

Perelandra #120

edited by Pete Gaughan

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Among the Trees

by Pete Gaughan

• The NHL playoffs dominated ESPN for a few weeks, and all that exposure made me a hockey fan. The game has in fact changed since I watched it in the '70s, and I found myself (once the Sharks were eliminated) rooting for the New York Rangers. As one broadcaster said, if they hadn't won the Cup (after 54 years without it), the Chicago Cubs and White Sox and Boston Red Sox could have turned in their charters right away—there would have been no hope for their curses!

• Baseball—wonderful thought: if there's a strike tomorrow, it leaves my Dodgers and my Indians both in first place. But coming up fast in the Tribe's Central division, here's a weird tidbit, courtesy of ESPN—Twins' performance after their most wretched years:

year	record	next year's outcome
1986	71-91	World Series champs
74-88	World Series champs	
71-91	???	

• Soccer: Of course, now I'm into the World Cup coverage—I've watched some of every Cup since 1978 (when I was watching from Austria!) even if it meant watching Spanish-language stations. (But in my usual stubbornness, I don't watch reruns; I was surprised when Mark Lew said on the phone, "Gotta get back to the soccer" because I was ignoring the tape-delay, typing this instead.) I was pulling for Ireland, though the Americans were making that difficult by playing as well as they can rather than as well as they usually do.

Sports chat is starting to really accumulate in this zine, isn't it? I promise to mix things up a bit more, it's just the backlog of letters combined with the recent addition of McBruce that leans us a little to the athletic side.

• Saw some statistics recently on how computerized our society has become (see my remarks in *Zine Register* 23 for comparison): 33% of American households have a personal computer, and 75% of households say their kids are using 'em. But 25% of pc buys have a significant breakdown in the first year (we've been spared, touch wood). Macintosh is 20% of sales but 35% of home-use machines. 55% of adults use a pc daily at work.

• I'm abandoning America Online. I have signed up for an account on Netcom, which is a traditional Internet node, using UNIX commands in a text interface. I still have the irishpete@aol.com account in case I foul something up but as soon as I learn enough UNIX I'll cancel AOL. Use the netcom address, please:
gaughan@netcom.com

Heat Wave

After two weeks in the low 80s, including gorgeous weather the days we actually loaded up the truck and

moved to Beverly Concord, today (that's June 2) the sun got mad and cooked up the hottest day of the year. 100°F in Concord (also 100° back in our old stomping ground of Novato).

And it also turned out to be the first day I truly felt at home in our new abode. Not because of the apartment—I simply don't depend on place so much for peace of mind. But things like trees, skyline, street familiarity, all came together that day.

Now (towards the end of June) it feels very much like home, in modern ways (I am calculating drive times from here unconsciously now) and in ancient ones (I can look up a street and know what type of birds to expect). Concord has a lot more variety of trees than Novato, even though it's more urban. There are only 100,000 people here (twice that of Novato), but there are real high-rises and more dense development and fewer outlying ranches. Novato is a true suburb, while Concord is more of a satellite city or exurb.

Next-door Walnut Creek gives it a run for its money. Each has a BART subway station, a half-dozen office parks and a renovated downtown business district. Concord has the big amphitheater and the legitimate theater, while Walnut Creek has the natural history museum/raptor rehab center (always a big plus in my book!).

Cathy can say that our new apartment looks bigger than the old one, but to me it looks about the same size, despite being smaller. The patio/balcony is much smaller, but the living room, kitchen, and dining area all open into each other. We have fir and spruce trees on the properties surrounding us, but the complex itself is mostly dogwood (I imagine my hay fever will be quite intolerable next spring!), including a few really large monsters—this development has been here a while.

In the 'more urban' category, we're a mile from either the main shopping strip or the BART station, in an apartment ghetto. I said last month that the neighborhood is 'more ethnic' than Novato (honestly, any place would be) and Don Williams rightly took me to task for that phrase. What I meant was that there is an even mix of all types here, so much so that I can't characterize the area as primarily Hispanic or primarily black. I would guess that each of those groups comprise more than a third of the total, but we also have Asians and a restaurant check would indicate that many of them are Korean or Thai. (And our complex has at least four young, white Mormon missionaries!)

I have described how my work load increased when my father had his recent heart attack. (He's rehabbing fine, thanks for asking.) The latest development is now three months old—he fired the other salesman he had working for him. Well and good (the guy lasted a year longer than I thought he would) but that leaves Dad and me dividing all of Northern California between us, and Dad is not supposed to be on the road. He rehabs three times a week, which pretty much rules out overnight trips, and gets tired if he's in a car or store (combined) for more than about six hours.

So I now call on camera stores from Fresno to the Oregon border. Dad took the I-80 corridor to Sacramento and Reno, and the Monterey peninsula, because there are only a couple of accounts in those two large geographical sections. But I'm driving all over. It has increased my income—good thing with my wife on unemployment—but mileage, meals and other costs go up as well. All of last year I think I had two overnights—this year I have four already and two more scheduled before summer is out.

As I've picked up more business, I've tried to move Repts Etc! into a more professional style of sales. Cellular phones are now a standard tool of the trade, but I won't go that far—we won't even get pagers for the time being, since calling in to our answering machines each midday seems to make us just about as accessible as we care to be. But we have taken one giant step, one which

most photographic reps haven't taken: we have 800 numbers. Another cost, but one which should help generate sales by keeping down customer complaints. We won't actually get more orders because the call is free—dealers decide what to buy first—but when there's a problem, they usually call the vendor/manufacturer because they have an 800 number (and because they know the vendor's office is staffed but we might be out in the field). If it's not solved quickly, we salesmen might not find out about it until weeks later, when the dealer is mad enough that they don't want to ever do business again. We hope dealers will keep us 'in the loop' more by enticing them to call us first.

Anyway, the short version of what this is getting to is: Part of my 'new' territory is the Sierras, so I went to Yosemite this week! First time in nearly two years; almost three years since Cathy went, but I had to make this trip alone. I only spent one day in the park, and the time before 2pm was full of meetings with various store managers (I sold enough to break even on the motel and meals); but I got to spend four hours visiting favorite sit-and-think-and-write spots around the valley. Among other things, I spent an hour watching climbers on the face of El Capitan (through binoculars, of course!).

A folk group we discovered last time we were in Yosemite has a tape out. They are called Mariposa, and the tape is *First Light of Dawn*. The music is true folk, with a couple of political tunes (the death of the Hopi nation for uranium, and the executions of Sacco and Vanzetti) but the 'mountain music' really gets to me. The song "And From Now On" always brings tears to my eyes; it's a two-verse ballad about remembering someone who has died and is better than anything Bob Dylan has ever written. There's a tune devoted to the life of one of my personal heroes, John Muir, and the lead track, "Mariposa Home" (from which comes both the group's name and the album title) will remind you of Mary Travers (you know, Peter Paul & Mary?) backed up by k.d. lang.

It's on Catalpa Records, a small label but well worth struggling to get: Box 1314, Santa Cruz CA 95601-1314. We sent \$10 as a 'donation' to buy them studio time and got our tape, so I would guess that's enough to buy the tape, and Mariposa seems like a group of peaceful people deserving of support.

Steven McKinnon sent me a tape this month, full of music he enjoys which he thought I might like (for instance, none of his heavy metal favorites). Steven, I thank you mucho. I enjoyed side A more than B; Waterboys, Cranberries and Melissa Etheridge ("Baby You Can Sleep While I Drive") would make a nice collage by themselves! Only problem I could foresee: that Delores O'Riordan's yodeling lead for Cranberries could get tiresome, but for the three songs I've got she's wonderful.

Side B (Peter Murphy, the Breeders and a couple of others) will take some more listening to. But thanks!

Quote of the Month

"The big question is why the below-cost timber barons and gentlemen ranchers get to be 'free market advocates' and the small-business people and wage-earners who dominate the environmental movement have to be 'watermelons' (green on the outside but red inside).

That our opponents make specious economic arguments is no reason for us to forego valid ones. That they equate 'free market' with government subsidies is no reason for us to shun market-based techniques when they are effective."

Chris Gehlker of Phoenix, letter to *Sierra* magazine

internet funnies

I've really come to enjoy the newsgroup "alt.folklore.urban"—the latest common urban legends revolve around Snapple (being owned by some devious conspir-

The Roar of the Greasepaint

(the letter column)

John Galt

Update on the neighborhood: The drug house door was bulldozed by the county in January, and it seemed to really clean things up for a month or two. But a lot of the same crowd are back now. For this and other reasons, I'm looking for a place in San Jose.

Now, now that everybody knows we have enacted "Three Strikes" (and there's a federal bill that would do the same thing): I wrote it here first. (And the real thing is weaker than I would have made it, but it will help.)

Not to bear the subject to death, but I wonder what *Pere's* readers think of caning as punishment for vandalism? [Brent's letter below seems to summarize the consensus here.] I'm for it.

[Later:] There's a new chapter in the home situation: Two weeks ago, my car was broken into while parked at home. They got nearly all my games, plus some groceries. (I'd gotten home late Sunday night and didn't feel safe unloading it then.) Since it happened at home, it's all supposedly covered by insurance (though they want receipts for EVERYTHING), but for me it's the last straw. I've put an alarm on the car, with a pager, and keep a loaded gun under my pillow. I hope they try again.

[I responded that I wished him well, and since he lives alone I knew he wouldn't be injured by this gun, but to be sure that he didn't wind up in jail for using it. John responded:]

I've already thought of all that. Here is the relevant law as I understand it.

1. It's legal to have a loaded gun inside your home, your place of business (if any), at the shooting range, or anywhere while in the process of making a citizen's arrest. Otherwise you need a carry permit.

2. Actually shooting someone requires that you be in immediate danger—but the law presumes this danger if someone has broken into your home, or is committing certain other felonies. This would not apply to someone breaking into a car outside the home. So I can use the gun to arrest and hold someone until police arrive, but if I shoot I'm in trouble.

Several other states, the closest being Arizona, have more permissive laws on both points. I know people who've moved there for that reason, and I may consider it but not yet.

Brent McKee

I see that you'll be printing a letter about the Singapore case. Without seeing Daf's letter I'll put my two cents in. Basically I come down on both sides of the issue.

First of all, to claim that the kid involved should not have been caned because he's an American and Americans feel such punishment is cruel and unusual hearkens back to the days of colonial empires. Literally. The legal theory was called "extraterritoriality," which basically meant that a westerner charged with a crime in China would be tried by a court in his own country and if convicted would be punished according to the laws of his country rather than by Chinese law. The principle has been discredited for so many years that to hear it brought up again is astonishing. My feeling in this case is that if he did the crime, and he did plead guilty, he is bound to accept the punishment of the country. If he didn't do the crime then his, or his parents', decision to be guilty qualifies as rank failure to understand the way they were dealing with.

