



**PENGUIN DIP**

**#10**

Welcome to PENGUIN DIP #10. PD is an SF fanzine, an artzine, a general gaming and role playing game fanzine, and a Dipzine, running postal Diplomacy games. Edited, published and copyrighted (except where noted) by Stephen H. Dorneman, 95 Federal St. #2, Lynn, MA 01905, available as a 10 issue (1 year) subscription for \$10.00.

## FROM THE FLOE: WRING OUT THE OLD, BRING IN THE NEW

Wring out the old? Well, Penny and I sure felt like old washcloths this Christmas, with colds so bad we put off Christmas dinner for a week, when we might be able to taste it and have energy enough to cook it. Whether it's stress-related immune deficiencies, that changeable New England weather, or just being unlucky, I hope we're both in better health for 1988. Aside from the coughing, sneezing, etc., we both had a very merry holiday, and hope that you and yours did as well.

This is the time of year when newspapers, local TV newscasts, and faneds like to look back, assess the previous year and generally get maudlin, and far be it from me to break with tradition. After all, this is the 10th issue of PENGUIN DIP, an auspicious thing in itself for us decimal-digitated creatures. . . So let me quote once again from a letter I wrote to **Dick Martin's** HOUSE OF LORDS and reprinted in PD#1:

"I intend to publish a zine that I'd like to read. A zine not unlike the SF fanzines that I published and read a long time ago (mid '70s). Zines with a lot of amateur and semi-professional artwork, reviews, a strong editorial personality and active participation by the subscribers." I think I've done pretty well on those counts. Still, there's plenty I haven't done. There are a lot of fine artists out there that I'd love to publish in PD, and more artwork I'd like to see from the fine artists that I have published. I'd love to get enough articles to generate a backlog of sorts. I want a cheap laser printer. But enough about me.

PD has survived and prospered only because of the support of its readers, and I'd like to thank a few special supporters in particular. **Ernie Hakey**, for giving me the idea of putting out a Dipzine in the first place, and for being a good friend. **Ken Peel** and **Dick Martin**, for turning me on to the Macintosh's potential, and for early support. **Bruce Linsey**, for his early encouragement and for his Publisher's Handbook. **Kathy Caruso**, for submitting the first article published in PD, and for volunteering to be that first standby. **Jim Tozzi**, for being PD's artist-in-residence from issue number zero. **Garret Schenck**, for keeping the press lively and for his consistently excellent articles. **Sheryl Birkhead**, a non-gamer, for her many, insightful letters of comment, and her fine artwork. And especially my wife, **Penny Dorneman**, for letting me add still another expensive hobby to my life. Maudlin, but true, every one.

**ARTICLES** this issue by **Greg Porter**, **William Ricker**, **Kirk Carroll**, and **John Kingsbury**. **ARTWORK** is from various clip art disks (cover, page 6), **Kathy Luzzi** (2,14), **Jim Tozzi** (3), **Phil Tortorici** (4), **Lyle Tucker** (8), **Andrew Edelston** (10), and **Steven Fox** (19). Sub credit for all, and to all a good night!



# LETTERS

**JON FLEISCHMAN:** "... I also enjoyed reading Ron Cameron's accounting of the October Earthquake. I was asleep in my waterbed at the time of the initial quake and I'll tell you now. There is no stranger feeling than riding out an Earthquake in a waterbed! Ron's story was even more vivid for me as I often game with him. I've plotted against him in the very garage in which he and his daughter rode out the earthquake."

**HARRY ANDRUSCHAK:** "So how is the weather back there in Lynn? Is Lynn anywhere near Boston? [ *Yes, about 15 miles North along the coast from Beantown.* ] In any case, it is sunny and mild here in Los Angeles. I can lounge around in my sheer nylon bottoms, in total comfort and with no worry about getting chilled. I mention this because you Easterners tend to get snotty about our Earthquakes. Well, I will stick to California, despite earthquakes, for the climate."

**LAWRENCE WATT-EVANS:** "In regard to Michael Hopcroft's letter and your reply, this is being written on an IBM/PC -- the old original, bought more than three years back, before clones flooded the market and drove prices down. I use it for word processing and for keeping my spreadsheets for tax records. I've written five and a half novels on it, as well as some short stories, a few dozen articles, and several hundred letters. I like it very much. I've never had any trouble with it, except about four instances of lost data, at least two of which were due to defective EI Cheapo floppy disks.

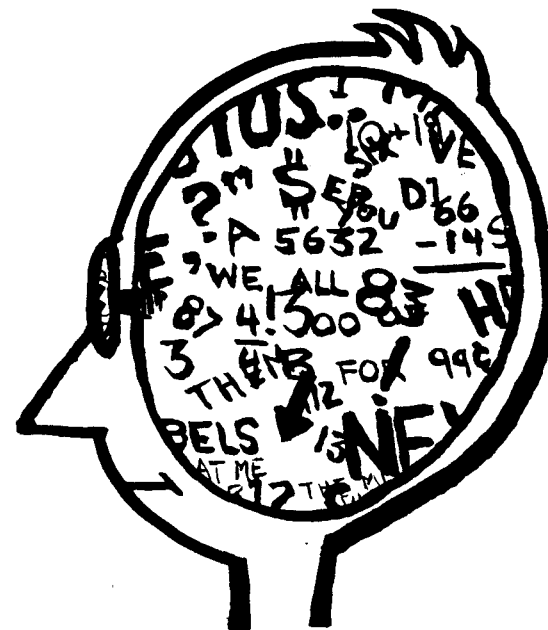
I never had any trouble getting it to run, and I use PC-DOS, which is virtually identical to MS-DOS, and never had any trouble with that, either. If Mr. Hopcroft's having difficulties, it's not the format that's at fault, it's either the particular machines he's tried, or whoever has been showing him how they work. It's true that you can't do a damn thing in DOS, but why would you want to? DOS is only good for switching from one piece of pre-packaged software to another. Doing much more than that with it is asking for trouble, but with all the software that's out for the IBM, it's also completely unnecessary. After three years, I know maybe six DOS commands; it's all I ever need.

And yes, there most certainly is an IBM public-domain network or two. I'm a member of PC-SIG, myself, which distributes several hundred useful and/or entertaining programs at \$5.00 a diskette or so, and there are other groups as well. (That's PC-SIG, 1030D East Duane Ave, Sunnyvale, CA 94086. At least, that was their address a year ago; I can't find a more recent catalog in the clutter on my office floor. I don't think it's changed.)

Before buying any computer, check it out -- go to the computer store and actually run something on it, don't just push a few buttons. Different computers fit different tastes -- personally, I think the Mac sucks, but lots of people like the damn things. A Commodore Amiga is the machine to get if your main interest is graphics, for example. I was primarily interested in word processing -- this is a business computer, not a toy -- so I went with the IBM with Leading Edge software, which fits my style very nicely. I have two other full-blown word processing programs I use for emergencies, but I don't much like them. They were cheap.

I also have PC-Calc for spreadsheets, PC-File III for databases (not that I ever use any), and literally hundreds of games, utilities, demonstrators, editors, calculators, and so forth, and I've spent a grand total of maybe \$250 on software, over three years.

While I was shopping, back in 1984, I tried thirteen different word processors. Most of them were either terrible, or were geared toward office use, not writing novels. I never would have known that if I hadn't sat down and tried each one, composing a complete short letter on each. If the salesman won't let you do that, go somewhere else."



