

Maniac's Paradise

Issue 3

\$0.75

May is almost upon us, and the situation is pretty grim. There's oil all over Alaska, Lucille Ball is in her grave, and we came this > < close to getting smacked by a very impolite meteor. What else could happen? Well, for starters, you could open your mailbox, expecting to find a few bills and a letter from your local Congressman asking for your support, and instead find this issue of Maniac's Paradise. Just shows you that things can ALWAYS get worse.

A few of you out there are getting this issue without asking for it. That's because I made a few extra copies, and decided to send them to a few prospective Diplomacy players. Take a look at the zine and see if you like what you see.

Those of you who saw the first two issues of MP have probably noticed that this issue looks a little different. Don't panic, your eyes aren't playing tricks on you. With the repair of the laser printer, I have switched over to Word Perfect 5.0 with a few fonts from Bitstream. Certainly makes a difference, doesn't it?

For those of you interested, the play-by-modem Seattle-New York hookup is almost finished. By the time you are reading this, Games BBS in Seattle should be carrying my Diplomacy conference. If you own a computer and modem and want to play some Diplomacy either call my BBS (212-432-1992) or Games BBS (206-523-9897). Both systems are running 24 hours a day, seven days a week. More systems across the country should join in the near future. If you want more information on this, drop me a note and I'll fill you in.

What else? Well, this is Issue #3 of Maniac's Paradise, published by Douglas Kent, 54 West Cherry St, #211, Rahway, NJ, 07065. Phone # is (201) 815-0361 from 5 pm to 9 pm eastern. Not any later, please as I get up at 5 am every weekday. The subscription price is a measly 75 cents an issue, which comes out to \$9.00 a year. I'm willing to trade for some other zines, so if you are a publisher, I'm sure we can work something out. There are no game fees, and every issue is free while you wait for a game to start. We come out once a month, with deadlines the first Monday every month, unless it's a holiday.

This issue is pretty thin on reading material as I am waiting for our first game to start. If you signed up for regular Diplomacy you probably made it into the first game. Check page 5 for the gamestart list, and who plays which country. Remember that

countries were assigned on a first-come first-serve basis, using the preference lists to see which remaining country you got. Make sure you get your moves in by the deadline. Having a NMR in the first season of the game could really be depressing, ya know?

This issue I've officially opened a few new games for people to sign up for. Now, besides Diplomacy and Gunboat, we have the Stock Market Game (two players signed up so far, and I'm getting alot of interest from people who are thinking of subscribing), Civilization (running under a set of rules borrowed from Mike Scott), Kremlin (definitely my favorite new game in a few years, maybe since Civization came out), and the old standard Yellowstone, which I added as an afterthought.

What else goes on? My wedding is coming up, folks, so you'll be unable to find me for a few days at the end of May. Yes, get out those hankies, ladies, I'm on my way to the land of marraige. I could use a few pointers, though, on how to transform a stubborn fiance into a wife/wargaming fanatic. I suppose she's fairly tolerant of my gaming, and nowadays even joins in when it's time to play Kremlin. Maybe with a little shove I can get her to try Civilization and Yellowstone, too. As of 11:30 on Sunday, May 28, I'll no longer be single, so wish me luck! Anyone with any other pointers on life as a couple can fill me in. Just PLEASE don't start talking about children!

I've also given a quick once over to the latest issue of The General, and you'll find my comments on page 6. I know that there are really just two schools of thought: those that love The General, and those that despise it. Maybe if you're waffling in the middle you'll find the column a little useful. If not, line the cat pan with it. I won't mind, and my two felines would probably be thrilled.

Speaking of felines, have any of you ever tried to clean your cat's teeth? I just bought a kitty toothbrush and some toothpaste, but I'm scared to try them out. The booklet that came with them suggest just touching your cat's gums and teeth with your fingers for a few days, to let him/her get used to it. I hope that taking it's advice doesn't leave me a nickname like "lefty".

Now that I've rambled on for too long, I'm forced to finish this page up. Too bad, since I really don't have that much to say. Have any of you seen Eric Idle's new TV series? It's pretty funny, although it's really just a rehash of "Topper". Idle was also in "Around the World in Eighty Days", which I missed. I have also heard (hooray) that the entire Python troupe is getting together to do a 20th anniversary show of some sort (or is it 25th?). More details on this as they come in.

For you movie fans, we have a big summer ahead of us. "Batman" starring Michael Keaton is due out shortly, and everything I hear points to big blockbuster. I certainly hope its better than the early rumors said it would be! Then we have the new Ghostbusters movie, plus another chapter from Indiana Jones, this time including the origional and best Bond, Sean Connery. I can't remember, but there might also be a new Star Trek movie on the way. Am I right about this? Anyway, on with the zine!!