On the other side, I would not like to see that particular punishment used in North America, as some legislators and many people on the street are suggesting. I honestly don't believe that there is a deterrent effect. By

which I mean that I don't think it will stop anyone from doing things the first time. I mean, Canada used to whip rapists. Until the late sixties there was a whipping post at the Prince Albert Penitentiary that was in regular use. It didn't stop people from committing rape, and it didn't stop people from committing rapes after they had been released. It was not an effective punishment. I don't think caning would be effective either. It may work in Singapore, but then there are a lot of things that work in Singapore that wouldn't work here. In case you didn't know it, Singapore is a police state masquerading under the trappings of democracy. There's a major fine for chewing gum for heaven's sake. They keep such a tight rein on publishers, and also on copy shops, that most American newspapers would be closed down. So for that matter, would both my zine, *Making Love in a Canoe*, and *Perelandra*. Singapore is very low on the list of places where I'd be willing to live, and I don't like the idea of implementing some of their ideas over here. Especially their ideas of penology.

Daf Langley

I didn't realize Cathy was so depressed over losing her job. Is she still on Prozac? Is it something she will be able to get off of, or is it a maintenance kind of thing? Tell her to hang in there. My mom once told me that you have to let go of the wheel of life when things seem to go wrong all around you. You must take a deep breath and let go and find out where you will settle. If

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you hold on to things too tightly, be it a job search, or a parent's death, or whatever, you don't leave yourself open to new possibilities. I'm not saying drop out of life, just don't stress yourself out on the things over which you have no control. Get out your resumes, make sure your answering machine works and let it go. Don't worry if no one calls the first day. There is a job just made for you out there. Believe that and all the rest will take care of itself.

[I hasten to say that I don't think Cathy's depression was due to being laid off. It didn't help, and is certainly frustrated and angered her, but she was down because of a large black hole in her life, part of which was her mother's death a year ago. Having dealt with that extensively in counselling, and having gotten over the initial shock at being laid off, she's doing much better. Richard Weiss wrote us quite a bit about Prozac (see below), both from doctor and patient perspectives, so we feel good about her taking it; it is a maintenance drug but that doesn't mean it's permanent.]

You should definitely go see *Schindler's List*. I think everyone should. It is a breathtaking movie. It will make you cry, but it will also leave you uplifted. That is the beauty of the movie. Out of the horror comes a message of hope. I think Spielberg deserves two Oscars for the job he did. Please don't fail to see it because you think it is just a parade of atrocities. It is so much more.

So, what did you think of the uproar about the kid being caned in Singapore? Is it just me, or was it arrogant of our country to presume to dictate what a country should do with its criminals? Yes, what he did would pass unnoticed in the U.S., but the kid wasn't in the U.S. I think the parents should have been better informed about the laws and I think they do their son a disservice with all this "Oh he didn't mean to do it" crap they are flooding the newspapers with. I think it was gra-

vious of the Singapore government to reduce the sentence to four lashes. As a side note, I read in the paper about a woman who was sentenced to 80 lashes for prostitution in Iran. It ran in a little two-column blurb in the middle of the first section of the paper. Now, what are we to construe from this? A. Lashing is not as bad as caning? B. Caning a young man for vandalism is worse than lashing a young woman for prostitution? Or is it C. that the young man has parents with bigger vocal cords than the young woman did? I am hoping that it is not because the case in Iran involved a woman and the case in Singapore involved a man.

[I believe we don't have a right to tell other countries what they should do with their criminals—but we should not be engaged in relations with those who clearly go too far. The Chinese imprison people for their political beliefs, and I think we should cut off all trade and exchange with them because of that. I would drastically curtail our joint programs with Singapore. While I was in college, my Singaporean friends said they couldn't get out of the country fast enough.

[As for newspaper coverage, yeah it's mostly a good campaign by Fey's parents. I didn't see the prostitution story so I will assume that's an American woman you're talking about. (If not, then the cause boils down very simply to "It's news if it happens to an American.") I think everyone knew that Iran is a severe punisher, and that prostitution would be a huge crime there because it is a religious state. Corporal punishments for vandalism, and in a more Western country is more surprising, hence more 'newsworthy'.]

On a nature note. Is there any other bird around that looks like a bald eagle flying except for a bald eagle flying? I saw a bird flying around downtown Seattle the other day. It was big (compared to the gulls flying around it), it had dark feathers with ruffles at the tips and it had a white head. The reason I am asking is that I have never seen one in the downtown area before. The gulls were swooping at it and the eagle? just kept spiralling higher and higher, leaving the gulls behind. It was certainly a sight to see. And do female bald eagles have white heads as well as males?

[The only bird in North America with the all-dark-but-white-head pattern is the adult Bald Eagle. Golden Eagles are as large, but are dark all over; young eagles of both species have mottled white in various parts of their bodies but only adult Balds have the white head. And the description you give (much larger than gulls, ignoring their 'attacks', circling higher without apparent effort) is entirely eagle-like. Bald Eagle sexes look identical; none of my references even comments on whether one gender is larger than the other.]

Richard Weiss

This [118] was a great issue of *Perelandra*. Thanks. A bit more humor and involvement then in some of the more recent, and lots of all the other good stuff.

Cathy, here's hoping that the job hunting goes quickly. There is every reason to internalize being turned down for a job—they rejected you. However, there are lots of ways to minimize the rejection via rationalization—since it is true that they rejected you based solely upon factors which really aren't your personhood. But, when's the last time that you know somebody got hired based upon personality?!

Sounds like where I'm moving and where y'all are moving will be closer together than previously. I don't know if y'all have received *Zero Sum* yet, but I'm moving to Walnut Creek. Eventually I'll be working in Alamo and out of John Muir Hospital. I'll be saving some money living there, and it's even cheaper on the side of Contra Costa where y'all be looking. Sounds very rational to me. Good luck with that. One of the personal benefits I imagine will be some low-key FTF games, choo-choos, etc.

...

But maybe that's partially because I share some depression, anxiety and ruminating qualities with what you seemed to express in your column, Cathy. I've taken Prozac off and on for maybe 5 years, since I went to a psych to see why I was so critical, and to try to make personality changes to save my marriage. One marriage and three jobs later, I think I've come to understand how much is biological. Even as a doctor, as a previous therapist, as one who treats lots and lots and lots of people with anti-depressives and anxiolytics I still project some pejorative thoughts on the pharmacist if I get a prescription filled, etc.

Nothing is single factorial with people. Lets use "depression" as a term to signify all of the diseases in DSM-III (psychiatric diagnoses) and as a model. Sure, some people think or will themselves to be depressed. Sure, some people have a variety of life events that change them, and make them sad. And sometimes these overwhelm the homeostatic balance of the psyche, but, probably that is through rearranging the chemical balance of the brain. Probably the neurotransmitters, those little chemicals that shuttle back and forth between brain cells, and make a form of wiring system to connect certain cells, so that when one fires it excites/fires another, probably these get imbalanced. This can be due to genetics, due to drug exposures, life events, or the random fluctuation that to occur to those who are biologically sensitive / predisposed. Usually it is a combination of those and support systems one has developed which decide whether is sad or depressed or catatonic or chugs along.

As the chemicals (neurotransmitters) get out-of-balance, then the emotions and the thoughts get out of balance (Actually, I am on the side of psychology which is now coming back in vogue, the James-Lang theory of emotion, that most "emotions" are cognitive labels for complex hormonal and neurochemical balances which can receive different "emotional labels" based upon the external events and the thoughts, so maybe emotions are thoughts, but that is another long article which I might write sometime. My favorite example is "guilt," which is almost purely cognitive, as a "teaser" for what I may write). (I think the idea of periods outside of parentheses is absurd, maybe I'm misusing punctuation here. As I age I think less highly of the "rules" of life I labored so hard to get "A's" on in school so that I could be a good life-liver and more highly of common-sense and adaptation. I guess that's another article). When the chemicals and thoughts get out of balance, there are 3 "proven" methods in the Western world to improve the depression (other societies can "prove" that their medicine person is successful, also): one is lots of exercise. I would say that 40 minutes 6 times a week of sustained rapid heart beat, huffing, and puffing and sweating is "lots." A second is psychotherapy. A third is drugs.

Only one of these is believed to have long-term efficacy and reduce the rate of "recidivism" / recurrence of the depression and that is drugs. Unfortunately, because of the "wiring-system" that seems to develop, the more occurrences of depression, the worse the condition gets and the less likely it is to resolve or be treatable. So current thought is to encourage you (all of us) to stay on the drugs as long as feasible, probably a minimum of two years, so that a good wiring system can develop and happy and flexible and effective coping/adaptations can be wired to the cells which interpret "emotions" in the brain.

I heartily recommend the "Prozac" book. Unfortunately one of the side effects for me of Prozac is poor incorporation of items into my long-term memory and so I can't remember the exact title or the author. *[[Living with Prozac]]* Also, I gave it to Alexandra so she could better understand why I take Prozac, and whether or not she should be worried that the "me" she knows and loves is not the "me" I really am interpret that as the "me off Prozac." I think this poor incorporation into

long-term memory is because I don't really give a shit, and so do not ruminate over the thought, and therefore don't practice it enough to be able to recall it easily. Sort of like if one were taking Prozac in school and didn't really care enough to study those spelling words by writing them out 10 times and then repeating it ad nauseam. My brain has happier thoughts than repeating some fact often enough to be able to recall it upon demand, and sometimes even gets into the more "Zen" or Tao state of just being in the present. This state is quite an experience for those of us who are anxious ruminators. And truthfully, I can't get anyone to talk about it enough so that I can figure out how often anyone is without words in their brain.

How about it, how often do you have no thoughts, no words, in your brain? While you are awake? And how often are those words that are there, not really a form of projection unto another of their opinion of you, a form of self-evaluation through self-consciousness. Ah, for the non-narcissists out-there, I'm curious.

So, Cathy, keep losing the weight. Take the Prozac a long time. Enjoy the trees and the birds and your sweet love-toady/slave. Get a job after a while and buy that house.

Pete, I find that it is politically incorrect to care how Alexandra looks, to think less of her without a flashy dress or makeup or "come-fuck-me" shoes, etc (hey, that's a woman's term for certain styles of clothes... lots of women's terms), or want her to lose those 8 pounds that she's put on, etc. Do you find that you are having politically-incorrect thoughts? Weight is also a health issue and obesity is one of the worst chronic diseases effecting American society/longevity. Those genes

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that helped forebearers to survive during starvation periods by having been able to store calories as fat are no longer adaptive.