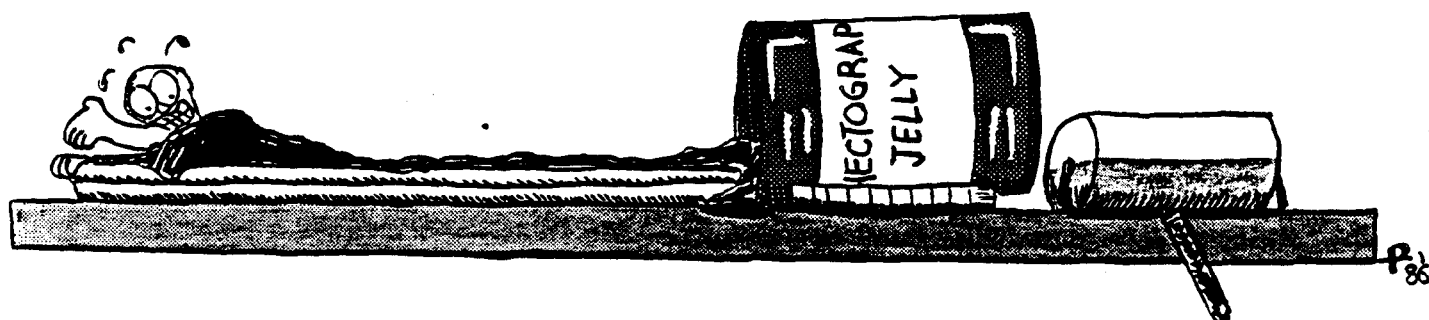
**JOHN KINGSBURY:** "Gee, Garret, you seem to forget that Brian Wilson threw himself down in front of a moving train! Doesn't that strike you as a little suicidal? Trains are not known for their short stopping distances, even at speeds as low as five miles an hour. There was much talk (before the incident) of how the movement needed a martyr, did the 'designated victim' perhaps change his mind (about being reduced to a red pulp) a little too late? Somehow, playing 'chicken' with a locomotive doesn't seem like a very effective way to 'work for peace'."

**GREG PORTER:** "The way I see it, the people who play games today will be designing them tomorrow. I figure anything I design will be an object lesson, either in what to do, or perhaps what not to do. I try very hard to make it the former, rather than the latter. I don't like to give the impression of excess ego, but I wouldn't design a game if I thought there was already something as good or better already available. I would have just gone out and bought it."

As long as I am shamelessly plugging myself, I would like to add that I am also the designer/publisher of the utterly fantastic but little known (no advertising budget) RPG known as TimeLords. This is the first major role-play release from the Blackburn Tactical Research Center, my struggling young game company. The time and effort going into this is what keeps me out of other pursuits."

**HARRY ANDRUSCHAK:** "Thank you for sending me PD#9, with my article on Chess. I noticed a truly horrible error in the article, which may or may not have been my fault, but which you, AS EDITOR!, should have picked up. In the ninth paragraph, that should have been playing two games with each other player, not three."

**ROBERT HAUSER:** "I am enclosing some cartoons that I found in NATIONAL REVIEW. They were produced on a computer. What do you know about computer drawing programs? Could you discuss this in PENGUIN DIP? I am curious about how these cartoons were produced." *[Although I own and use a copy of GraphicWorks from Mindscape (see this issue's cover, a piece of Macpaint computer clip art that I used GraphicWorks to add a title to), I know next-to-nothing about how such programs work. (That's why I bought a Macintosh. I don't want to know, or have to know, how the programs work. I just want to use them.)]*



**WAHF** (We Also Heard From): **Stven Carlberg, Sheryl Birkhead, Bob Gossage, Jr., Craig Ledbetter, Bruce Linsey, Kathy Luzzi, Cathy Ozog and Jim Tozzi.** Special thanks going out to John Kingsbury, Bruce, Kathy, Cathy, and Jim for the Christmas cards and greetings.

**"TO BOLDLY GO WHERE NO ONE HAS GONE BEFORE . . . AGAIN:**

## **A REVIEW OF STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION**

TV Review by **Kirk M. Carroll**

Old television series never die. They just enter syndication. Occasionally, one is given new life by bringing the series back into production. After an incredibly successful syndication run and several feature length movies, the U.S.S. Enterprise is once again exploring strange, new worlds and seeking out new life and new civilizations in a series format. But don't look for Captain Kirk on the bridge. He has been replaced by Captain Jean-Luc Picard. This new Star Trek series follows the adventures of the Galaxy class starship Enterprise, approximately seventy-five years from the time the original starship Enterprise roamed the heavens.

Having been a devoted Star Trek follower since its inception, I looked forward to this new series with mixed feelings. On one hand, I knew I would miss the familiar members of the original Enterprise. At the same time, however, I realized that if Star Trek were to be successfully revived in a series, it would have to be done without the original crew (can you imagine a starship manned with a crew whose average age is in the fifties?). On the other hand, I looked forward to a fresh cast and fresh stories. So, unlike many of the other Star Trek followers, I approached this new series with a completely open mind and was willing to give it a chance.

The best way to view The Next Generation is to look at it as a new and original series. To compare it to the old Star Trek would be a mistake. But since everyone will compare it anyway, let's do so, beginning with the crew.

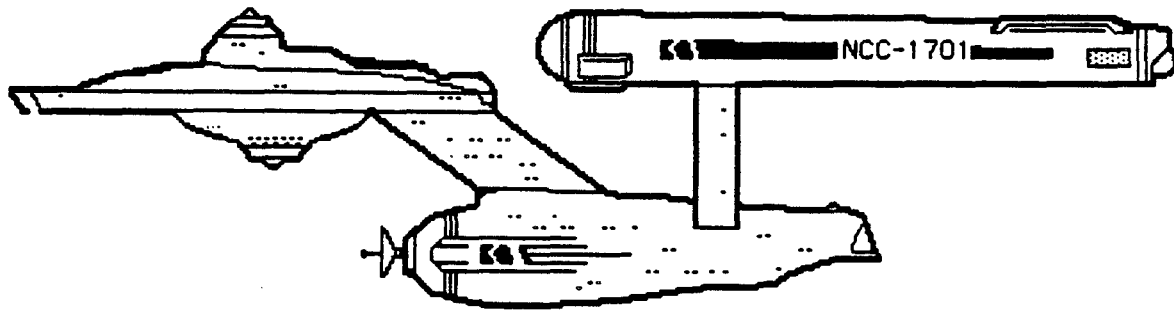
The old crew is gone and forgotten, right? Well, the characters as well as the actors who played them are (although DeForest Kelley made a cameo appearance in the pilot episode as the 137-year-old Dr. McCoy). But what about those qualities which defined those characters? Look closely. You may see a few resemblances. Captain Kirk is no longer in command of the Enterprise. That duty now belongs to Jean-Luc Picard (Patrick Stewart), a man much older than Kirk was at that rank. There is, however, a reason behind that. One of the criticisms of the original series was that a starship captain would not place himself in mortal danger week after week as Kirk did. A starship captain, it was reasoned, was too important to the ship and was not expendable, hence it was unrealistic for Kirk to always lead the landing party down to a planet. What he should have done was to assemble a landing party composed of junior officers so that he could tend to the ship's needs and make the command decisions expected of him. This is what Jean-Luc Picard does.

So, has the Captain Kirk character totally disappeared? Not at all. One needs to look only as far as the first officer, Commander William Riker (Jonathan Frakes). To look at Riker is to imagine what a junior officer James Tiberius Kirk must have been like. The characters are strikingly similar. The main difference, of course, is that Riker does not command the Enterprise, as Picard so often points out.

