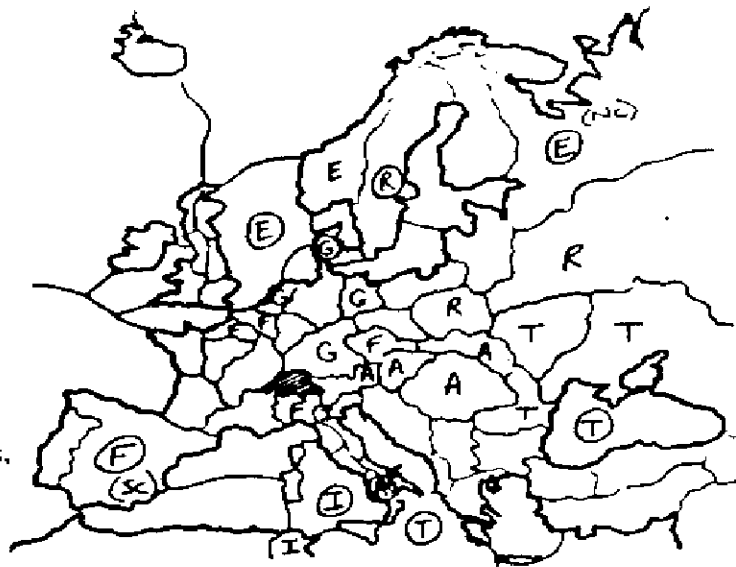
- 7. A person's total rating is the sum of that person's ratings for all of the tournaments of that year.**
- 8. Each person's rating for each tournament is rounded to the nearest 0.0001 point. (A fraction of 0.00005 rounds up.) If, in the final ratings, two persons' ratings differ by no more than 0.00005 multiplied by the sum of each of those players' number of tournaments in which they scored more than one point, those players will be considered to have finished in a tie. (EXCEPTIONS: See rules 9 and 10.)**
- 9. As an exception to rule 8, two players are not tied if one of them is considered tied with a higher-ranking person who is not considered to be tied with the other one.**
- 10. As another exception to rule 8, an apparent tie for first place in the final standings is broken by re-calculating their ratings by retaining all fractions (rather than rounding to 0.0001). If a tie still exists, the person in the fewest sanctioned tournaments finishes first. Any further tie for first is broken by dropping each person's lowest-rated tournament, then the next-lowest, and so on until the tie is broken or all tournaments have been considered. If a tie still exists, the persons tied for first at this point finish in joint first place.**
- 11. The ITR has the authority to make rulings on any point not specifically covered in these rules, but only on matters concerning the awarding of ITR points. When interpreting these rules, the decision of the ITR is final, although any person does have the right to discuss openly any decisions made without fear of reprisal by the ITR, and any person may make comments to, or be consulted by, the ITR before a decision is reached.**

SEASON
PREVIOUS

Book Mail No Removals!

TIMEWARP Fall 02

- A (Kathy Byrne):** A Vic S A Tri-Tyr,
A Gal S Turkish A Sev-Ukr, A Tri-Tyr,
A Ser-Bud, F Ion-Nap
- E (Stephen Dorneman):** A Nwy-Swc,
F Bar-Stp(nc), E Nth-Nwy
- F (Mark Howorth):** (retreat A Mun to Boh)
A Pic S Austrian A Tri-Ven, A Boh-Mun,
A Apu-Rom, A Bur-Bel, F Mao-Spa(sc),
F Pic S A Bur-Bel
- G (David Coufal):** A Ber S A Mun, A Hol-Bcl,
A Mun H, F Den H
- I (Bob Miller):** A Tyr-Ven, A Tun-Rom,
F Tys C A Tun-Rom
- R (Robert Thornsberry):** F Swe H, A Ukr-Mos,
A War S A Ukr-Mos
- T (Gary Behnen):** A Bul-Rum, A Sev-Ukr,
F Bla S A Bul-Rum, A Arm-Sev, F Aeg-Ion



Underlined moves do not succeed. Must have been a good turn, what with no removals and no retreats. You people are sooooo nice. Thanks to Nhan Vu for the standby orders, and to Bob for hanging in there. ~~Goodbye, March 10.~~

I'm a little bit annoyed that Don didn't go to the slight extra trouble of copying my original report to him. Really, how hard can it be? Instead he uses the world's ugliest computer print. Yuck! So instead of making you look at that and try to figure out what it says, here's a copy of the real report. There are no radical differences, this is just a lot easier to read.