[[I wrestled with the idea of leaving that paragraph out but since neither Richard nor I object to having this topic sprawled across these pages, ... Yes, I have 'politically incorrect' thoughts, in the sense of objectifying women. Very nearly all the time. But I have never thought less of anyone for not being sexy. Some parts of my wish for Cathy to lose weight is I think she'll be sexier, but her longevity and self-image are bigger reasons, and frankly I will fantasize about her and about others whether she loses or gains weight.]]

Obesity is starting to get out of the "willpower" category of disease and into an accepted diagnosis and treatable with a variety of modalities. Drugs to treat obesity are achieving increasing respect as weighted towards the benefit side of the risk-benefit equation. I've recently started using drugs for those with comorbid conditions from their obesity (other diseases related to the obesity or which make the obesity itself a more serious risk for yet another "disease or event" such as a heart attack, or a stroke, or the development of overt diabetes, etc. Like high blood pressure and diabetes and other chronic diseases, obesity is a chronic disease that takes lifetime treatment, and that treatment may be better with the use of certain drugs. As the pharmaceutical industry develops even better drugs, there may be wide-spread acceptance of the value and necessity to treat obesity with drugs.

Major change of topic here. I like Jon Carroll *[[whose column was plugged in issue 118]]* a lot. In fact, he is my favorite columnist of all time, anywhere that I've ever lived, or the numerous newspapers and maga-

zine that I've read regularly over the years. I've given him at least one positive comment in Zero Sum and am glad to see that you've commented on him. I wonder if he syndicated in anyway beyond the Bay.

The year-long ennui of the baseball season is part of what makes it fun. It is also what makes a pennant winner something special. However, who the winner the World Series is often not the "best" team in baseball. That has to do with the very low winning percentage in baseball, the parity between the teams and the totally huge factor of luck which enters into a short series. It also has to do with the factor that there is no way to determine who "best" is anyway. Let's take two teams with which you are well familiar—the Reds and the Dodgers. The Reds in the early 70's won 70 of their first 98 games, and limped home the rest of the way. They were clearly the BEST team in a long time, for almost one-half of a season, but, were they the best team in August and September (yes, let's return to the World Series happening during the Jewish Holidays like Yom Kippur (eh, Sandy Koufax fan) and not the pagan holidays like Halloween, or soon to be the American holiday of Thanksgiving!)? Were they the best team for the year? There are many similar Dodger stories. How about when the Giants eliminated them from the pennant on the last day of the year. How about, well, enough. The multiple divisions do a number of things to increase the odds that the perceived "Best teams" will not meet in either the league championships or the World Series. Especially the short 5 games series, where luck has even more of a factor. And some teams will be "playoff teams" because they have 2 or 3 good pitchers and the closer, but weren't so good over the long season—sort of like why the Warriors in basketball don't do well in the playoffs after winning tremendous numbers of regular season games, because it takes a different kind of team and game to win in the playoffs—ask the Sharks, they play play-off hockey all year and have a better chance than other teams that don't.

So, baseball has sold out. The likelihood that I will want to watch the playoffs has gone down. It will depend upon whether I perceive the match is close and between good teams that deserve to get to play for the "Best." I realize that this philosophy has been one I've already adopted for basketball and football. I only watch playoff games on TV, and I only watch those that the media has hyped as these being the "best" teams and match-ups.

Actually, after the 1993 Super Bowl win by the Cowboys I quit being a football fan. One, I don't want Alexander to get hurt playing. Two, I'd rooted the Cowboys through two glorious cycles during my 33 years of being a fan, and third, my interests were turning elsewhere.

Someone asked you about Fantasy/Rotisserie baseball and you said that you were not a Roto-head. I am. I think everyone ought to be. In baseball and now in football, there is little to root for in a "team." Probably more so with the Dodgers than with others you can still watch people get drafted and developed and then play into stars; but, why should you like Strawberry and Davis and Golt and Worrell and Butler and DeShields and Wallach etc. And you mention that you are now partly a Rangers fan again because of Will Clark. Being a Rotohead does away with all that pretense of still caring about a team, when half the team wasn't "your team" last year. I still care about Lance Johnson, even though he's not on my team anymore, but because he was. I can root for Mark Portugal still this year without feeling disloyal if I had been an Astros fan, and the same with Mark Grace next year when he leaves the Cubbies for richer payrolls. You could still be an unabashed Will Clark fan.

Personally, I hope that hockey and basketball don't follow the lead of baseball and now football and allow

too much player movement. Hey, the Sharks at the beginning of the year had more than half of their roster as new players. But, the important ones were the same, and lots of the new ones were draft picks. But, a few trades here and there are OK, just not too many. In a those leagues that allow so much player move- have become roto-leagues. Who can George and buy at auction—only the auction is not equal like roto. So, while reality is busy trying to imitate fantasy, join a fantasy league!

[[Great great stuff, Richard—thanks. The apolitical support for Prozac is the first I've seen—most people pushing it have seemed either like fanatics or weary doctors trying to find a quick fix.

[[I'm just too old to change my spots. When I play a game, I want to succeed or fail based on my ability, not someone else's (such as a 'drafted' fantasy player); and I will never lose interest in 'my' teams (Dodgers, Indians) just because they turn over personnel. Used to be guys moved around as the team's whim, now they move at the players' whim—no big difference to me.]]

Andy York

Now, time to go through the latest *Perelandra*. I liked the newspaper style for the front cover. Quite impressive, when can we expect it on our local news-stands!!

Jumping into the LetterCol, I think I can help clear some light on the parents being classified as criminals. Here in Texas, the word is getting around the schools that you can "get back" at your parents by claiming they are abusing you. If they spank you, complain to Child Welfare (who are obligated to investigate). Even if the parent is found to be in the right (and most times it comes down to "he said, she said"), there is a stigma attached. The parents are interviewed (often times having to take off work — with questions from employers), neighbors can be polled, the school district gets involved by as the initial reporting/referring agency), the local police department is informed.

This can be quite unnerving for a parent who is just trying to control a child. And, it makes them think twice the next time they want to discipline the kid. By sending them to their room without dinner, will they complain that I'm starving them; if I spank them, will I be called an abuser; etc. This doesn't even include fabricated stories by the children trying to retaliate because they couldn't go out on Friday night.

I don't know a solution, as there has to be some type of investigation to determine if this is a real crime. But, many families are being wrongfully disrupted; and there is nothing that can be done to the kid who makes an outcry falsely (a good spanking will probably get the parent back under investigation).

There's a fine line between abuse and parental supervision—and society has yet to set a limit. People proclaim about the wide-spread child abuse and many claim that you should never spank your child. However, there is a strong outcry for parental responsibility and more discipline. Which should it be?

Nice report on the birding trip. How was the scenery besides the birds?

Happy Birthday to Cathy (one day late)!!!!!!

[[I hope everyone realizes that the 'newspaper'-style cover was a one-shot. I am trying to vary the cover look of the zine, so I may return to the mock-news format, but I have several other styles I want to try first.]]

Chuff Aflerbach

[[our correspondents in Paris...]]

six hundred years the Notre Dame Cathedral has been standing, and they pick the summer we come to visit to begin repairs on the facade! It was still impressive despite the scaffolding, but of special interest was the raptor observatory we observed. They had set up a TV

camera with a telephoto lens and trained it on a nest in a niche high up in one of the spires. On a large B&W monitor we could observe two Kestrels (one a fledgling, I think) in the nest. I looked with my binoculars, but there was a row of trees blocking the view from ground level—the camera was much higher. So here's a technical question for an ornithological ombudsman: if I only saw the birds live on TV, does it count on my lifetime score card?

[[I believe the ABA (American Birding Assn) rules don't allow you to count them, but I have put the word out on BirdChat for an answer.]]

Michael Quist

The zine *[[The River City Railroad Gazette]]* is coming along nicely, I have an 1830 game started and am just one short for a Railway Rivals game with Brosius, York, Hadden, and Stimmel. I am expecting to get issue 1 in the mail early June, the first 1830 game will be in progress and I hope to have the RR-North Italy Preliminary round results there as well. There has been a lot of interest in Silverton which surprised me, so I am making Silverton play system a priority. I am not entirely satisfied the the Cox version.

I had not planned to trade for genzines but I think I will make an exception for *ZR*, so I will consider the trade you proposed in effect.

I did receive one sub from your *ZR* update already, it was a pleasant surprise. Thanks for the support. Sub list is up to ten, all but one are email connected due to the inherent speed of that medium. So far I have plugs in Arc and Boris the Spider

Possible features in issue 1 are "The state of PBM rail hobby" and "Silverton Houserules and game system".

[[Great, encouraging news, Mike. Keep it up!]]

Rich Irving

About that comment on computer games, my personal opinion is, like anything else, they are OK in moderation but, as with just about anything else, excessive

Six hundred years the Notre Dame Cathedral has been standing, and they pick the summer we come to visit to begin repairs on the facade!

playing (at any age) can be a problem. When I first got DOOM, for example, I played almost every night but I always took a break if it got too frustrating or intense. (Rarely longer than after an hour or 2.) Now I don't play it quite so much even though I can't quite finish all of the levels. I think the players (or their parents) should make sure that the games aren't dominating their lives too much.

DOOM is admittedly a gory & violent game. (If I had kids under 12, I don't think I'd let them play it.) (For those who don't know, in DOOM, you are a space marine infiltrating bases on Mars and its moons that have been invaded by hellish creatures. You find weapons (shotguns, machine guns, rocket launchers, "BFG-9000," etc.), ammo, health bonuses, armor, etc. inside these bases (rendered in eye- and ear-popping 3D and sound. Combat in all its bloody detail.) and shoot any enemy that appears:imps, "former" humans, demons, spectres, "Barons of Hell," etc. It is probably the best virtual reality game available now for the PC.) Most of the other games I own on my current computer are decidedly non-violent: Bicycle cards, Links 386 Golf, Indycar Racing.

One thing I do find funny is that I have friends who don't think anything to devote hour upon hour to

playing computer games (especially role-playing or adventure games or occasionally games like Doom, SimCity or Civilization), but claim PBM gaming takes too long. The comparison really isn't valid, however. PBM or PBEM takes a commitment to communicate with your opponents or formulate orders. This is usually an hour or two a week over a 2-3 year period (or sometimes longer). Whereas, the computer game will be solved (or given up) after many hours over a period of a few weeks or months.

The two types of gaming are completely different. Computers are better than people at three things: memory, arithmetic and manipulation of data. So what games are computers good for? Games with a lot of hidden information (adventure games), games with a lot of manual calculations to perform (simulators of all types, "virtual reality"), games that move a lot of objects in "real time" (arcade games), etc. In theory, it is possible to play SimCity without computer, but real cities probably would develop faster. But, most of the best games have minimal artificial intelligence (AI).