The essence of Kirk lives on in Riker's character. What about Spock, that phenomenally popular pointed-eared Vulcan? Thankfully, no attempt was made to incorporate another Vulcan into the series. Instead, we have Lieutenant Commander Data (Brent Spiner), an android who, like Spock, can be annoyingly logical. But unlike Spock, Data longs to be human, as evidenced by his confession to Riker in "Encounter At Farpoint," and by his emulation of Sherlock Holmes in "Lonely Among Us."

Obviously, they couldn't give all of Spock's unique attributes to one character. Therefore, we now have Counsellor Deanna Troi (Marina Sirtis), the (half) Betazoid empath. Troi's special gift is amazingly similar to Spock's ability to mind-meld.

There, the similarities to the original crew end. The new crew include Lieutenant Geordi La Forge (Levar Burton), a man blind since birth but can "see" with the aid of a remarkable device, allowing him to examine things electromagnetically and microscopically, as well as on a molecular level; Lieutenant Tasha Yar (Denise Crosby), the attractive Security Chief; Lieutenant Worf (Michael Dorn), the Klingon member of the crew (my, how things have changed in seventy-five years!), and Doctor Beverly Crusher (Gates McFadden), the Chief Medical Officer. Admittedly, it took a little time to get used to the new crew, especially Denise Crosby as Security Chief (but who plays a convincing role as such) and a Klingon on the bridge! At first, I didn't think the Klingon would fit. However, although they are often times violent, they are also duty and honor bound. This attribute makes them acceptable as members of Star Fleet.



The ship itself differs from the old Enterprise. The basic design is similar, but of course is superior to the old design. The pilot episode showed us an extra capability of the Enterprise: that of being able to separate the saucer from the rest of the ship. This may have been possible with the original Enterprise, but it was never actually done. This was done in the first episode to keep the ship's children (!) and families out of danger. The question that immediately shot through my mind (and which still lingers) is why are there children and families on the ship to begin with? There is no room on a starship to accommodate them and I especially resent the character of Wesley Crusher (Wil Wheaton). A Federation starship is simply no place for children!

One of the strongest assets the new series has is that Gene Roddenberry is still around and is evidently an integral part of its production. Thus, we can be assured that the new series will be faithful to the original spirit. Other notable returnees from the original series include D.C. Fontana (who co-wrote, along with Roddenberry, the inaugural episode, "Encounter At Farpoint") and Robert Justman.

The writing up to now has been very good with but one exception. My biggest fear was that the writers would try to ride the coattails of former episodes and write stories with plots as sequels to the early episodes. This has happened but once: "The Naked New," by John D. Black and J. Michael Bingham, a ridiculous episode dealing with a problem that was encountered in the original series episode, "The Naked Time," also written by John Black.

The other episodes have been surprisingly fresh, with plots and writing reminiscent of the fine first season episodes of the original series. My favorite episode so far has been the one entitled "The Last Outpost," written by Richard Krzemien. It was a delightfully humorous episode which introduced the new "bad" guys, the annoying Ferengi.

The writing, along with good casting and the marvelous special effects provided by Industrial Light and Magic (the same people who gave us Star Wars) have really made Star Trek: The Next Generation a show to watch. I only hope that the writers can keep it fresh without having to rely on old story lines and that Roddenberry continues to enjoy the support of both the Fox Broadcasting Company and Paramount Pictures. To the new series I can only say, "Live long and prosper."



## FOOTFALL/LARRY NIVEN & JERRY POURNELLE

### Book Review by Stephen H. Dorneman

It is 10:42 PM on December 16th as I write this, and I just put down a 581 page paperback (\$4.95, from Ballantine Books) and went "Wow!". Literally. Corny as it may sound. There aren't too many books that can do that for me anymore. There also aren't too many books that put a good, old-fashioned lump in my throat when characters die, or have me almost shouting "Go get 'em!" on buses, either. But Footfall did it all.

Footfall is the story of an alien invasion of Earth in the very near future. I know, I know, it sounds pretty bad from that one sentence plot summary . . . but it's not at all like you're thinking. Niven and Pournelle are two of SF's hardest hard science fiction authors, and they invade their worlds the right way, with believable (heck, buildable!) technology (Bussard ramjets to cross interstellar space, kinetic energy weapons, i.e. rocks from space, to destroy land-based targets, lasers and nukes instead of death rays and Q-bombs) and, more importantly, with believable aliens. The Earth the aliens are after is filled with (mostly) believable people, too.

The cross-cutting series of vignettes that make up this novel starts by following a large cast of characters (122 listed in the *Dramatis Personae*) from the astronomical discovery of an alien spacecraft within the orbit of Saturn through that ship's first contact with humans aboard a Soviet space station. This section of the book, with so many characters to introduce, moves slowly, but it's worth the wait. After the first 125 pages the rest of the book seems to fly by oh too quickly, as the aliens begin to bombard the Earth, the US and USSR try to fight back, the aliens land in the Kansas heartland, both sides begin to learn about the other through prisoners, politics plague the politboro and the alien mother ship alike . . . and then the action really starts.

This is not a perfect book by any means. Tasteful sexual encounters seem thrown in just to add that "best-seller" flavor. Most of the characters are such duty- and honor-bound good guys that the aliens have much more identifiable characteristics. And everybody's so smart! Congressmen recognize Bussard ramjets, newspaper reporters read people at a glance, and science fiction writers know . . . well, everything. The biggest conceit of the novel is a group of science fiction writers that have been assembled by the US government as a Threat Team to advise the President, and are basically infallible under their Heinlein equivalent leader, Anson (Heinlein's middle name, and an early penname of his.) And, of course, the book is riddled with Tuckerisms, real-world SF fans and pros becoming characters and/or character names in the novel.

But all is forgiven for the latter two-thirds of the book. Jerry Pournelle writes military SF action as good, if not better, than anybody out there, and the aliens are perfect. You want to reach out and grab Herdmaster Pastempeh-keph and shake him by the trunk and tell him that humans aren't herd animals like his people, and that they aren't going to surrender *en masse*, no matter what size meteors the snouts drop on Earth.

The book concludes with a seat-grIPPING, spine-tingling last-ditch attempt by the humans (in particular, the Americans, although the Soviets give their own accounting) to militarily throw off the invaders, and last-minute negotiations that are in doubt up until the very last page. Some people have called this book space opera, and they might be right. But by any name, it's a book worth reading. And arrange not to be interrupted during the last 100 pages.

## DUEL MASTERS/REALITY SIMULATIONS, INC.

### Play By Mail (PBM) Game Review by John Kingsbury

While at this year's NASFIC (CactusCon), I had the opportunity to take part in the Duel Masters Open Tournament held there by Reality Simulations, Inc. The tournament was not the best place to get acquainted with the game, the atmosphere was exciting, but vital portions of the rules were not available. I did get interested enough to continue play since then, however.

This is not a Fantasy Role Playing PBM (unless you count the peculiar weapons used), it is simple violence. The "play-by-play" turn results are interesting, sometimes amusing, sometimes aggravating.

Unlike RSI's other game, Hyborian War, you are not running a country, just a stable of gladiators. These warriors are "stated up" by a combination of pseudo-random point distribution and deliberate design. A set number of points are spread around the various attributes by the RSI computer, and then the player has a set amount of points to add to them (except to the Size stat). You then pick a fighting style for each of the five team members which (hopefully) fits their abilities.