Next time you write to Don, tell him to go to the extra trouble of copying what I send him. You shouldn't settle for less!

And as long as I'm sending you all this game report, here's a sample copy of my zeen to look at too. This is what computer-printed zeens *should* look like!

So, Kathy, is there a name change, or what?

gained/lost

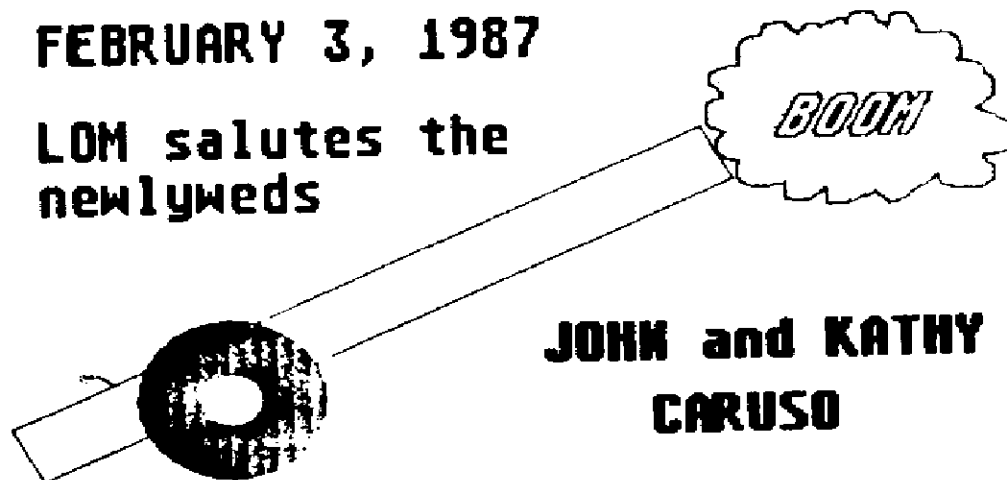
- A:** home, ser, gre, nap (6)
- E:** home, nwy, stp (5)
- F:** home, mun, ven, por, spa, bel (6)
- G:** ber, kie, hol, den, mun (5)
- I:** rom, nap, tun, ven (3)
- R:** sev, mos, war, stp, swa (3)
- T:** home, bul, rum, sev (6)
- neutral: bel, spa, swa, nwy (0)

- build 1
- build 2
- even
- build 1
- even
- even
- build 1

Since I go 25 miles to the copier, very hard... besides, an extra day's delay was out of the question

FEBRUARY 3, 1987

LOM salutes the newlyweds



**JOHN and KATHY
CARUSO**

NOT BAD...FOR A NOVICE

TIMEWARP Spring 03

A (Kathy Coruso): (build F Tri) A Vie-Boh, A Gal S Turkish A Ukr-War, F Tri-Adr, A Tyr S A Vie-Boh, A Bud-Tri, F Nap S Italian F Tys-Rom

E (Stephen Dorneman): (build F Lon, F Edi) A Nwy-Fin, F Stp(nc) H, F Nth-Ska, F Lon-Nth, F Edi-Nws

F (Mark Howorth): A Pie-Ven, A Boh-Sil, A Apu S A Pie-Ven, A Bel-Bur, F Spa(sc) H, F Pic-Bel

G (David Coufal): (build A Kie) A Ber S A Mun, A Mun S A Ber, F Den H, A Kie-Ruh, A Hol S A Kie-Ruh