That is the main problem with most computer "opponents." I have seen computer Risk, Monopoly, Diplomacy, and Othello programs that are either atrociously easy to beat, play completely unrealistic boring strategies or play the same exact game every time. Most real time games (sport simulations, Civilization, Railroad Tycoon, etc.) that employ a simple strategy (often different strategies for different coaches, cultures or tycoons) that is easy to implement and generally make the "levels" harder by increasing speed. I have found only two strategy games that play the game well (or at least well enough to bear me): chess & Scrabble. (The reason why is that both use a algebraic functions to evaluate each possible play. Chess programs usually search deeper into the possible move tree and use a set opening "books" and a small random factor to prevent following the same path in every game. Scrabble uses a brute force search of its dictionary but it will not always take the highest score (so it doesn't open up Double & Triple scores), but is in the end limited by the size and contents of its dictionary.) Of course, the best computer players in these games cannot beat the best humans now, but they are likely to in the future. But in Diplomacy, I think we'll have to wait much, much longer.

Lance Anderson

Today I find myself very grateful for being allowed to share the two things you value most: your zine and, vicariously, the love you have for your spouse. Your headline was a tribute to that love that I couldn't ignore (as if I could with COLOR!) Thanks again for having me along for the trip. Now, could we get more of Bruce McIntyre? His bit about betting and the NBA was quite interesting and, since I don't read newspapers, I don't know the conclusion to this tale. Could someone fill me in? Anyway, on to the orders.

[[Bruce, did you catch that?]]

Jim Bailey

When I was browsing in the local bookstore recently, I saw two books side by side in the biography section that really hit me. Right next to Anne Frank's *Diary of a Young Girl*, was Amy Fischer's *My Story*. If that doesn't sum up the screwed up values of this country, I don't know what does.

In my opinion, the phenomenon that is far worse than violence in TV, is the explosion of tabloid news and talk shows. By parading a bunch of dysfunctional losers across the screen twenty times a day, the media (I hate pointing fingers, but there's no single identifiable target here) promotes the idea that the way to fame and fortune is to be irrevocably screwed up.

The total lack of stories about people that suffer tough times and pull through even stronger, contributes to the culture of blame and victimization. Well, those

stories may exist, but they're buried under so much crap, it's not worth the effort to find them. In this context, I really admire the way you and Cathy are handling your various setbacks. Your continuously positive outlook, seeing beyond today's problems, is something that I really want to applaud. (clap, clap, clap) I also want to publicly wish you well with your house hunting and Cathy's job search.

I'm personally so disgusted with the talk/tabloid shows that I've completely sworn off them. I won't even give them the benefit of my curiosity to see what the day's subject is. I'm not completely successful, though. I stopped on Geraldo's CNBC program long enough to see him lecture a network executive about the shameful portrayal of violence on TV. Talk about the pot calling the kettle black!! He's responsible for so much of the whacked out things you see on TV, I'm surprised he can still manage to crawl out of his hole.

I just really wish it would all go away, which won't happen until people stop watching in big numbers. I don't want to live in a future where Amy Fischer sits alongside Anne Frank, or where we speak of the "Tonya Harding" Olympics as well as the "Jesse Owens" Olympics.

Bill Wordelmann

I am looking forward to meeting you and Cathy at Origins in July. My wife Elaine will be accompanying me, as she always does for Origins, wherever it may be. I will probably be in the Puffing Billy area for most of the convention—helping out Mayfair Games run the events. Please stop by and say "hi". I'll keep an eye out for you.

[[I'll be signed up for Tisan on Friday and Diplomacy on Saturday—other time is devoted to creative wandering. So I'm sure I'll see you.

[[Anyone else attending Origins? I'll be rooming with Jason Bergmann, Steve Nicewarner, and David Harshbarger.]]

David McCrumb

The controversy about a resigning player forwarding their thoughts and ideas on the game is interesting. In the one game I resigned from, I did that as a courtesy to the new player to let them know what I thought was going on rather than have them rely on their opponents to tell them. I have also been on the receiving end of such correspondence, and I found it to be a big help. I fully support the idea and encouraged it when I had players resign from Dip games I was GMing, and will do so when I next GM a Dip game.

Congratulations on your grandparents making 60 years. My grandfather died four months before they would have made 60. My other grandparents are now at 57, but my grandfather was diagnosed with bone cancer last week, so they probably won't make it that far. Still, being together over 50 years is a great accomplishment. I hope Sharyn and I can make it that long.

[[chas about his new Compaq LTE Lite 4125 computer deleted—I'm interested but don't know how much the public would be!]]

David Wang

So how is your new place, Pete? Are you and Cathy all settled in now? I hope Cathy is having better luck with her job search.

[[I am resisting the impulse to nag her about getting a job. Realistically, she can't start a new job until late July, when we return from Maine. So she has spent a lot of time back in Marin County visiting friends: one who is fighting cancer, and another who has also just moved. She's also managed to get something hung on every wall in the new place, though we still have a large blank space in the living room and I still have to do the office. (The Irish flag, Yosemite map, and eagle poster are up, but I still have to tack up the Enterprise, the space shuttle, the Declaration of Independence and Manny Mota.))]]

How big is Concord? *[[just over 100,000]]* Are you anywhere near Randy and Melanie Davis? *[[yeah, about three miles south]]* Would you happen to know if Randy is still in the hobby or has he dropped out completely? *[[well, I've left a message on his machine but haven't heard back yet]]*

Brendan Whyte

[[email letter one:]]

Got the warehouse edition in the post 2 days ago. How far have you moved? My California maps are on the walls of Elizabeth's room, so I can't tell.

You Americans seem very mobile. Where are you from originally? What is the statistic? We all move once every 3 or 5 years or something. Is it a big change/shock? In 23 years, I moved once, 2km, to my present family home in 1977.

I consider the move to Massey (very) temporary, although I could live here, it is a lovely town, and not too far (\$18 2 hour bus/train ride) to Wellington for culture/libraries/games shops etc. Funny, a year or two ago I couldn't imagine living in a town smaller than Auckland, and yet most of that is unknown and may as well not exist for /to me.

It all depends on the personal ties and connections you make. I knew of one person here when I arrived, and then I discovered a distant cousin, and an old acquaintance from Auckland were here as well, although I've only seen each of them once. Geographic mobility is a topic I'm interested in, like anything to do with urban sense of place, perception of space etc. But it is definitely the people and not the place itself that make it home.

I really admire the way you and Cathy are handling your various setbacks. Your continuously positive outlook, seeing beyond today's problems, is something that I really want to applaud. (clap, clap, clap)

This human element is missing from too many researches on urban belonging/sense of place. maybe I should go back to geography after all, my studies there have had quite an impression on my awareness of things. how do people survive without an education? no, they survive anyway; how do they LIVE without an education? I find poetic and lyrical quotes, as well as Shakespeare etc popping into my head at pertinent times, and knowledge of history and geography enhancing my experience of places I go, just in terms of knowledge as well as in terms of sense: the whole feel, sights, sounds and smell of a place. I can't express it well (me lost for words) but I need the knowledge to perceive. The wonder of it all, to live.

Deep and philosophical huh? Hope you make a happy new home out of the wooden(?) box they give you to live in. I'm sure you will.

[[Moved: approx. 50 miles ESE, that's all. Novato is on the NW shore of the San Francisco bay complex (the 'bay complex' is roughly the shape of a wasp: a round northern bay, a 'waist' and then an elliptical southern bay); Concord is E of the northern 'bulge' in the bay, separated from the bay by a range of 1000' hills.

[[Due to wind patterns, and the fact that MOST cities here get cooled by either the bay or the sea, both towns are hotter than most of the surrounding area. Today reached 90 deg F in Concord, normal for this time of year. Each city probably gets two days a year at 100 deg—not nearly as hot as Sacramento or Stockton to the east, but enough to be considered sweltering by the rest of the Bay Area.

[[I was born in Cleveland, Ohio, and moved at age 10 to Los Angeles. Cathy was born in Melbourne, Florida

and moved to West Texas at age 3. We met when I was in the Dallas area for graduate school in 1984, and moved to northern Cal. in 1990. So we're probably a little more mobile than average—not in number of moves, but in distance.

[[I agree about people, not place, making a home—LA still 'feels' like home simply because my formative ye (high school & college) were there, and I left so many friendships behind when I moved to Texas. Yes it's so different physically from when I lived there (more smog, more developments, beaches & streets more worn out) that it doesn't feel like home while I visit there!

[[In the same way that the people who live on the land are more important than the land itself, when I was studying linguistics I was drawn to sociolinguistics—how people USE language in different contexts, ethnic groups, classes, etc, not prescriptive rules about what language should be.

[[I'm quavering on the value of education. I'm glad I have a head full of useless trivia but I can see how many people live just fine without it. (heavy cynicism intended—one of these days I'll go back and finish my M.A. and then rate education much higher again.))]]

[[email letter two:]]

Well, add the cost of a stamp to my bill and send me the Vulcan dip stuff please. This sounds fun, but will probably be too easy for the new players to be eliminated. We'll see. Deviant dip really appeals because I played a mutable rules game where the entire game was mutable and mutable. Deviant dip is slightly less chaotic, but probably more fun and comprehensible because of it.

This caning debate is interesting. Funny how no one cares about all the gooks who've been hung over the years in some tinpot banana republic until one of their own kind get hauled before the swinging judges. There's a NZ couple mother and son who were on death row in Malaysia for a year before appeals for clemency 'commuted' their sentences to life. Might as well be death over there. He was caned anyway. How a caning acts a deterrent if you're going to spend the rest of your day in a Malaysian jail anyway, I will never understand. I'm not sure what my own views on such things are. I have visited the NZers there and they did a silly thing running drugs in a country knowing there was a death penalty. But I am personally against the death penalty, and any form of state administered capital punishment, for the reasons that it does not act as a deterrent and it is ethically abhorrent to me to take human life for any reason. Too often the weirdos who commit multiple slayings are a product of western urban social decay and a lack of self-esteem brought about by that among other things, so that society is a part of the blame.

Not to say that this is entirely where the blame lies. Rural and Third world areas have their share of multiple killers too (I suppose: you never read about 'man kills 5 in New delhi' maybe because it happens everyday.) but the people who have killed here are loner/loser types that were never accepted into society. The fact that their reaction against that societal rejection is then rejected by society also and if taken alive they are killed by the state seems hypocritical. You kill us we kill you is no answer. There is too much rejection of non-conforming types in society today: mentally ill, deformed, handicapped people. I think it is a symptom of the pace and individualism inherent in the 20th century west. It is one thing I do see in the third world, and in smaller, less urbanised/industrialised areas of the west: a real personal relationship with your neighbours is very important to me. That is something that there seems to be down here in the 'small town' of Palmerston North.