A set of "personality" factors are also rolled up, and that adds a little something to the excitement of each fight, as you get to know each member of your stable better and better with each fight.

No set guidelines are given for character design, or matching character attributes to fighting styles, but they do point you in the right directions. They never say something like "To use a longsword, a character needs at least a Strength, Wit, and Dexterity of at least eleven." You, as "Team Manager", have to learn what works and what doesn't by experience. If you feel a character is totally helpless, you can send them to the "Dark Arena" (almost certain death) and get rid of them, but you have to pay for that fight as you would any other.

Costs are steep, \$10.75 to run one turn for all five warriors, but only \$4.75 for one warrior (\$3.25 per turn + \$1.50 per fight). This can add up real fast, even if you play in a slow game (every four weeks). Fast games are every two weeks. Unlike many PBMs, the first set-up and rules are free (replacements and second teams extra). Should your team lose a warrior, a replacement is provided free.

I must say that I never thought I would be paying good money for a PBM, until I tried this one. I'm coming to really look forward to getting my turn every four weeks.

Write to Reality Simulations, Inc., at P.O. Box 27576, Tempe, AZ, 85282 and ask for a free (no further obligation) set of rules and team roll-up.





## PLAY BY ELECTRONIC MAIL: a voyeur's review

Diplomacy Observations Copyright ©1988 by William Ricker

A number of people on the Usenet (the international Unix computer network) have set up Play By Mail (PBM) games using Electronic Mail rather than USnail. A Traveller campaign is just starting, and a number of AD&D games have allegedly happened; however, most of the games have been Postal Diplomacy. The general procedure is to use person-to-person electronic mail for private player-to-player negotiations and player-to-referee move submission, with a broadcast bulletin board message handling public turn results and other referee-to-player messages and batched "press" (player broadcasts). Players could individually post to the bulletin board, but protocol appears to be against that.

For the purposes of this review, I just peeked into the bulletin board where results are posted. There are currently three games of Diplomacy running. The "D2" game is in Fall '02, running apparently one-week cycles for each of its builds/retreats and moves. After Fall '02, the results look interesting to my unknowledgeable eye:

COUNTRY	SUPPLY CENTERS CONTROLLED	
	#	+ foreign centers held; - lost home centers
Russia	7	+Berlin; +Austria-Hungary (had 7 in '01 also, but Berlin and Vienna are new, meaning two in Balkans were lost/given to Turks!)
Germany	6	-Berlin; +low countries; +Denmark; +Edinburgh (via Nth Sea!)
Turkey	6	+Balkans
France	5	+Iberia (Fleets Yorkshire, English Channel)
Italy	4	+Tunis
England	4	-Edinburgh; +Scandinavia (retook London from France Fall '02!)
Austria	2	Trieste, +Serbia

From the look of the map and last moves, I would guess Russia, Turkey, England and Italy are united against France, Germany, and Austria-Hungary. Turks, Germans, and Russians give good press.

The basic problems with Play-By-Electronic-Mail (pbEm) are (a) unreliable mail (just like PBM, but different) and (b) most of the users of the Usenet are using their Work computers. On a home-computer network things might be different, but on Usenet, vacations, project crunches, and business trips add to the player-invisibility caused by network outages (which would be felt on a home-computer network too). Add to this that Usenet is an ad-hoc network of, at best, dubious reliability, and the occurrence of NMR, broadcast "can you hear me?" messages, and substitute players is apparently quite common. For instance, Russia is currently phoning in his orders for the game cited above, as he cannot route mail to the referee except through a computer which is "down".

The advantages of pbEm are the speed of transcontinental negotiations and order/result transmittal when it's all working. I can routinely get responses to E-mail the next day, and often the same day if things are really cooking. On the Usenet and ARPAnet, where the employers pay the connection fees, this fast E-mail service is also free. (Note that ARPAnet would be a more reliable backbone for pbEm'ing, but is accessible primarily to graduate students, computer science majors, and major corporations, although the "Internet" is changing that.) Since the referee isn't paying any postage or printing fees, there's no turn fee, either.

(In an MCI- or COMPUUSERV-based game, there would have to be a turn fee. Possibly by getting a "reverse charges" franchise for the referee, like the 1-900 dial-a-smut lines, etc.)

If you're on the Usenet, tune in to rec.games.pbm with your News-reading software. If you have your own FIDO node (IBM-PC hobbyist network), you can set up your own operation billing your players as if they were users. I don't know how an ARPAnet/Internet user not also on the Usenet could find other players. We hope the two networks will integrate more fully soon, so that rec.games.pbm and rec.games.board will be available to the ARPAnet community. (Note that not all Usenet hosts are actually Unixes; some are VMS, some are IBMs getting CSnet copies of Usenet news-feeds. If in doubt, ask your computer guru.) There are public access Usenet nodes in New Jersey and Sausalito, California (Whole Earth Logical Link?), which you can tap into if you have a modem and want to pay AT&T or SPRINT or MCI.



## CONCRETE JUNGLE

### Design Notes by Greg Porter

Well, there I was, minding my own business, when out of the blue I get an unmarked zine with my name on it. Popping the staples, the Victorian-Lovecraftian cover of PENGUIN DIP #8 greeted my astonished gaze, along with a note from Stephen asking for some comments/design notes on Concrete Jungle, a little game I designed a few years back which has apparently developed a very small cult following. He knows full well that no designer can pass up the chance to talk about their game, and I am no exception. This will be sort of an article/design notes/design philosophy/shameless plug. So, here goes . . .

Concrete Jungle (CJ for short) is a pocket-sized boardgame of counter-terrorist combat. Designed to fit in a notebook or jacket pocket, it retailed for \$6.95 or \$7.95, depending on whether you bought the first or second editions. It had limited national distribution through The Armory in Baltimore, MD, and hobby shops scattered throughout Virginia. Currently it is out of print. But since I have about a box of each of them left somewhere, and I'm getting ready to move, if this article inspires you to try it, I'd be glad to send you either edition for \$4 or \$6 respectively. (*Send to Greg Porter, 4415 Sprengle Lane, Richmond, VA 23228*)

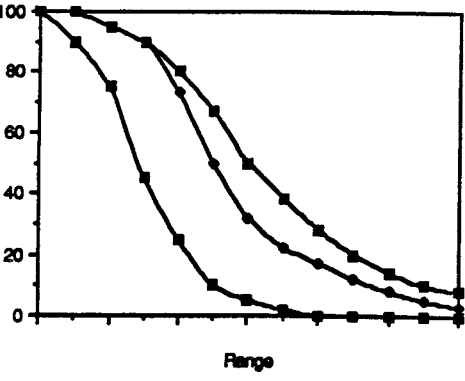
**Background** - CJ was created to fill a void that I perceived in the game market. This was that there was no good simulation of the really close-in tactics you get in modern firefights. Sure, there are games like SPI's Sniper, or that relatively new one by the Avalon Hill Game Company, but each was too long a scale to really let individual tactics show through. After all, when you can empty the clip of a MAC-10 in two seconds, what good are 30 second turns? At this time (mid-1984) I had already completed development of TimeLords, a role-playing game (RPG) with detailed analysis of modern combat, so I tried an interesting tack . . . scaling a full-blown RPG down to boardgame level. This was possible by making CJ what I call a "minimum game." It covers one subject in detail, and does it well, rather than trying to generalize.