Game Openings

The following games have room for more players. If you are interested, fill out one "Game Entry Sheet" or write up the information clearly and send it to me. Remember to make a preference list for Diplomacy and Gunboat, and to specify a color and "Team name" for Stock Market and Kremlin. All games will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Standby's are always needed, so if you wish to be on the standby list, mention that to me as well.

Diplomacy 2:

Description: Standard Diplomacy, Might allow black press.
Players Signed Up: Diehl, six more players needed.

Gunboat 1:

Description: Standard Gunboat with no press allowed.
Players Signed Up: Six, One spot left to fill game.

Gunboat 2:

Description: Standard Gunboat with no press allowed.
Players Signed Up: Two, Five spots still open.

The Stock Market Game:

Description: PBM Stock Market Game. Simple, good for a distraction.
Players Signed Up: Stimmel, McCrumb(?), need another two to four.

Kremlin:

Description: Kremlin, Basic with some advanced rules. Ask for Kremlin houserules if you are interested.
Players Signed Up: None, I'll take from 4 to 6 to fill the game.

Yellowstone:

Description: PBM Yellowstone, Does anyone even own this game?
I have a rough set of houserules for any interested parties.

Players Signed Up: None, I need four players to make in full.

Civilization:

Description: PBM Civilization using houserules from Victims Wanted
Players Signed Up: None, can use six or more.

Possible Additions for Next Month:

Britannia, Circus Maximus, Conquistador, Dune, Kingmaker, Merchant of Venus, anything else you'd care to suggest.

Please note which games allow black press, which do not, and which allow no press at all. I'll supply houserules for any game that you need them for. Remember that you must subscribe to play, but you need not pay until the game is ready to start, and no issue will count against your sub until the first issue in which one of your games is actually underway. If there are any other games that you think might be suited for the play-by-mail forum, I'd be willing to try them out here. Just ask.

Notes to Players: _____

GAME ENTRY SHEET

This zine now has game openings. Fill out this sheet or a copy for each game that you are interested in joining, and return it to me. Remember you must be a subscriber to participate in the games, although you need not pay for an entire year at a time.

Your name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: () -

Which game are you signing up for? _____

Would you like black press in the game? Yes [] No [] Don't Care []

What is your country preference list? First choice _____

Second _____ Third _____ Fourth _____

Fifth _____ Sixth _____ Seventh _____

Name any people with whom you don't wish to play (confidential) _____

Would you like to be on the standby list? Yes [] No []

Do you anticipate interest in any of the possible additions to the game list [these are printed at the bottom of the Game Openings Page]. If so which ones? _____

Send all completed forms, subscription money, articles for submission, etc., to:

Douglas Kent
54 West Cherry Street #211
Rahway, NJ 07065

Phone #: (201)-815-0361, 5pm-9pm eastern
(212)-432-9824 11am-2pm eastern (weekdays only).

Subscriptions are \$9.00 for twelve issues (75 cents an issue, to be exact). There are no game fees.

Gamestarts!!!

The following players are confirmed in the gamestart for Diplomacy 1, hereafter to also be known as "First Born" (BN #1989AL). If any of you on this list haven't yet paid you subscription money, now is the time, as next issue will be the first to count against the subscription price. We also need a vote on black press/no black press, so let me know which you want. Begin your Diplomacy now and get your first turn moves in by the deadline (June 5, 1989). Here are the players in game 1:

Austria: Jim Diehl 10530 West Riverview Dr., Eden Prairie, MN, 55347
England: Art Shulman 45-1107 River Drive South, Jersey City, NJ, 07310
France: Russell Rowe 411 Wells-Mill Rd., Apt. 84, Oxford, Ohio, 45056
Germany: Shawn Erikson 6313 22nd Ave NW, Seattle, WA, 98107
Italy: Bernie Oaklyn 9607 Conaty Circle, Spotsylvania, VA, 22553-7622
Russia: Robert Banozic 2256 N. Cleveland, #107, Chicago, IL, 60614
Turkey: Melinda Holley PO Box 2793, Huntington, WV, 25727

Diplomacy Houserules

1. Standard abbreviations will be used for all games, with the following clarifications: Norwegian Sea=Nwg, North Sea=Nth, Norway=Nwy, North Atlantic Ocean=NAO, North Africa=NAf, Liverpool=Lpl, Livonia=Liv, Tyrolia=Tyr, Tyrrhenian Sea=Tyn. If you are unsure spell the whole thing out.
2. Any GM error not reported by the following deadline will stand.
3. Summer/Fall and Autumn/Winter/Spring will be the standard season setup.
4. Seasons will only be separated by GM's decision or if two or more players request it.
5. Conditional orders are allowed for separation of seasons, builds, retreats, who is playing a country (player or standby), GM error, or specific questions.
6. NMR retreats will retreat to the available location that comes first alphabetically, as will builds. NMR removals are alphabetically chosen in this order: non-supply centers out of home country, supply center out of home country, non-supply center in home country, supply center in home country.
7. After the first NMR, a standby will be contacted. A second consecutive NMR causes the standby to become the player of record.
8. Black press is permitted where noted, but only the GM can use the "GM" dateline.
9. Any draw proposal is valid, but must be passed unanimously. NVR=yes.
10. Conflicting orders cause affected units to hold.
11. Houserules may be changed as circumstances dictate.