Auckland is too big and impersonal. I can leave myself in 10 minutes in the car there if I want. Which is fun sometimes, but the sheer mass of people is frightening, there is a definite threat with the impersonality of a crowd. It is nice to be able to walk the streets and meet

people whom I know, who would stop and help if I fell down a manhole. Too many news reports in the cities tell of people attacked in broad daylight in the middle of town, and if someone else notices, then they just stand and watch. No aid given at all. Maybe there is a myth of rural idyll. Certainly I need the personal contacts of life. But when we drive to work each day past our neighbours, we don't get the chance, or take the time to greet them or pass the time of day. It is sad. Help. Maybe I'm going crazy.

Oh well, we're not all as intense as me down here. I think that I think too much. But society today is definitely not what we should be forcing upon the third world they are right to reject modern western philosophies and seek to syncretically blend the best parts of both worlds. Individualism as opposed to communalism in everyday life has advantages, but is open to far too many abuses. The government here is proposing that the parents of mentally ill or unemployed persons be required to look after them financially until age 24. Students have to be 25 before they lose the parental asset testing that ensures a minimal grant. I get a whole 54 dollars a week to pay for food, rent, power and fees and other living costs. You guys are probably worse off in terms of tertiary education debt. Then the professionals/doctors/lawyers/engineers repay their debt by passing it on to their clients. The poor end up paying in the end. It has been pointed out that the new monetarist right have a stated goal of keeping the classes in society (actually creating them here because 20 years ago we were basically egalitarian). This is supposed to provide an incentive to the poor to emulate the rich (ie work hard and you might have enough to live on in 50 years time) and an obligation to the rich to look after their workforce (ha ha bollocks). So maybe I should emigrate. I hear Pitcairn Island is nice at this time of year.

Back to the capital punishment thing: we abolished it here for all crimes including treason quite a while ago, and we have few problems. What do you put the crime rate in the US down to (violent crime especially)? I think the size of the state and its apparatus also affects the ability people think they have to affect their own lives/govt decisions. Think they do, ie perception, not reality, but the two are probably pretty close.

Here with only 3 million people, there is more feeling of one man making a difference, compared to 250 million over there. But then that is my perception from one small, isolated corner of the world. America scares me with its size and power. So I am applying for an exchange to SF/LA because I would very much like to see if these places are as I perceive them or if they are nicer. They must be, from the people I have met/know, and my perceptions are based heavily on the images given to us by the media. Watching local drama productions on TV shows me how far these are out from reality, so I guess any medial presentation is an escape from reality: drama intended, and news etc unintended. It is interesting to compare CNN, ABC, BBC and BCNZ and the private TV3 network's interpretations of events. I do feel the US news is far too chatty and friendly to cover up the biases and prejudices. One thing I am very thankful for here is that we get US/ Australian, British and some other news, information and culture. We are not imperialised by foreign or our own culture too much, although I wish there was a more definite NZ culture. Too much is made of the Maori being NZ, and that leaves me out in the cold, as my roots are British, so I tend to think of myself as very distinct from Maori, until I come into contact with Brits, then I am definitely Zealander, but there seems to be little culture for me to be part of. There is a definite string of kiwi blokes and jokers, but their attitudes are different to mine. I guess culture and sense of place are more relative and less absolute than I'd realised.

You'd better warn UCLA or Berkeley to turn

down my application. This is one seriously screwed up Kiwi trying to come to your shores for a spell. Boy, that is a spiel. You can print what you like in *Perelandra*, but it is very waffley eh? Maybe I should stick to answering the letters of your other subbers rather than speak on a given topic.

Hope you're enjoying your new digs as well as I am, and that the weather is warmer there. This wind and the rain are freezing for us cyclists. At least I can sleep in tomorrow.

[[email letter three:]]

Please excuse the weird fragmented epistle that arrived in your machine last week. I had a really bad week and got a big release writing it, so thanks for allowing me to blow off a few boilers at you. I would be interested in any replies you care to make to some of the points therein, but most of it was just a mind-dump.

Life is back to normal although I am having the

Come on, Pete, you know *Cogniscenti* deserve to be number one in this year's Runestone Poll. Eighth or ninth? Pshaw!

usual worries about falling behind in work. Women do that to you, sapping your time. But it is my own fault. A question of prioritisation I suppose.

Keep cool, and will write slightly more coherently and responsibly next time. My regards to Cathy and the new neighbours. Have you met them yet? *[[Not really.]]* Are you in a flat or a detached place or semidetached?

[[I suggested that he should pay more attention to the women, they are far more important than anything you'll learn in school—except for baseball, of course...]]

Thanks for the advice on women. My sentiments exactly, but cricket over baseball every time. If you're going to pig out on chips and beer in front of TV, do it for 5 days at a stretch. If a game can be finished in under a day, it is a copout!

Randy Cox

Come on, Pete, you know *Cogniscenti* deserve to be number one in this year's Runestone Poll. Eighth or ninth? Pshaw! Anyway, you implied *[[in ZR]]* that I had cheated in the past and that is, of course, not the case. You stand corrected.

[[You failed to observe the rules of the poll. I stand corrected. But my implication was that you were, as last time, making inordinant get-out-the-vote efforts—this was not mistaken.]]

Oh, what is U-NO the candy? I am a friend to almost any sweet treat, but I've never heard of U-NO (much less Mint U-NO). Tell me where I can find it.

[[No sabe, señor. I get them as most of my usual candy-bar shelves. It's a bar of whipped chocolate, coated with a thin layer of milk chocolate. Very basic, but with a disappear-on-contact feeling on the tongue that reminds me of the Willy Wonka movie...]]

Mark Lew

I'm on the CalTrain, headed to Stanford for the Cameroon-Russia World Cup game. I was talking with Andrew on the phone this weekend and mentioned one of the other games I had watched on ESPN and he said something like "yeah, when we were there..."

"You went to the game?"

"Yeah, I got tickets to all of them. You want to go on Thursday?"

Um, ok.

He got two tickets for each of the Stanford games when he first heard about it three years ago. He ended

up giving away several of them, since he's been out of town. I still don't know how much he paid.

[[second letter]]

Cameroon got creamed.

I'm glad I went, for the sake of the experience—you know, live at the World Cup game, etc.—and some things are genuinely better (notably, being able to see the entire field at once). But all in all, I think it's more fun to watch the game at home on ESPN.

[[Baseball haters beware, the next two pages are devoted to the claim that Baseball is Life—The Rest is Just Details...]]

Richard Irving

You somewhat missed my point or maybe I didn't make it clear. (Now that reread my letter last time, it probably is the latter.) The main problem, I have with old division-winner-take-all setup is that a "second place" team might be 7 or 8 games ahead of a "division winner" after playing a balanced schedule and still not make the playoffs. I haven't looked it up, but division winners that finish "behind" the second place team in the other division seem pretty common, although the 8 game "lead" the Giants had over the Phillies last year is unusually large. (The only situations I can think of (at the moment) where this could have happened are the 87 AL [Twins won the West with 85 wins], 80 AL [I don't know how many wins the Royals had but I know Baltimore had 100 wins and finished second to the Yankees] and the 73 National League [Mets won the East with 83 wins]. [All of the weaker "division winners" made the World Series and the Twins won it.]

The new playoffs seem (to me) like a good balance between ensuring the best team (whoever that may be) will actually have a chance at the title and without having too many undeserving teams making it creating a boring first round. (But the AL West this year seems to be doing their best to screw this up by sending a losing team to the playoffs! However, as of May 10, only Chicago (16-14) and KC (15-14) would have had winning records in the old AL West.) Anyway, more than 8 teams per league would be definitely too many.

There rarely seem to be any compelling first round NFL or NBA playoff matchups. (This year's exception is the Denver-Seattle shocker.) Hockey seems to get these upsets on a regular basis.

As for the shortening the baseball schedule to 154 to finish baseball before Halloween, I don't have a problem with that. I just left the 162 games in my example. As for the DH or no DH (That is the question!), I would prefer having the DH in all of baseball but I could live with having all of the pitchers hit. Having the World Series played under two sets of rules is confusing and more favorable to the National League. In AL home games, it is easy for NL teams to find a DH (just use one of the pinch hitters). In NL games, the AL pitchers may not have seen live pitching since high school, unless they played in the NL. (BTW The DH is used in ALL minor leagues and in college.) I think 2 hits in the last 15 World Series by AL pitchers is rather indicative of the problem.

[[I know damn well that the DH is used as all levels of baseball, that doesn't make it right. Pitchers should be expected to bat; if they can't hit well they provide their team with a disadvantage that has to be weighed against their pitching ability, just as position players' offense and defense are weighed. And pitchers serve many other purposes by hitting than base hits—among them, moving runners along, and having to face retaliation for hit batsmen. But the most important reason pitchers should hit is that hitting is fundamental to baseball. The DH lowers baseball to the level of football, where nobody plays both offense and defense any more.]]

[[There's a great article by Jason Stark in the "May 15" issue of Baseball America going back through history to see if losing records, second-place teams, etc would have

made the playoffs under the new structure. The gist of it is, yeah, maybe once in the past thirty years a team would get in that didn't deserve it.

[[Well, more than once in thirty years, but not much. First Stark looked at the bottom of the pile: teams that would squeak in. Since 1969, and not counting 1981: 3 teams with losing records would have made the playoffs (One of these is the 1983 Rangers with beloved goofball Mickey Rivers.)

*2 teams that finished at .500 would've made the playoffs
18 teams with less than 85 wins would've made it in
1 team that finished fifth under the old alignment would have made the playoffs (1986 Indians at 84-78, 5th in East would have been best in Central)
1 team that won the World Series wouldn't have made the playoffs (1987 Twins at 85-77, now in the Central, would have been behind Milwaukee, which finished behind Detroit and Toronto)*

*[[Here's the kicker:
[[And while people have dumped on the idea of including wild-card teams in the post-season, the average wild-card team would have won 90 games, and only 2 of the 18 playoff teams with fewer than 85 wins would have been wild-card entries. So it's those lousy teams that win shrunken, mediocre four- and five-team divisions that deserve all the criticism."*

[[He continues, on the flip side: "Meanwhile, very few teams that win more than 90 games will get the shaft." The 1993 Expos (94 wins) would have stayed home, and the 1977 Orioles and Red Sox would have played a one-game playoff for the wild-card spot. Other than those two, only three teams that won more than 90 would have missed: 1978 Royals (92 wins), 1983 Yankees (91), 1989 Angels (91).

[[You mention the 1980 AL: KC went 97-65. Playoffs would have been NY (103 wins), Mil (86), KC (97) and wild-card Bal (100). No other team had as many wins as these four.

[[In fact, that little remark about the 1980 AL made me wonder: how many teams would be left out of the playoffs but have as many or more wins as a playoff team? Of such wondering is hard work born. I spent the evening going back through the outcomes of the divisional races...