The scale of CJ is just above that of most modern RPG's, with a two meter movement grid, and two second turns, this scale being the highest that modern combat will support, given the rate of fire of modern weapons, and the field of battle (a single building). Each of the single maps covers one building, and the play usually takes place entirely within its walls. With a scale any smaller than this, you might as well just play a regular role-playing game, with the attendant slowness.

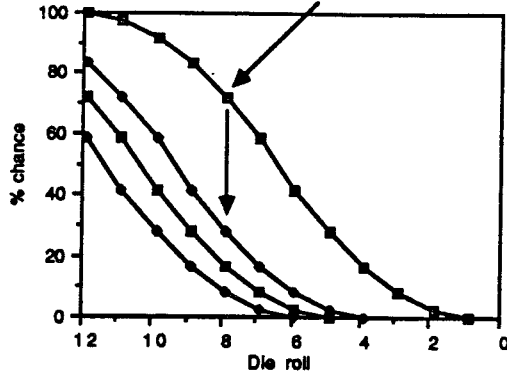
Units are bought with a given number of points, either a dice roll like 6d6 points each, or a set number, depending on what the players want. Each counter represents one man, and has a separate sheet to define the attributes of that unit, since they are too detailed to follow the standard A-D-M (Attack-Defense-Movement) of most boardgames. Each unit will have Body/Bruise Points to represent how much damage they can take (football players vs. child hostages, for example), Reaction Level or reflexes (ditto), and skill in the following areas: Pistol (Pistol/Machine Pistol/SMG), Longarm (Rifle/Autorifle/Shotgun), Grenade Launcher (& LAW/RPG-7), Hand to Hand (Martial Arts/Knife), and Thrown Weapon (any type of grenade). They also have a choice of any modern weapon. The CJ weapons list has about 40 weapons, and simple rules to recreate any modern weapon should you not find what you want.

The combat system is based on rolls of 2d6. While I am not a fan of most bell-curve systems, I chose this because the flat-pack of the game was not conducive to including dice, but everyone has access to six-sided dice lying around somewhere. Normally, most games or systems rely on straight additions or subtractions to a die roll, i.e. a chance of 7 or less with a +2 is a 9 or less. This doesn't give hit chances that match real-world curves. See the first illustration:

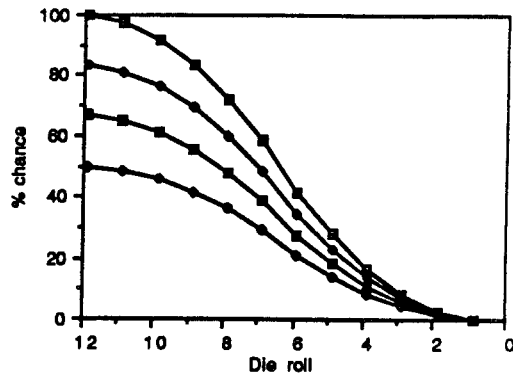
T-62 hit probability



Example: 8 with a +0,-3,-4 and -5



Equivalent graph with percentage modifiers.

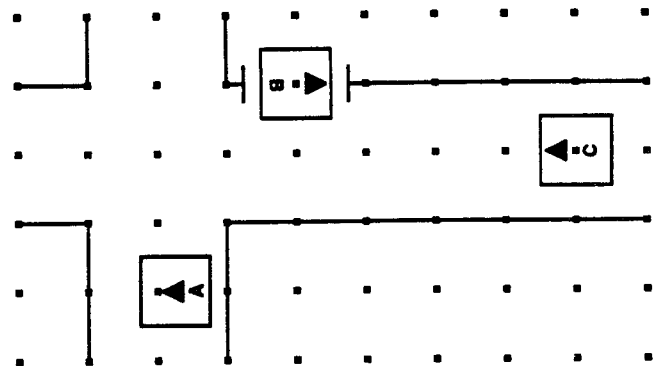


The graph on the left is the hit probability of a Soviet T-62 115mm gun under good conditions (stationary firer and target, accurate ammo), and worse conditions (moving target, not-so-accurate ammo). Granted, this isn't man-to-man combat, but the curves you see reflect many hit probability curves for modern weapons. The center graph reflects the chance to hit with a 2d6 bell-curve starting with a 12 or less, and that same curve with a -3, -4 and -5 to the roll. The reduced chance falls off much more sharply than the base. A 12 going from +0 to -1 loses 2.78% from the chance to hit, but from -3 to -4 is an 11.1% drop. The discrepancy is noticeable. Instead, I chose a percentage modifier system, where your chance to hit is based as a fraction of your original chance, rather than an arbitrary modifier. This way, a person with a 100% chance to hit who takes a -50% modifier will have a 50% chance, and a person with a 50% chance who takes a -50% will have a 25% chance. This idea is translated into a "to hit" table in CJ, since trying to figure out percentages for each 2d6 roll would be remarkably tedious. I have been told by statisticians that this system seems more likely to produce accurate results, but that was qualified with the note that I would have to perform a large number of experiments under controlled conditions to prove it one way or the other. Intuitively it seems more sound, and the curve for the second graph looks like the rightmost graph when plotted using a percentage system.

Granted, neither set of curves is perfect, but neither of these has been skewed by range modifiers, etc. to look like the left graph. The most important point to note is that the percentage system naturally maintains a bell-curve shape, tapering off as you reach the top and bottom, where the other only tapers off at the bottom. The bottom line of the system is that really good units are still badly hurt by severe modifiers, while still allowing lower quality units some chance to hit, where before they had none.

Weapon fire is a matter of cross-referencing your skill with any modifiers and finding the chance to hit. If automatic weapons are used, this will usually be applied to a mass fire table (I'm letting him have the entire clip . . .), which gives a decreasing rate of return for anything more than 5 or 10 rounds. Like most other parts of the game, the rules are designed to give realistic results. You use stupid tactics, you get killed, you stay smart, you might live. If you try to play Rambo, walking down the hall with an M-60, someone will probably just stick the business end of a shotgun around the corner and blow your guts out.

Movement is a simple matter of moving your counter on the map to show position and facing. The maps are based on a square grid, with each movement being a minimum of 2 meters. A bit coarse for some buildings, the map is actually a schematic diagram of the building rather than a visually accurate picture. This scale allows you to clearly see lines of movement and fire, while still giving "context" options. For instance, Unit A is standing with his back against the wall, out of sight of Unit C, who is standing in the hallway, while Unit B is standing half in the open doorway. Looking at this a few times, you can visualize the exact placement of a unit by their facing and situation.



Sequencing of the turn is basically movement and combat, but in any order, and opportunity fire is universal. Each turn, you write down the order in which your units will move, and during each turn, players alternate in this sequence (my #1, your #1 . . .). This allows you to sometimes get out of sticky situations by moving first, or setting units up for complicated actions (#1 blows the lock off, #2 throws the door open and tosses in the stun grenade, #3 guards our backs). If opportunity fire occurs, and it often does, fire is in order of initiative. Initiative is based on the Reaction Level of the unit, their facing regarding the attacker/target and the weapon they use. So, the fact that you are using a full-length rifle in the crowded halls might be offset if the target must turn around to shoot their more convenient pistol. This initiative is one of the key points of the game, as who survives depends a lot of the time on who shoots first. If this part of the game fails, you might as well flush the rest. So, I did a lot of research through various armchair merc magazines, as well as government studies, field manuals and Justice Department publications. The results are quite satisfactory.