Review: The New Expanded General

In case you didn't know, as of the 25th Anniversary issue, Avalon Hill's General magazine has expanded it's size from the old 48 pages to a new 60+ page size. Included with the expansion are a few new features as well. I thought I'd give a few comments about what Mr. Martin and Co. have done to my favorite professional gaming publication.

To begin with, let me say that most of the magazine remains as it has been for some time, so don't have a panic fit. "Avalon Hill Philosophy" still leads off every issue with some ramblings of one kind or another. In the latest issue, Vol. 25 #2, it concentrates on the newest update to the Readers Buyers Guide. Pretty boring, but its always fun to compare your favorites to the games on the top of the list.

Next there is the cover story, this time dealing with Tac Air. There is also a Series Replay, also on Tac Air. However, The General tried something a little different, doing a series replay of two people playing Tac Air for the very first time. It let's you see some players making a few of the mistakes that YOU might make in trying the game out.

Two more standard features follow, "Letters to the Editor" and an article of Firepower. Then, there is a new column called Sports Special. I think this column is meant to fill the void left from the demise of All-Star Replay. I guess it's alright for people who play some of AH's sports games, and it doesn't take up too much space, so I won't complain.

There are various other features that you've all seen many times before: a few articles on various games, a couple of bonus Advanced Squad Leader scenarios, an article of PBM play (a subject that seems to be coming up in The General alot more frequently, thank goodness), a Squad Leader "clinic", "Opponents Wanted", "The Question Box", "Infiltrator's Report," etcetera. In addition, there are two new columns worthy of mention.

The first is "Computer Corner", which I think has been in the magazine on and off for a while, but now seems to have become a permantant fixture. For those of us that are still waiting for the computer game that can equal the excitement of a boardgame, this column is the place to watch. The other new column is a true gem and wonderful idea: "Coming Attractions". The first column of "CA" talked about Siege of Jerusalem, a game I know alot of us have been waiting for earnestly ever since. The new issue discusses MBT, short for Main Battle Tank. It's another of those Nato vs. Pact games, kind of a ground unit version of Tac Air. I haven't looked that closely at the article, so you'll have to pick up a copy of The General yourself.

Speaking of picking up a copy, if you aren't a subscriber you missed out on a bonus set of extra counters included with the latest issue. These counters will be discussed in the next few issues of The General. The new Tac Air counters are dealt with in this issue. The other counters are for 1776, Bulge '81, and Empires in Arms. I'll tell you, there's nothing like getting those free counters when you open up your copy.

Overall, the expansion of The General is a great idea, since even Avalon Hill get's

issues out much later than expected on occasion. The more they send you to read, the longer you can wait for the next issue. If you're like me, you love The General.

As an afterthought, I hope alot of you managed to get in on Avalon Hill's latest special offer. It was really three different offers. They gave you a list of some of their slower-selling games, a few at highly discounted prices (Yellowstone for \$10 instead of the normal \$18, for example). Then they give you three choices: buy any AH game and get one on the list for 50% off, buy any two on the list and get a third free, and buy one on the list and get one year of The General free. I picked up two games and added two years to my subscription. Unfortunately, if you didn't participate, it's too late: the offer expired April 30. I guess I just wanted to make you feel bad if you missed it.

Zines Zines Zines

Here are a few other Diplomacy zines that I enjoy and/or get on a regular basis, or both. If you haven't seen some of these, it might be worth your while.

Rebel is published by Melinda Holley, PO Box 2793, Huntington, WV, 25727. It's one of the most popular zines around right now, and there is always alot going on. Filled with tons of Diplomacy games.

The Last Resort, by Charles Fargo, 76 Traveler Lane, Marshfield, MA, 02050. A smaller zine like mine with some Dip. games plus one Gunboat. There aren't any openings right now, but Charles will be adding one or two more Diplomacy games in the near future.

Victims Wanted by Shawn Erikson, 6313 22nd Ave NW, Seattle, WA, 98107. Runs Dip, Gunboat, Fury of Dracula, and blind ASL, plus alot of other games on the drawing board or filling up.

The Home Office, published by Fred G. Hyatt, 60 Grandview Pl., Montclair, NJ, 07043. On a five-week schedule, Fred runs Dip, Gunboat, and other Dip variants like Gunboat Colonia VI. Games are populated by a number of Canadians as well as US'ers.

**Deadline for next issue:
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Maniac's Paradise
Douglas Kent
54 West Cherry St, #211
Rahway, NJ 07065
(201) 815-0361



Bruce Reiff
36 S. Main St.
Rittman, Ohio
44270