[[Of 44 league-seasons from 1969-1980 and 1982-1992, 18 times teams have been left out of the playoffs despite having more wins than a team that got in. If the new alignments had been in place, that would have only happened 11 times.

[[Including 1981 would make it even more lopsided (two teams had more wins but didn't make it, and one had a better percentage but fewer wins and was left out). Clearly the new system makes it more likely that the playoffs will include the teams with the most wins.

[[Your comment about "a good balance between ensuring the best team (whoever that may be) will actually have a chance at the title and without having too many undeserving teams making it" seems to be a summary of what all the stats above are saying. But it leaps over the first question of whether the 'best team' is the one which plays well over the last three weeks in October, or over six months of the regular season.]]

I didn't see the *Baseball America* article (But I'll look for it.), but one thing did come to mind. How did Stark account for expansion in his article? Elimination of Colorado & Seattle would leave only 3 teams in each Western division. I would assume he moved KC & Houston into the West. (It would seem logical.)

I also wonder how many of the teams that made the playoffs with losing records were in the smaller Western Division. If expansion were to come (although I shudder at the thought if occurred now, given the weak pitching staffs around now.) maybe that might help alleviate the problem of a division winner having a losing (or .500) record. Assuming a normal distribution the chances of randomly picking 5 or 6 losing teams and putting them in the same division would be less.

(Almost 50% less for each additional team.) (The point about randomness is that the divisions were selected solely for geographical reasons. If the geography had been different, so would be the divisions.)

An interesting side note, there was an article by John Akers in the *San Jose Mercury News* (5/10) that interviewed some of the players' opinions about the realignment & change in the playoffs. This is hardly a scientific sample but the A's & Giants and their last home opponents (Orioles & Dodgers) revealed that most of the players simply didn't care—they still have to win as many games as possible. (They aren't banking on slipping in on a losing record.) If they expressed an opinion, they were somewhat in favor of it. Tommy Lasorda was quoted, "In essence, you'll have more teams competing in September. In the past, you didn't have fans in the ballpark in September. Now you have more teams competing to get into the playoffs, and you have more people coming to the ballpark." That's exactly what we're trying to do." (That surprised me, but then again, it does help his chances especially this year.) I admit the possibility that those who were against it didn't talk to Akers.

Steven McKinnon

[[I wondered out loud last time about the office building in center field at the Ballpark as Arlington...]]

The offices at the Ballpark are essentially just that, offices. They are open for lease to anyone, and consider it a major coup that people like Troy Aikman of the Cowboys chose to have his business office there. Part of the draw is that you can stick around after work and watch the Rangers.

Speaking of uniforms, who gave supposed major-league teams the right to play regulation games wearing their practice jerseys?

It seems that Will Clark and Rafael Palmeiro have finally resolved their little war. The way I understand it is this. They played together in college and were really good friends at one point. Palmeiro felt betrayed when Clark signed his contract with Texas, thereby pushing Palmeiro out.

This sort of thing is to be expected in the age of free agency, but I can see where Palmeiro would be pissed if he considered Clark a good friend and could have stayed in Texas for similar money. But while Palmeiro has a good point when he points to his superior numbers over recent years, he is not paying credence to Clark's vastly superior dugout effect: leadership.

Even I know that Clark is one of the most respected players in the league, and I am only interested in baseball as it pertains to the Rangers (especially now that Houston dumped their old crappy uniforms for new crappy uniforms and lost Portugal).

[[Erm, not quite, Kemosabe. Clark and Palmeiro played together as Mississippi State, but were not best buds there. In fact, Raffy resented Clark pretty early—Palmeiro has always claimed that he's given short shrift because he's Latino, Clark is a Louisiana redneck, and Clark got the 1 bleecanup job in college as well as the Olympic advertising hype (Raffy once called him the 'great white hope').

[[Then in the majors, Palmeiro has always felt he had better numbers (and has usually had an edge in power) but got less publicity (implication: race again). AND, Clark is known as an irritating guy—he may be a leader in hustle and attitude but very few teammates like him; while Palmeiro is the sweet, friendly sort, if a bit full of himself.

[[So Raffy's insults this winter were the result of a long-festering wound, but he should have shut up. He (and everyone else) knew he wouldn't be back with Texas—he

wasn't getting along with management, and no team he's played on won a pennant. Clark is known as a winner and fit the mold of a 'remade' Ranger team. Palmeiro should have taken Baltimore's money and talked with his bar—if he had crowed AFTER the season that Texas should have signed him instead, he wouldn't have sounded so petty.]]

Not knowing that much about the game I'm often frustrated at the Rangers' inability to win despite a great lineup of hitters. Why is it that they are singularly unable to put together a pitching lineup in any year that is in any way improved over the previous one? Of course, it doesn't help that Brown sucked through his first five starts, finally winning his first on 4/28.

Not that I'm unhappy with the new uniforms, but I was really starting to like the old blue uniforms of Texas, too. Red seems like such a boring color to pick. Red is also associated with Philly, Cincy and St. Louis for me, all teams I find completely uninteresting other than Cincy (it's a college buddy's team and I love to see them lose).

The best aspect of the red is that the road jerseys look like the grey and red of my high school soccer team, the Rebels. Too bad they didn't choose grey and yellow.

[[I dislike teams completely overhauling their 'look' except in extreme instances (the Padres' 1970s style couldn't go away too soon, and the Astros' recent change was welcome). But I know why the Rangers switched, and it wasn't entirely promotional-goods marketing either. The team has been so bad for so long that the uniforms were, in essence, a symbol of failure. More important, the team has a much greater chance to win under the new playoff system—if they do get in, then the new uniforms will stand for success.]]

[[Speaking of uniforms, who gave supposed major-league teams the right to play regulation games wearing their practice jerseys? You look at the Oakland A's and Baltimore Orioles in their dark, solid-color jerseys, and you think, "Little League!" And last month I saw the ultimate abomination: the Blue Jays and Athletics wearing solid blue jerseys at home (the Jays were playing against a Brew team wearing the same color!).

[[Next letter, a month later.]]

My campaign to become something of a baseball fan continues. This has been a very good year in sports spectating for me. As usual, I watched a lot of football in the fall, and with the arrival of the Albany River Rats and pay-cable sportschannels my hockey interest has intensified. Were it not for the World Cup my summer could look bleak for sport. However, in a reversal of the usual order of things I've become more interested in baseball.

I bought a copy of World Series Baseball for the Sega Genesis system, and it is this game that has encouraged me to watch more baseball on t.v. What has helped most is the familiarity with names that the game engenders. To begin with I always played the Texas Rangers. As is usual with sports games the roster is behind the times, with Charlie Leibrandt and Nolan Ryan (perhaps they figured he didn't really mean it!) still on the staff, and recent standouts Greer and Frye left off. But when I watch Rangers' games now, I have knowledge beyond Brown, Gonzalez, Clark and Canseco.

I have a better appreciation of whether or not to replace a hit-slumping infielder with a fresh bat that may be a poorer defender prone to err on a possible double-play ball. And I understand pitching and hitting tendencies more. The game is designed to reflect hitters' abilities at hitting certain types of pitches in certain areas of the strike zone. I, for one, continually frustrate myself swinging at balls that sink into the dirt in front of the plate in spite of knowing that I can't hit them.

The game itself is far better suited to two players facing off than one versus the computer. Sometimes the computer is an idiot. About three-quarters of the time it will throw pointlessly to second on a sacrifice bunt

rather than first. Pitching duels are uncommon for one-player games. The computer is rather easy to hit off, and while it may only get six or seven hits off human pitching, four or five of them are home runs.

Starting pitchers have 250 endurance points and one to three for each pitch (slow, mid, fast). Pitchers throw three of eight pitches in their repertoire (fast, change-up, curve, slider, splitter, sinker, knuckler and screwball). While as a batter you know where the other player has aimed his pitch, you have to recognize, almost right out of the pitcher's hand, the type of ball he's thrown in order to decide on swinging. These decisions in the game have better allowed me to recognize pitches in real baseball as well as to understand the split-second decisions of batters.

I, for one, could have foreseen the problems of Mitch Williams, too. After I switched to playing as the Astros I often brought him in to close in the ninth, only to get blasted. I can't get his ERA below 6 no matter how I try. Drabek, Harnisch, Kile and Swindell, however, I find far more impressive. I do far better with them than the Rangers' Brown, Rogers, Armstrong and Pavlik, and after a look at league stats I like the way this is borne out in reality.

I do have a couple of novice's questions, though, which I hope you can answer for me, no matter how idiotic they may seem. I understand you must pitch five innings as a starter to gain a win, but:

1) Is the winner the pitcher who was in when the winning run was scored? *[[Sort of: it's the pitcher who was in when the team took the lead for good. If I'm pitching when the team goes ahead 1-0, and eventually wins 10-6 but never trails, then I get the win.]]* What if I pitch in the bottom of the 8th, we score the winning run in the 9th and you get all three batters in order in the bottom of the 9th? *[[The pitcher who finished the 8th gets the win.]]*

ould have foreseen the problems of Mitch Williams, too. After I switched to playing as the Astros I often brought him in to close in the ninth, only to get blasted. I can't get his ERA below 6 no matter how I try.

2) What's a save situation and how is a save decided? I can't figure out, when two or three relievers pitch the last few innings, why sometimes it's the guy who pitched in the 7th and sometimes the last pitcher. *[[A save can only go to the last pitcher of the game. You can only earn a save two ways. Most often, you get one if you enter the game with your team in the lead, with the opponents' potential go-ahead run in one of these situations: on base, at the plate, on deck, or in the hole. Thus, if you enter the game with a lead no larger than the opponents could overcome in the next three batters, it's a save opportunity; you are credited with the save if you then finish the game without giving up the lead.]]*

[[This way, someone who enters with a huge lead doesn't get credit for a 'save'.]]
[[Second, it's a save if you pitch three or more 'effective' innings (scorer's subjective judgment) to finish a game, even in a blowout. In my opinion, the save statistic is stupid, an inaccurate judge of a reliever's effectiveness.]]

3) What's slugging percentage? *[[Not a percentage, really: it's total bases divided by at bats. That gives a kind of 'basing average' weighted by extra-base hits. Hitting a grand slam every time up would be a 1.000 S.P., hitting a home run every time would be 4.000, and league averages tend to be between .300 and .350.]]*

4) Why do pitchers fare better against like-handed batters, i.e. right versus right? I'm guessing because they pitch inside easier and therefore handcuff a batter more

easily. *[[Well, there's a little truth to that: left-handed hitters see few left-handed pitchers (less than 30% of pitchers are left-handed), so when a lefty throws inside it's more intimidating to them (the pitcher's arm actually begins its motion behind the batter).]]*

[[But the main reason is the nature of curveballs. A curve is thrown by snapping the wrist on release. For a right-handed pitcher, this makes the ball break to the left as he faces the plate: down and away from a right-handed batter. A lefty's curve breaks to the right, down and away from a left-handed batter. Batters find it far easier to hit a ball which starts away from them and moves in; pitches which start out coming at them and break away force the batter to freeze an instant, in case the ball doesn't break at all and they have to back out or hit an inside pitch.]]