The "fog of war" element is taken care of by the use of optional dummy counters. Each "real" unit has a corresponding dummy counter on the map. Dummy counters move, but cannot open doors or do anything physical. If ever spotted by an enemy unit, they disappear. The effect is that both forces are unsure of the enemy positions at first, but as the combat progresses, intelligence of enemy position increases. It also has the beneficial side-effect of encouraging good tactics. You can't just run down a hall if an unknown counter is around the corner or hiding in a closed room, not if you want to live.

Damage results are simple. Most weapons have a damage from 2 (9mm) to 5 (7.62mm), although the scale goes in a non-linear fashion all the way from 1 (.22) to 15 (120mm cannon). Damage subtracts from the Body Points of a unit. Damage to the legs reduces movement, damage to the torso adds 1 BP of damage, and damage to the head is tripled. Extremities can only take a fraction of the weapon damage, making arm and leg "kills" more difficult. Since the average person has 3 or 4 Body Points, incapacitation and death can be very swift for the careless or unlucky. Armor subtracts some damage, and converts some to Bruise Points. Any damage reduces your chance to hit, but Bruise Point damage does so to a lesser degree. Losing Bruise Points may only render you unconscious, important if trying to play a campaign game.

**Looking Back** - To me, CJ was a success. Economically, I made money (but not much). On the "rate the game" reply sheets, it averaged 7.5 on a 1-10 scale, so I feel it succeeded technically. So what if it didn't get me fame and fortune. It is an accurate simulation, and the people who bought it liked it. That is what matters in the end (although fame and fortune are nice, too). If I had to do it over again (and I might), I would have designed CJ as a purely miniatures-based system, with optional rules for map-based play using sheets of 11x17 graph paper. The movement and combat is based on a simple 1/4" grid, and the scale is 1:300, but it could easily be set up with 25mm miniatures and a 1 inch grid, as I did at Atlanticon a few years back. This would have solved a lot of packaging woes, as I wouldn't have needed to include maps and counters and something to put them in. The rules would be a simple bound booklet, somewhat like any other set of miniature rules currently available.

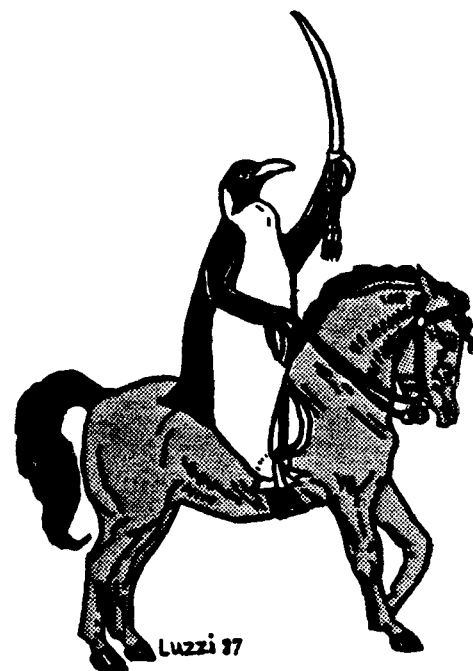
**Looking Ahead** - Should there be sufficient demand or the equally unlikely event of someone else wanting to publish it, CJ will be printed again, using the above guidelines. Also, I have various supplements to the system lying around my file cabinets which I would someday like to see published. The major one is Urban Clash, which is a set of detailed vehicle rules for CJ, allowing custom design of any WWI to present vehicle. Other currently shelved ideas are full vehicle listings (80+ vehicles from WWI to present), SF armor rules, and an autoduelling supplement that can use Car Wars maps (blows Car Wars away, but that's just my opinion), all perfectly interchangeable. Ah well, such are the perils of being a freelance game designer.



# BLACK TIE AFFAIRS: THE GAME OF DIPLOMACY

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## ROCKHOPPER'S SOCKHOP SPRING 03 1987AU

**Austria (Howorth):** A Tri HOLD, A Bul-Ser, A Bud SUPPORT A Tri, A Vie SUPPORT  
A Tri, F Gre-Aeg

**England (Hall):** A Stp-Lvn, A Nwy-Stp, F Bar-Nwy, F Hol HOLD, F Nth-Ska, F  
Lon-Nth

**France (Quirk):** A Naf HOLD, A Bur SUPPORT A Bel-Ruh, A Bel-Ruh, F Wme-MAO, F  
MAO-Iri, F Mar-Lyo

**Germany (Ditter):** A War-Sil, A Sil-Boh, A Mun SUPPORT A Sil-Boh, A Den HOLD, A  
Kie SUPPORT A Den, F Swe-Bal

**Italy (Ozog):** A Ven-Tri, A Tyr SUPPORT A Ven-Tri, F Adr-Alb, F Ion-Tys

**Russia (Hakey):** F Bot SUPPORT ENG A Nwy-Swe (No Such Order)

**Turkey (Nickel):** A Sev-Mos, A Con-Bul, A Ank-Arm, F Rum SUPPORT A Con-Bul, E  
Smy-Aeg

Underlined moves do not succeed. "Tis not in mortals to command success." - Joseph Addison

## SHOUTED OUT THE WINDOW (Press)

**Russia-in-Exile, Bothnia:** "Mind if we sail around until we run out of gas? Actually, the fishing isn't bad here . . . but the winter ice is real chilly. Perhaps we'll scuttle these scows and emigrate to America."

**Vienna:** "A single shot was heard in the palace. 'It appears the War Minister is feeling a little ill. Please remove him from my presence,' the King shouted. The King turned to the Archduke and screamed, 'How could that fool order an attack on the Turks at Sofia?!! Didn't he know of our secret agreement? How could he ignore the devilish Italians massing in the West?' The Archduke looked only at the floor, trying to mumble some explanation. 'That fool may have caused the downfall of us all. Get me a drink. And find me a new War Minister.'"

**Russia-World:** "Due to a request I couldn't turn down, operations supporting an English takeover in Sweden have been initiated. Operations in Livonia have thus been suspended."

**Austria-Turkey:** "Would you believe/accept a simple apology?"

**France-Germany & England:** "With both of you guys living in Minneapolis I felt I had to protect myself. If you haven't attacked me then I will pull back my forces and no harm will have been done."

**Russia-England:** "The curse of Yig?! Cut me some slack."

**Austria-Germany:** "I promise to start writing. Really."

**Italy-Austria:** "I just want to be your Buddy and your pal. Please leave Tri in peace."

**Austria-Italy:** "Now just cool your jets there, young lady. Who knows, I may be too hot to handle."

**Russia-Germany:** "I hope you get what you truly deserve . . . happiness in oblivion."

**Austria-France:** "Now don't go wasting any time. I'm sure Cathy would enjoy a good spanking on her backside."

**Italy-France:** "If there's Frenchmen in Tun it's war, Dude."

**Austria-GM:** "I decided not to NMR, but don't tell my checkbook." *[Your secret's safe with me. . .]*



## THE MAGELLAN COTILLION FALL 03 1987AV

**Austria (Smith):** A Sil-Mun, A Ukr-Rum, A Tri-Vie, A Ser-Bul, A Vie-Tyl, F Gre SUPPORT A Ser-Bul

**England (Rush):** A Yor-Bel, F Den SUPPORT F Kie, F Kie SUPPORT RUS F Bal-Ber, F Nth CONVOY A Yor-Bel

**France (Oaklyn):** A Bur HOLD, A Spa-Naf(impossible), A Pic SUPPORTS A Ruh-Bel (NSO), F Bel HOLD (dislodged; retreat ENG or OFF), F Wme SUPPORTS A Spa-Naf (imp), F Lyo-Tys