I (Bob Miller): A Ven S Austrian A Tyr-Pie, A Tun H, F Tys-Rom

R (Robert Thornsberry?): NMR F Swe, A War, A Mos all hold

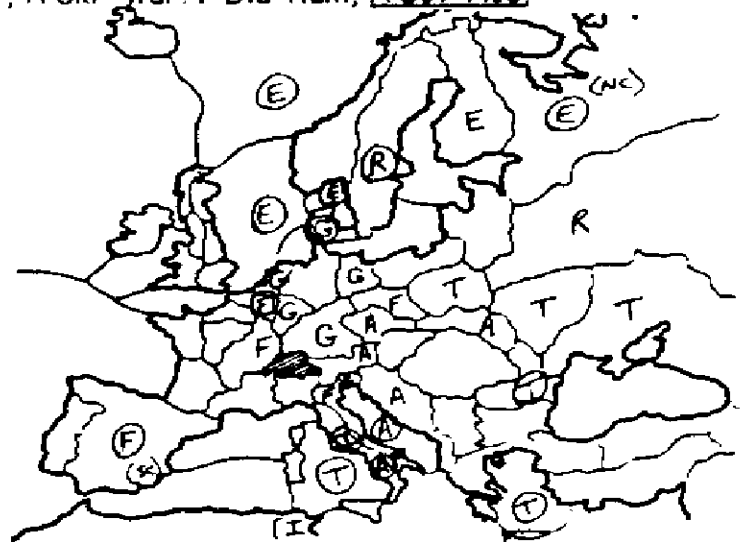
T (Gary Behnen): (build F Smy) A Rum-Ukr, A Ukr-War, F Bia-Rum, A Sev-Mos, F Ion-Tys, F Smy-Aeg

That's right - Rule 14

Underlined moves do not succeed. The Italian A Ven retreats to Tus or the box. I guess the Russian A War can retreat to Lvn, Pru, or the box. Ordinarily, I just remove NMR retreaters, but I think the LOM houserules say I can't do that. So Russia gets a little bit lucky - will it be enough?

Gonna have to have a standby for Russia this time. And a deadline, too. Well, Don?

standby for RUSSIA is MELINDA ANN HOLLEY, BOX 2793, HUNTINGTON, WV 25727



DEADLINE: APRIL 17

GER to GM: Thanx for the free reading

FRA to ROCKVILLE: Hmmm... I'd never seen your zeen before. It's very slick. Next month, when my cash flow problems disappear, I'll send you some money for a sub.

ROCKVILLE: And hopefully you'll want to join a game as well? Glad you liked the zeen. But I never thought I'd hear it called "slick"!

FRA to ROCKVILLE: Aren't laser printers godly?!? What was the world like before them?

ROCKVILLE: Take a look at this LOM. That's how things were done in the dark ages, before they invented light.

ITALY to FRANCE: I prefer to think of you as a train with a very large horn supported by a very small caboose!!

AUS to FRA: Get off what fence? I've practically started WWII and you're accusing me of playing like the Englishman!

FRA to ENG: Well, you don't write much, let's see what your intentions really are.

ENG to FRA: Many thanks for the good wishes. Just don't send me the kind of gifts you sent Germany and Italy, thank you.

AUST to ENG: I think your two builds just blew your neutral status wide open!

FRA to GAME: On March 11th I'll be 8000 days old. How many days old are you?

ROCKVILLE: About 10,000, you young whippersnapper!

FRA to TUR: So what should we call you? Napoleon, perhaps.

ENG to AUS & TUR: So, which one of you gets the knife next? Don't keep us in suspense. And while we're talking about knives, just how many pieces do you two and France think you can divide Italy up into? He's only got three centers, for Ghu's sake!

ENG to GER: I'll write sooner this turn. Let's do it again, and get it right this time!

AUST to F & G: Eenie, Meenie, Mienie Mo - one of you has got to go - just ask England!

AUST to GM: Would you tell the blowhard in Turkey that bad mouthing my Mets can go get his orders lost in KK. He doesn't believe me.