[[A screwball is an 'opposite' pitch: a right-hander's pitch which breaks in toward a right-handed hitter (and, again, vice versa for lefties). Very few pitchers can do this, and a right-hander who can throw a screwball will have more success against left-handers. Carl Hubbell could throw both screwballs and curveballs, and consequently was an outstanding hurler.]]

5) Is a balk an attempt to pick off a baserunner after having gone into the pitching motion too far to abort it? Is that why some pitchers have abbreviated wind-ups? What else constitutes a balk? *[[Informally, a balk is any action by the pitcher which could deceive the runner into thinking he's throwing home when he's actually throwing to a base (or vice versa). The formal balk rule is one of the longest in baseball (two full pages out of 70) and forbids all this while a runner or runners are on base.]]*

*faking a pitch
throwing to a base without stepping directly toward that base*

*faking a throw to first
quick-pitching (before the batter is ready)
pitching while not facing home plate
touching the pitching plate without the ball
pitching from the "stretch" position without coming to a stop*

*separating his hands but failing to throw
dropping the ball (accidentally or intentionally))]*

6) Is there really any meaning to life? Oh, sorry, that's philosophy. *[[Yes: baseball is the meaning of life.]]*

Nathan Trent

I did not see all of the D-Day ceremonies, but I did hear the end of Clinton's speech at the beaches. In my opinion it was fairly tasteful and respectful considering the temptation to turn it into a complete spectacle. A solemn day deserves reserved and solemn remembrance.

[[Because we're on the West Coast, I knew I'd miss everything—I wasn't going to get up at 6 a.m. to watch a memorial service. But I did watch on the t.v. about 9 and sure enough, Clinton ran just late enough that I caught all of his speech.]]

[[The thing I enjoyed the most about the D-Day commemoration was the way the old grunts were treated. Guys who swabbed the deck of the Jeremiah O'Brien (which is based in S.F. and which I have toured) in 1944, were individually piped aboard aircraft carriers and royal yachts as if they were admirals!]]

why not pick on somebody that has trouble retaliating? I never noticed Cathy sneaking up until the last turn. At that point, I had only one snowball and so decided to use it to try and improve my standing by picking on a closer target. Anyway, with the NMRs and kitchen-bound players, only Mark's Di could have sent her inside. It failed. Too bad. It would have been a wild finish with six or seven players over ten points when it ended. Great game, Cathy. You got the idea right. Be present in the press but not obnoxious, and everybody will normally leave you alone.

Pallida Mors (Lance Anderson): Congrats to Cathy for her spectacular win! I'm supposing that her favorable die rolls were the result of good karma, of which I am somewhat lacking ... although striving to improve. Hope to try this again sometime when your wife is taking a break ... Again, Cathy, a stupendous victory!

SnowMaster (Pete Gaughan): Dave forgets, Cathy is very experienced at Snowball Fighting. Although she hadn't played by mail before this game, she has played several times face-to-face, including one game back in Arlington when she hit Dave Frick from a distance of more than a dozen hexes over the shed.

AURORA / Railway Rivals 1025CN

California/Nevada revised map—Endgame Statements

WINC (Wordelmann's Inroad to NV and CA—Bill Wordelmann, yellow) \$275
ICE-D (Richard Weiss, red) \$219
RENO (anarchy, black) \$186
SMOG (Southern Metro Over Gauge—Chuck Mercer, brown) \$185
COLTS (anarchy, blue) \$145
S&RVL (Sleer & Rain Vacation Line—Bob Theriault, green) \$142

Richard Weiss: "Thanks, Pete, for running this game. This was my very first PBM Railway Rivals game and I learned a lot and enjoyed myself.

"Building track to block others or to collect fees now seems dumb.

"I think my plan of building north-south and avoiding the outlying cities was correct—even given the change in the rules. I got quite a break when my start city compatriot 'blacked out' and I had no competition for a turn. How he then became 'anarchy' and finished third is beyond me.

"I thought having monopolistic access to a city and hence guaranteeing two runs would have been much more valuable than it was. Bill won without any. He just had straight track.

"Thanks, y'all, for the fun and the memories."
Bill Wordelmann: "I have no endgame statement for "Aurora" (Railway Rivals), other than to thank those that were left playing. I'd be willing to give another game a try, if you're interested."

Pete Gaughan: "I'll think hard about it. Let's get Tralfamadore up and running, get into the fall hawk migration season, and then I'll check my available time and zine space."

ZEBRA / Snowball Fighting ASF25

Endgame Statements

WARRIOR.....	PLAYER.....	sp.....	hp.....
Snow Poke.....	Cathy Gaughan.....	16	2
Puff.....	John Schultz.....	14	0
Bullwinkle.....	Mark Weseman.....	10	5
Comet.....	David McCrumb.....	9	3
75mm Long Barrel.....	Steve McKinnon.....	9	1
Pallida Mors.....	Lance Anderson.....	9	6
Big Bad Frank.....	Brad Wilson.....	8	10
Terry Forster.....	Mike Stewart.....	7	0
Floating Zeppelins.....	Randy Davis.....	5	3

Comet (Dave McCrumb): It was rigged! It had to have been rigged. The GM's better half (come on, Pete, admit it *[[sure—I admit it!]]*) wins against all of these experienced snow fighters. I seem to end up in battles with John Schultz (usually losing), so this time I tried to avoid him. I started picking on Brad Wilson, and when he started NMRing, I decided to keep it up. After all,

The old game show *Let's Make a Deal* climaxed a frenzy of audience-host bartering with a finale called the Big Deal. The people who had won the most cash and/or merchandise were asked to give up what they'd won for a shot at the Big Deal. (A sudden thought: I remember many contestants who decided to keep what they had, even two or three, but what would Monty Hall have done if all of the people decided not to take a chance at the end? What then?) The first two were given a choice of three doors, one of which contained the Big Deal, one of which contained some decent prizes, and one of which contained a collection of farm animals or some other gag prize.

After the choices were made, Monty would show one contestant what they had won; invariably this turned out to be either the gag prize or the decent one. Then, much like the announcement of a decision in a prize fight, where the crowd reacts at the word "new" and doesn't wait for the completion of the sentence "the winner, and new champion, is ...", Monty would tell us which door would be opened next. If it was the door chosen by the other couple, you could tell that the Big Deal had survived the day without being won. But if Monty decided at this point to show the unchosen door, the contestant would scream and yell, knowing that he or she had hit the jackpot.

So let's change the scenario a bit. Suppose there is only one contestant, you, and Monty begins by showing you a door you didn't pick, which is not the big prize. All well and good, but now we throw a wrench at the law of probability, and see if we can make a dent. Monty now says that if you want, you can change your pick and choose the other remaining door. (Let's assume that he can be counted upon to always offer the contestant this choice.) The question is, is it mathematically advantageous to switch? Think about that and I'll return to it in a few paragraphs.

In the sixty year history of contract bridge, there has been such an improvement in bidding methods that bridge historians seldom discuss auctions when writing about famous matches of yesteryear. Today's advanced beginner has in his bidding arsenal so many new bidding gadgets that there is comparatively little guesswork left in deciding what the correct contract should be. However, the strategies of playing out the tricks has not undergone a similar improvement in sixty years. Endplays, trump coups, and squeezes have been well understood by the authorities since the pre-bridge days of whist. The British authority Terence Reese wrote in the sixties that the only new wrinkle in cardplay that had emerged in bridge was something called the Principle of Restricted Choice, which affects the *Let's Make a Deal* Scenario above (you didn't think I'd just gone off on a tangent here, did you?). I'll try to explain it so that non-bridge players can follow along.

In bridge, a game for two partnerships, the whole deck is dealt out, thirteen cards to each player. After the bidding, each player plays one card from his hand in turn, and the highest card wins the trick. After all thirteen cards have been played, the result in tricks is compared to the bidding, and the side that made the highest bid needs to have won that many tricks to score points. Each player must play a card of the suit led to each trick if able; the winner of a trick leads to the next. The side that made the highest bid in the auction is called the declaring side, and one member of the declaring side plays cards from his (concealed) hand and decides which cards are to be played from his partner's hand, which is placed face up on the table when the play begins, and called the "dummy". In some hands there is a trump

suit which complicates things a little, but we need not worry about that here.

Suppose you are the declarer and you face this situation (aces are high in Bridge) with five tricks left:

DUMMY:	S	2	YOU:	S	--
	H	AT9		H	KJ532
	D	--		D	--
	C	2		C	--

If no defender has yet played any hearts, and you need the last five tricks, your best bet depends upon who you think has the queen: if your right hand opponent has it, you must play a heart to the ace and lead a heart back and "finesse": this means play small if he plays small, hoping that he has the queen but has not played it. If your left hand opponent has the queen, your best play is to cash the king and continue with a small heart to the ten if he "ducks." You might alternatively play off the ace and king and hope that either defender has the queen but only one (or no) other card in hearts, but this is anti-percentage. With the opponents holding a total of five cards in the suit, the queen will "drop" in two rounds only about 28% of the time. Guessing which opponent has the queen is a 50% proposition, and if you are a good bridge player you can often improve on that by remembering the cards played to previous tricks and comparing the cards the opponents had with what they showed in the bidding. For example, if an opponent made a bid that described a certain strength hand, but has already turned up with enough cards to meet the maximum strength possible for the bid, he cannot have the queen of hearts (unless his bid was wrong).

But if the declaring side has nine cards in the two hands combined, the play for the drop becomes a clear favorite percentage-wise. With A8642 opposite KJ53, you should play the ace first and if neither opponent has a singleton queen you should lead back towards the king-jack. Often the next player will solve your problem for you by playing the queen perforce, but if he plays a small card, you are best to play the king and hope the suit "breaks" 2-2. There is a bridge maxim about this: "Eight ever, nine never." With eight combined cards you guess the location of the queen, but with nine you never guess but play for the drop. But there is one exception...

Consider this suit:

YOU:	AT753	DUMMY:	K942 (+ one other small card in a different suit)
------	-------	--------	---

It looks like you should hope for the opponents cards in the suit to be divided 2-2, so you cash the ace first, but your right-hand opponent plays the queen. Does this change anything? What if he played the jack?