**Germany (Hauser):** A Ruh SUPPORT ENG A Yor-Bel, A Pru-Ber, F Hol SUPPORT ENG A Yor-Bel

**Italy (Sabot):** A Mun-Boh, A Tyl SUPPORT A Mun-Boh(cut), A Ven SUPPORT A Tyl, F Tun SUPPORT F Ion-Tys, F Ion-Tys

**Russia (Bowen):** A Mos SUPPORT A War(cut), A Liv SUPPORT A Mos, A War SUPPORT A Mos, F Nwy-Swe, F Bal-Ber

**Turkey (Carli):** A Sev-Mos, A Arm-Sev, F Aeg-Ion, F Bla-Con, F Eme SUPPORT F Aeg-Ion

Underlined moves do not succeed. "The moral flabbiness born of the bitch-goddess SUCCESS. That - with the squalid cash interpretation put on the word success - is our national disease." - William James

AUSTRIA (VIE, BUD, TRI, SER, GRE, RUM, BUL, MUN) 8 BUILD 2  
 ENGLAND (LPL, EDI, LON, DEN, KIE, BEL) 6 BUILD 2  
 FRANCE (MAR, PAR, BRE, SPA, POR) 5 REMOVE 1  
 GERMANY (HOL) 1 REMOVE 2  
 ITALY (VEN, ROM, NAP, TUN) 4 REMOVE 1  
 RUSSIA (WAR, MOS, STP, SWE, NWY, BER) 6 BUILD 1  
 TURKEY (CON, SMY, ANK, SEV) 4 REMOVE 1

Please note **Derwood Bowen's** Change of Address, in the Invitations, above. And thanks to **Jack Carli** for rightly pointing out that his fleet Aegean did not make it into the Ionian last turn. Although underlined moves do not succeed, some non-underlined moves apparently don't, either.

### WHISPERED IN THE HALLS (Press):

**London-Berlin:** "Thanks for getting back to me. Better late than never and let's hope this works."  
**Russia-Austria:** "Silesia is an interesting place to be. What gives?"  
**London Times:** "The Parliament today stood and applauded for twenty minutes when they learned that the French fleets had headed northeast (along with that small plane). However, the general feeling here is that having a French fleet in Holland is intolerable."  
**Italy-World:** "FLASH - a small plane was seen overhead making strafing runs, killing women and children. When last seen this small plane was heading EAST. We now resume our regular programming."  
**Russia-Italy:** "It looks grim for you."  
**Italy-France:** "Ouch!! Thank you, may I have another . . . Ouch!! Thank you, may I have another . . . Ouch!! Thank you, may I have another . . ."  
**Wales-Munich:** "Support, support, my kingdom for support! (Ooops, sounds like a slogan for a bra commercial)."  
**St. Pete-London:** "Headroom was cancelled. So no more here."  
**England-AIT:** "The information was genuine. I hope you followed suit."  
**Italy-Austria:** "*Et tu Brute?*"  
**Russia-Board:** "Max Headroom was cancelled by the Network. Too bad."  
**Rush-Smith:** "Sounds good. If you ease up on Russia, I'll agree."  
**Rush-Carli:** "You sounded good too. Ditto what I said to Smith. The first of you that gets back to me has the inside track. Of course, if I'm promised a date with Heather Locklear I'll do anything."  
**Tsar "Slim" Bowen:** "There are severe complaints about the lack of catfish in the Volga River. Russian wildlife experts are against importing them, but being Tsar cancels that one."  
**Bettendorf-Everyone:** "I hope you all had a Merry Xmas. I've enjoyed playing with all of you."



## THE EMPEROR'S BALL      WINTER 03      1987AK

**England (Hopcroft):** Has A Swe, F Ska  
**France (Sargent):** BUILD F MAR. Has A Boh, A Pie, F MAO, F Lpl, F Wme, F Mar  
**Germany (Schenck):** BUILD A MUN, F BER. Has A Kie, A Lon, A Gal, A Mun, F Edi, F Nth, F Den, F Ber  
**Italy (F. Anderson):** BUILD F NAP. Has A Tyl, A Trl, F Adr, F Tys, F Nap  
**Russia (Holley):** BUILD A MOS. Has A Bud, A Vie, A Sil, A Fin, A Mos, F Bal, F Rum  
**Turkey (E. Anderson):** Has A Ser, A Bul, F Gre, F Aeg, F Eas, F Ion

Underlined moves do not succeed. "Surely we should find it both touching and inspiring, that in a field from which success is banished, our race should not cease to labour." - Robert Louis Stevenson



Thanks, and 1 free issue, to **JackMcHugh** for unused standby orders - his press is below.

### OVERHEARD AT THE BALL (Press):

**Turkey-France:** "I'm sorry for all the unsolicited advice; but I knew you'd only ask if Germany told you to. One last hint: you are allowed to write to anybody in the game!"

**Germany-English Standby:** "**OH NO, NOT YOU AGAIN!!!!**"

**Standby King Jack-Czarina Melinda:** "A date or I sack St. Petel!"

**Standby King Jack-6M:** "Is that an opening line or what?!"

**Germany-6M:** "C'mon Stephen, have a heart! This guy McHugh is already frying my gizzards in more games than I care to count. He's even made me draw up plans for a special Jack McHugh Fan Club. We're going to call it JACK'S OLD GUARD, to give it that Neopolitan flavor, ooops, I mean Napoleonic flavor. It's a very exclusive group -- you have to be one of Jack's special toadies to be admitted."

**Turkey-Italy:** "Is it true what Germany says, that you leaned too far off a tower of Pizza, fell on your pepperoni, and lost the ability to write?"

**Byzantine Buzz:** "There actually is life after pizza. A large anchovy was seen flopping away from the collapse, the words 'free passage' hissing from his dying gills. Meanwhile, in the far north, the last remnant of the great kippered herring fleet was seen drifting out to sea. Apparently no one was on board, for the hulk was covered with squabbling sea-birds of all sorts. If no penguins, there was at least an arctic tern in grey morning suit to add a touch of class to the fracas."

**German News Agency:** "**AUSTRIAN KAISERIN SEEKS ASYLUM IN BAVARIA** (Noblische Nieuws, February 12, 1904): Today the ex-Kaiserin of Austria-Hungary applied for and received an indefinite visa to stay in Bavaria. 'I've always loved this part of Germany. And that nice Prince Repprecht or Rupprecht or whatever the hell his name is has offered to let me stay in his castle in Neuschwanstein, you know, the one on all the travel posters, oh it's just divine, I don't know what to say, he's such a nice man, and oh, I love all you Germans -- you people are just the greatest,' the Kaiserin droned on and on, forgetting for the moment that Prince Rupert, er, Rupturt, or whatever, was also known as the Mad Prince of Bavaria.

The recently deposed Austrian monarch had little to say about the recent disasters in Vienna that led to the collapse of her relatively enlightened rule, the installation of the repressive pro-Tsarist regime of the Herschke Andruiczkeit, the flight of capital, her flight from the capital, and her dramatic border crossing. 'Oh, heck, I left all that military stuff up to my generals. What do I know about armies and fleets and stuff like that? Besides, this country was sick when I inherited it from Kaiser Ours, so you can't blame me for trusting the Italian demon, can you? I mean I can't make mountains out of molehills, or bring the molehills to Muhammed, er, you know what I mean."