ROCKVILLE: And KK's not the only place, either!

ENG to ROCKVILLE: Sorry about all that game-related press, I don't know what came over me. Maybe I should say something about the Celtics?

ROCKVILLE: Well, what can you say about the best team in basketball that hasn't already been said?

CARUSO to GM: Of course there is a name change. I figure that way I can pass myself off as a novice!

ROCKVILLE: As if you need to change your name to do that!

AUS to TURKEY: I am doing this against my better judgement - this has to be one of the dumbest ideas you ever had!

GER to AUS: I think the Broncos made a very respectable showing the first half, considering we only have two really great players and Rich Karlis, who obviously can't even tie his shoes correctly.

AUS to GER: Will you stop getting excited, I like the free world and have no intention of jumping over the Berlin Wall.

ITALY to WORLD: The country is safe, for now. The commitments on my time by Uncle Sam have slowed down a bit, so watch out!!

GER to WORLD: This press is getting a little esoteric for me.

ROCKVILLE: We'll have to see what it looks like next month, then.

Addresses:

Kathy Caruso, 29-10 164th St, Flushing, NY 11358-1428

Stephen Dorneman, 95 Federal St, #2, Lynn, MA 01905-2230

Mark Howorth, 1808 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, CA 94703

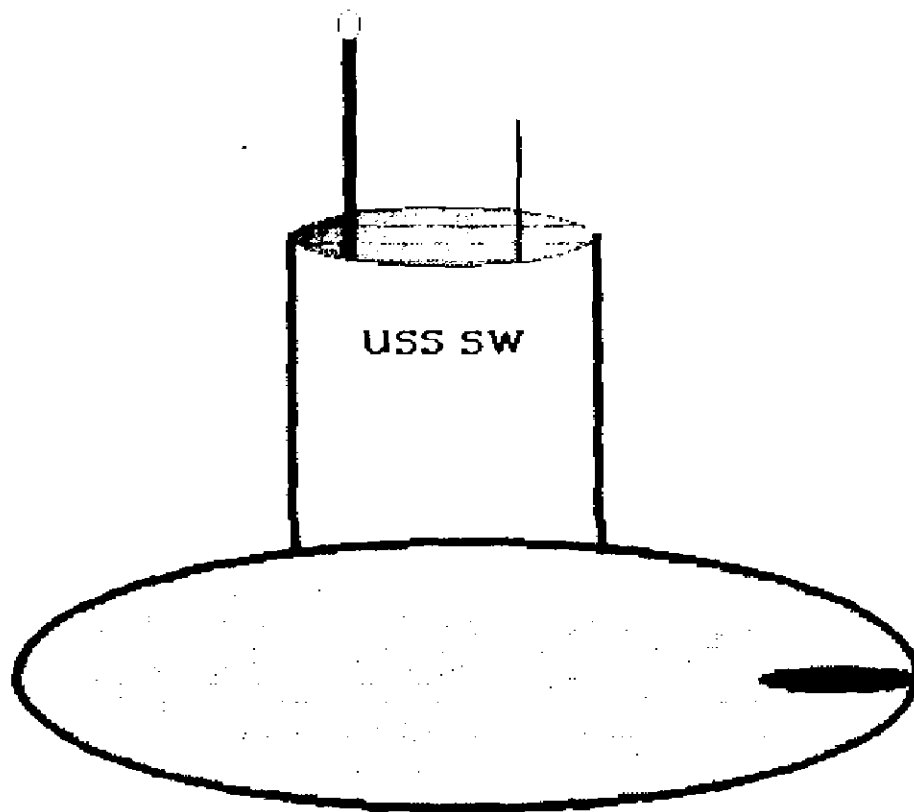
David Coufal, 1085 Wagon Wheel Ave, Colorado Springs, CO 80915

Bob Miller, 2912 West 141st Pl, #2, Gardena, CA 90249

Robert Thornsberry, 515 Park Ave, Lexington, KY 40502

Gary Behnen, 13101 S Trenton, Olathe, KS 66062

GM- Dick Martin, 26 Orchard Way N, Rockville, MD 20854-6128



SUBMARINE WARFARE

(a neat idea for a subzine)

by

Derwood Bowen

2140 East State Street

Salem, Ohio 44460

This is the log of the subzine Submarine Warfare. It's five year mission is to explore original writing for Don Del Monte. This is a log of the voyages of the submarine "Warfare." It is going, "Where no Subzine has gone before!" (That's real original, isn't it?)