**Kaiser Schtupidshitz-Russia:** "Listen, Tsarina, or whatever your name is, don't think I don't notice your sly little digs about me being greedy. I'm greedy?!? You should talk, you destroyer of Austrian civilization, you mindless scavenger of all that is right, proper, and pure in this world, you unmentionable unspoken of an unforeseen unknowableness, you locus of all evil in the modern world, you, (sputter), you, Russian, you!"

**Telegrams Received By Austrian Kaiserin (Presently Residing In Bavaria):** "(from Kaiser Schtupidshitz): My dear, you have my deepest condolences. While you sure screwed Austria up (umph, excuse me) . . . While you experienced difficulty keeping your act together (no, wait a minute) . . . While due to circumstances beyond your control Austria was wrested from you (that's better), trust that I will not rest till the day the Russian Schwein-pups are replaced by the peaceful German Jackboot (Harumph. If I do say so myself.)

(from Dragonstooth): DEAR KK STOP HAVE REMOVED YOU FROM RATING SYSTEM STOP RECENT POOR SHOWING IN 87AK RESPONSIBLE STOP DONT LET THIS DISCOURAGE YOU HOWEVER STOP DONT STOP

(from Frederico, King of Italy): Sorry, KK. The Sultan made me do it.

(from Anchorage, Alaska): Tough luck, schweetheart. Now I'll never write you!

(from the Tsarina): Let all the world tremble before the awesome power of Russian arms. May nations everywhere melt before the iron fist of Melindavitch, Tsarina of all the Russians (and more and more Europeans). Ha! Foolish weaklings! I shall crush you all like the little maggots you truly are! Ha, Ha!!! Bow down before me, Me, ME, **ME**, ruler of all I survey! Ha, ha, HA, HAAA!!! (ack) Ha ha (ack, cough), (gag) (retch) ha (aaagh) (choke) (gak).

(from the Tsarina, sometime later): (Gak) I revel in pain and suffering. I cause pain and suffering. I am Shiva, destroyer of worlds. I am the thing under the bed, I am your every nightmare, I am another standby call in REBEL!

(from the Tsarina's Mom and Dad): Kathy, we are so sorry for the evil our daughter did to you. She was always a hateful child -- we can only pray that some day she will be brought to justice."



## KING BASH

FALL 02

1987CP

**Austria (Addison):** (A Bul retreats Ser) A Gre SUPPORT A Ser-Bul, A Ser-Bul, A Tri-Ven, A Tyl SUPPORT A Tri-Ven, F Aeg SUPPORT RUS F Bla-Con, F Adu-Adu

**England (Schlosser):** A Bel SUPPORT FRE A Bur, A Yor-Den, F Nwy SUPPORT F Nth, F Hel SUPPORT A Yor-Den, F Nth CONVOY A Yor-Den

**France (Rigley):** A Mar-Pie, A Bur SUPPORT ENG A Bel, A Par SUPPORT A Bur, F MAO-Wme, F Lyo-Tys

**Germany (S. Sabol?):** **NMR!** A Hol HOLD, A Ruh HOLD, A Kie HOLD, A Mun HOLD, E Den HOLD(dislodged; retreat SKA, BAL, or OFF)

**Italy (Carroll):** A Ven HOLD(dislodged; retreat TUS, ROM, or OFF), A Apu SUPPORT A Ven(cut), F Ion-Adr, F Tys-Ion

**Russia (Lutterbie):** A Rum SUPPORT AUS A Ser-Bul, A Sev-Arm, A War-Pru, A Sil-Ber, F Swe SUPPORT ENG A Yor-Den, F Bla-Con

**Turkey (Sabnis?):** **NMR!** A Smy HOLD, A Con HOLD(dislodged; retreat ANK or OFF), F Bul(ec) HOLD(dislodged; retreat BLA or OFF)

Underlined moves do not succeed. "To burn always with this hard, gemlike flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life." -Walter Pater

Would **MICHAEL GONSALVES**, of 1401 Haven Road #T-6, Hagerstown, MD 21740-3071, please stand by for **TURKEY** and **PETE GAUGHAN** of 3121 East Park Row #165, Arlington, TX 76010-3744 for **GERMANY?** And everybody should note that **Bob Addison** has a Change of Address, above.

AUSTRIA (VIE, TRI, BUD, SER, BUL, GRE, VEN) 7 BUILD 1

ENGLAND (EDI, LPL, LON, Nwy, BEL, DEN) 6 BUILD 1

FRANCE (BRE, PAR, MAR, POR, SPA) 5 EVEN

GERMANY (KIE, MUN, HOL) 3 REMOVE 2

ITALY (ROM, NAP, TUN) 3 REMOVE 1

RUSSIA (STP, SEV, WAR, MOS, RUM, SWE, CON, BER) 8 BUILD 2

TURKEY (SMY, ANK) 2 REMOVE 1

## NATTERINGS OF THE COURT (Press)

**Emperor of France-Russia:** "First it will be Warsaw and then China. And once I'm done there, maybe Japan. But I'll find that writer of yours that insulted France and when I do first it will be his toes then his leg and so on and so on. . ."

**France-Moscow:** "I told you that I know it's all in fun but the Emperor took it very personal. And I'll do what I can to make him see things our way "

**Serbia:** "Turkey feels expansive at Thanksgiving, but he sure would have done better if he would have stayed home."

**Trieste:** "Austrians are now boosting their income by the production of Venician blinds."

Deadline for all games is **JANUARY 30.**



**GATECRASHERS** (Mark Weseman, Jon Fleischman, Kathy Caruso, Eric Anderson, Jack McHugh). A standby pays no game fees, receives sub credit for submitting moves and upon playing a position to completion so let me know if you want on (or off) this list, now open to current players, too.

**GAME OPENING!** Still looking for three more players to fill out a new regular Diplomacy gamestart. Since we didn't fill immediately with newcomers, this one'll be open to current players, too.

Stephen H. Dorneman  
95 Federal Street #2  
Lynn, MA 01905-2230



**FIRST CLASS**

Rod Walker  
1273 Creet Dr.  
Encinites, CA 92024

Sub Ends #: 19

## THE BACK PAGE

With the start of a new year the 1988 Presidential race is shifting into high gear, a wide open race on both the Republican and Democrat sides for the first time in my memory. And making an already exciting contest even more interesting, Gary Hart has re-entered the pack, returning to the front-runner position in some polls despite his previous indiscretions. Although I'll strongly defend his right to run for President (along with the 202 other candidates registered with the Federal Election Commission), I can't bring myself to wish him luck.

It's not that I'm so prudish as to think that a person who has had sex with someone other than their legal spouse is not qualified for the highest office in the land. (I may not be a Kennedy Worshipper like many other people in Massachusetts, but I thought he did a good job in the time that he had.) I even like the image of a Don Juan turned Don Quixote, tilting with the windmills without a campaign organization or warchest. Although I am somewhat worried that Hart may think of women more as things to be used than as people, (Aside from his behavior with Donna Rice, witness his remark about how he expected his wife, Lee, to support him in the new campaign, "It got down to how much abuse she was willing to take.") it's not that that really worries me.

What really worries me is that Hart arrogantly challenged the press to pry into his personal life, then didn't have sense or will enough to stop his self-destructive behavior, and then lied about what he had done.

Some say that the "Character Issue" has been emphasized enough already, that it's the issues that count. I strongly disagree. Position papers are made by committee, budgets are cranked through computers, but in a crisis situation, the President puts up or shuts up because of one thing. His or her character.