Here in Salem we are experiencing a very mild winter. I am most grateful, seeing as how I am not too fond of being cold. I am also not too fond of being in snow up to my butt. This winter and last we have had very little snow. My first winter in the area we got bombed. I don't remember stats, but it was a lot of snow by my standards, and heavy by the standards for this area. Of course, people from someplace like upstate NY can tell me that what we get here is nothing. But I am used to living in Columbus, where we hardly got any snow at all. That's the way I like it.

I just sent for a bunch of samples of a bunch of zines. I'll be nice and review all of what I get, saving you the trouble. As a matter of fact, I feel the urge to review the ones I am getting now. So that is one article which I no longer have to search for inspiration to write. I am also going to review the new albums I bought. That covers still more of the dreaded white space. Let's see, is there anything more I can review?

It looks like I have pretty well dealt with the preliminaries of SW. I guess I can just jump to page 2 and right into the first of the many boring exciting reviews. I do hope you enjoy SW, and don't forget to vote me high in the Runestone Poll, whenever that is. After all, I do deserve it (don't I).

REVIEWEDBYMEREVIEWEDBYMEREVIEWEDBYMEREVIEWEDBYMEREVIEWED

REVIEW #1 I have here an item for review called a cat. It is my own cat, Sasha. Reviewing a cat is not easy, as you have to decide what criterion to review in the first place. I, of course, have handled that problem. So, what follows is a review of my cat.

What things about a cat make it desirable? First off, is the purr. I mean, when you pet a cat, it should purr. Sasha does not rate real high here. Oh, sure, she does purr. But you can barely hear her. A really good cat purrs loud enough to be heard without putting your head on top of it. So in this area, I must downgrade her.

In the area of companionship, Sasha rates very high. She loves to sit in my lap. She also greets me when I come home from work. And, she even talks to me. Admittedly, her vocabulary is somewhat limited, but she does communicate with me.

Cats also have a nuisance value. There are times when cats can be a pest. Sasha rates fairly good here. She does jump on the dip board every once in a while, but is not real insistent about it. And, she has the good sense to leave me and my wife alone when we are making babies. (But she knows the minute we are done.) On the whole, she only makes a minor nuisance out of herself. I consider this a positive pronouncement.

Discussing obedience in regards to a cat seems kind of funny. My cat does not obey a lot, but she will come when called. I rate that very highly. I have not known many cats that would do even that. Unfortunately, that is about where obedience ends.

Finally, there is the aesthetic aspect of the cat's appearance. To a large extent, this is a "beauty is in the eye of the beholder" type of thing. I think my cat is very attractive. Of course, I picked her out of a litter, so that is to be expected. She is a tortoise shell cat. That means she is black and orange, with the colors intermingled all over her body. I think her appearance is striking. It is also practical. At night, you can't find this thing in the shadows if it doesn't want to be found.

To put this all together, my cat is not the purrfect feline. Like all of us, she does have flaws. However, she has been my companion for about ten years. The two of us have learned to accomodate each other. If I were Consumer's Report, I'd rate her as acceptable. I'm not CR, fortunately. So I'll just keep her and be happy.

MYCATITHINKILLKEEPHERMYCATITHINKILLKEEPHERMYCATITHINKILLKEE

And now it's time to review a dip zine or two. Let's see, who is up first? How about:

PRAXIS: Praxis is a Canadian zine published by Alan Stewart. He runs 5-week deadlines so that Americans can participate in the games. The zine is interesting reading, in my opinion. He promotes discussion in his letter column. He also has articles on playing dip and other miscellany. The zine looks good physically, and is easily read. On the negative side, some may be offended at some of the press he has carried (I wasn't). Also, he hasn't always been regular in publishing (though he puts the games out on a flyer if he is running late). The GMing seems mostly reliable (only one delay because of error that I know of). Anyway, I mostly like Praxis. It is good reading. The games run a bit slow, but if you are in no hurry, it is also a good place to play. I would suggest you at least check out a sample before you sub (good advice for almost any zine, by the way). His address is 702-25 St. Mary St., Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4Y 1R2

REBEL: Melinda Holley is responsible for this one. Rebel isn't as pretty to look at as Praxis. But I don't have any trouble reading it. The zine is very wharehousey. But Steve and Linda Courtemanche had a highly readable subzine called High Inertia, so the zine isn't totally devoid of reading. Actually, every once in a while, Melinda herself writes an article. But the main reason for Rebel's existence is the games. I am playing in a game here, and I don't know how typical my experiences are as a whole. The game I am playing in has had some errors. I don't know whether we just have had bad luck or whether Melinda's tremendous game load has an affect on the time she can devote to GMing. I will probably sign on for another game here when this one is done, unless things get worse, so I guess it isn't too bad. If you are looking for immaculate GMing, you might go elsewhere. On the positive side, she puts the thing out reliably. Anyway, if you are interested, send her a stamp at : PO Box 2793, Huntington, WV 25727.

FUILLETONIST'S FORUM: This one comes out courtesy of a Texan named Greg Ellis. (I guess we shouldn't hold it against him for being a Texan.) The zine looks real good physically and is easily read. Greg's main thing seems to be politics. There is a continuing discussion of political topics in the letter col, which is fairly active. In addition to running dip, which he does well, he also runs Presidential Politics. There isn't much other reading matter, but if you want a political discussion, give this a try. Greg can be reached at 700 Rio Grande, Austin, TX 78701-2720

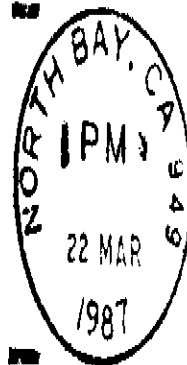
CATHY'S RAMBLINGS: Cathy Ozog brings us this zinny. She is a big fan of the British hobby, and tries to produce a British type chat zine. Usually, the chat is quite interesting. She is also running a role-playing game, in addition to dip. Dan Palter sometimes chips in a sub zine. The biggest negative about CR is it's lateness. She has been famous for being late. Her last issue is even later than normal. If you want chat, and don't care if your game is a tad late, check this one out. Of course, you don't have to play here to enjoy the zine. PO Box 5225, Munds Park, AZ 86017

COSTAGUANA: This one was number one in last years Runestone Poll. That alone says a lot about Conrad von Metzke's efforts. If you want a lot of reading material, check this one out. Conrad writes very well about a variety of topics. One of his favorites is classical music. His games seem to be well run. The zine comes out a bit irregularly, but he keeps the games going pretty well on fliers to the players, if need be. If you want lots of reading material, check him out. He says he is going to cut down, but I have yet to see any evidence of it. Anyway, Uncle Connie can be found at 4374 Donald Ave., San Diego, CA 92117-3813

Now we have a review of record albums. At least a couple of them.

How about Standing on a Beach by the Cure? The album is subtitled The Singles. It is a collection of Cure singles from years back to now. I was not familiar with the Cure's material. While in a record shop in Columbus, they were playing this album. I liked what I heard, and the Sleaze had recommended it to me. So I picked it up. I enjoyed the album. The material is all very strong. The sound is new wavish, without any of the pop bob shit. It is very basic, not a lot of frills. A good, clean sound. I can recommend this album very highly. I don't know about all the rest of their material. Maybe someone else out there can tell me about something else they might have heard.

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