If the queen (or jack) played by the player on your right is his only card in the suit, this leaves the guy on your left with a small card and whichever high card his partner didn't play. Now your best bet is to lead towards the K-9 and play the nine if the other high card doesn't appear. Or is it? What if right hand opponent (RHO), who played the high card on the first round, also has the other one? When you lead up to the K-9 and LHO plays low, you know there are only two possibilities: RHO started with Q-J doubleton, or he started with Q or J singleton. It appears that since there are two possibilities, that you are on a 50-50 guess as to what card to play.

The Principle of Restricted Choice, however, says that these two possibilities are not equal, and advises you to finesse the nine.

The first assumption to be made is that a defender holding Q-J doubleton will play to the first round at

random. Many bridge players tend to favour one or the other in this spot, but most good players recognize situations where a play doesn't matter and try to play as randomly as possible. (I sneak a look at my digital watch and play the Q if the seconds are even.) So if the above scenario (assuming he played the queen) happens 100 times, this is what will happen.

50 times out of 100, RHO will have been dealt a singleton queen and it will be right to finesse on the second round.

50 times out of 100, RHO will have been dealt Q-J doubleton and it will be right to play for the drop. However, on 25 out of these 50 times, he would have played the jack and not the queen, so only 25 of these 50 trials are statistically significant.

We therefore conclude that it is correct to finesse, by a two-to-one ratio. It should be apparent that the above reasoning can be modified for the case when RHO plays the jack, with similar results. The Principle of Restricted Choice says that possibilities where a defender's choice is restricted (the defender with the singleton queen had no choice on the first round; he had to follow suit and play the queen) are more significant than possibilities where a defender had a choice, even though it appears that the possibilities have equal probability.

Do you see how this applies to the *Let's Make a Deal* scenario? The key is whether or not Monty had a choice when he decided which door he was going to show you first. If you have chosen the door containing the Big Deal, Monty can choose either of the other two doors to display first. But if you have chosen incorrectly, there is only one choice for Monty: he cannot show you the door you picked immediately, and he cannot reveal the Big Deal door first, so his choice here is restricted. The Principle says go with the scenario where the adversary's choice is restricted, so you assume that Monty's choice was restricted and switch, and you'll find that you win twice as often. A quick foray into QBA-SIC reveals that the switcher is indeed 2-1 ahead of the stand pat contestant after thousands of trials.



Leprecon Shotz:
Eric Ozog at Titan

The Vulcan Times

#9—from Pete Gaughan, 1236 Detroit Avenue #7, Concord CA 94520-3651 (510-825-2165; fax 510-825-3419)

VULCAN / Deviant Dip 92JFrc04

Rules now in effect:

- Rule 0: Master Rule.
Rule 9: Perpetual Balloting. Cathy gets two votes. Anyone in the zine (except John Galt) may propose a rule. Original players get an off-board supply center.
Rule 10: Secret Ballot. Voting on rule changes is kept secret.
Rule 12: Perpetual Deviant. Game may not end in a draw of less than eight players.
Rule 14: Seven Is Not Enough. Game becomes Clime 9-Man.
Rule 17: More Proposals. Each player may propose two rule changes per turn. Pete may propose one rule change per turn.
Rule 20: Hypnotism. Once per game year, each player is allowed to hypnotize any unit.
Rule 27: Offboard Dot. All players receive one offboard SC.
Rule 32: Chinese Checkers. Units may jump over 1 unit into a nonadjacent province, half-strength.
Rule 33: Russian Revolution. Russia is divided.
Rule 49: Unconditional. No conditional orders, except those under Rule 157.
Rule 77: Black Death. Black Death appears in a randomly-selected supply center each turn, destroying SC status.
Rule 90: Olio. Misc. changes in Boobland, Beluga-stan, Arktangel, Gulf of Lyon.
Rule 127: Blessed Are The Rule Makers. Players get an extra one-time build (in any owned SC) for every passed proposal they author, to a max of two builds per year.
Rule 129: Potpourri. GM receipts placed in pool for DipCon; Vulcan rules proposed elsewhere cause loss of two units.
Rule 157: This is America, Bud! Orders may be made conditional on the previous turn's builds, removals or retreats; deviant rules/proposals from Britain are invalid; proposals with the word "whilst" are invalid.
Rule 183: Gaughan is now spelled GOD. Pete is divine and omnipotent.
Rule 186: Let Our Units Go! No rules that inhibit the movement of units may be passed.
Rule 192: Clones. Clones need no SCs to support them and operate just as regular units.
Rule 197: Not Just Normal Spectators. Anyone with fewer than two SCs, who can vote on or submit proposals, gets a supply center adjacent to NAO, WAO and Ura (but not to each other) and may build immediately.
Rule 199: Pass More Rules 2. Any rule which receives net +4 or more votes is passed, unless it is (1) a "quick-kill" rule (passes with 8+ yes and 0 no votes); (2) a "porkbarrel" rule (net +12 or more); (3) a "quick-win" or "not-so-quick-win" rule (only by having the highest vote total).
Rule 207: Hack Job. Off-board centers converted to on-board. Player may win by either holding a majority of SCs or 18 centers.
Rule 212: Planet Downfall. Players may build rockets, which can: 1. Allow a unit to move to any province on the current map; 2. Destroy a unit or a supply center, including off-board centers (destroyed supply centers return in two years); 3. Allow one unit to move to/from any space on Planet Downfall.
Rule 215: No More Re-proposals.
Rule 220: SC Conversion. Only spaces with 9 or more characters in their names become SCs.

Passed This Turn

- Rule 224: *Save the Whales*. International Whaling Commission strikes at offenders, using nukes to destroy Norway and Russia. Nwy, Ark, Ura, Mos, Kaz, Sev, Kiev, Geo are all vaporized—and permanently disappear. All units in them or ordered to them or accepting support from units in them are eliminated. *[[The use of "Gre" in the previous issue was my typo. —GOD. Killed: England's a norway.]]*
Rule 237: *Procedural Matters*. This game may end in a solo win, without imposition of an SC tax or continuation of the game. Rule 0 is amended thus: "following the next deadline" becomes "following the next Winter, Spring or Fall". The GM gets two votes.
RuleMaker builds, Winter 1904: PGaughan, Wilson.

Error, Error, Error...

Italy owned two centers and therefore should not have had his units removed; his winter report should have read: builds ~~from~~, rf marseilles; GM removes f portugal; now has a kiel, a naples, ca oman, ca sicily, cf picardy, rf marseilles.
One of you wrote an order conditional on which proposal passed. Naughty, naughty! Read 49 and 157 again.

Spring 1904:

- Austria (Andrew York): no units.
Barbary States (Brad Wilson): f casablanca—west africa.
Mensheviks (Jim Burgess): nmr. a burgess—unordered.
y (Cathy Gaughan): f gaughan s god f god—west atlantic, a isengard—gap of rohan.
England (Greg Ellis): f sahana—antarctic (not adjacent), f jerusalem—south med, f liverpool—irish, f edinburgh—norwegian, cf skaggerak—north, cf catalonia—western med, cf greece—aegean, cf adriatic—ionian, ca apulia—venice.
France (Tim Goodwin resigns): nmr. no units.

- Germany (Joel Grönberg): nmr. no units.
GOD (Pete Gaughan): f god—west atlantic.
Italy (Mark Lew): a kiel—ruhr, a naples—apulia, ca oman—kuwait, ca sicily—cc:naples—rome, cf picardy—english, rf marseilles—cc:catalonia—south atlantic.
Mensheviks (Rich Irving): declares a irving an RDF; a irving—urals /no such space/.
Monarchists (Jason Bergmann): no units.
Nelson (Mark Nelson): no units.
Persia-Arabia (Jack McHugh): no units.
Rad (Conrad Minshall): a minshall s boobshevik a burgess—urals /no such order/.
Turkey (Steve Nicewarner): ra constantinople—bulgaria, a berlin unordered, ca paris—cc:picardy—belgium.
Whyte (Brendan Whyte): builds f whyte; f whyte—west atlantic.

Matthew Lahtinen is now the player of record for France. Would John Galt please stand by for Germany?

Deadline for Fall 1904 is July 27.

Game Paradigm: Black Death strikes (Spring and Fall only) orders (incl. Chinese Checkers, Hypnotism) votes on old proposals, those passed take effect new proposals offered
Official Spectators: John Galt, Phil Reynolds, Bob Theriault.

Edicts of the Vulcan GOD

It seems to GOD that this game has degenerated beyond the point of fun. Several players who were enjoying the game have dropped out because of a certain trend; others who were enjoying it are now just scraping by with minimal interest. The trend? Using the game not as a vehicle for clever and humorous play and press, but for repetitive, boring slams on other players.

Edict #2: The 'quick-kill' provision of Rule 199 is expanded to include any proposal which is targeted at one and only one player, even if it does not lead to imminent elimination (call it a 'punching bag' provision). In addition, all restricted proposals will hereafter be identified as such when proposed.

Edict #3: No player may vote for Proposal 257.

Remember: due to Rule 237, the proposals below will be voted on AFTER your next set of moves, including SC chart adjustments.

New Proposals

- Prop. 241 (Minshall): *Sunset Clause*. Each season GOD randomly chooses one rule from the ten lowest numbered rules (excepting rule 0) and revokes it. That is done by whatever means GOD finds expedient. For example, if the target rule requires a specific rule be passed to revoke it then GOD might write such a rule and declare it passed. Etc. This rule may eventually delete itself. So what?
Prop. 242 (York): *South is North*. All previously passed rules are inverted in their meaning. Pete, GOD/Devil, will start with the first rule passed and apply the inverse of the rule to the current map situation. This will continue until this rule is reached—and then stop.
Prop. 243 (York): *Bond, James Bond*. Spies & CounterSpies are now available to each power. Each Winter, every power can train one spy or one counterspy for every two supply centers owned (rounded up). A counterspy is assigned in secret to protect a center in a Spring turn. A Spy is sent in a fall turn to attempt to neutralize an enemy supply center (reverts to neutral); or to capture a neutral center. However, if there is a CounterSpy protecting the center, the Spy is caught and eliminated (NOTE: sending two spies to the same space will eliminate a counterspy; but not alter the center—if no counterspy, the center will change ownership). Casablanca is a special case and any number of Spies & CounterSpies can exist there without effecting one another or the center.
Prop. 244 (McCrumb): *Need My Space*. All land provinces may now hold either one or three units. If holding three units, they must be of at least two different nationalities.
Prop. 245 (Irving): *All Good Things...* This proposal incorporates the following: (1) Time will now flow backwards following the passage of this proposal. (Since it will pass in Fall 1904, the following turns would be: Spring 04, Winter 03, etc.) Autumn retreats occur based on Spring moves and Summer retreats on Fall moves. (2) A Spacio-temporal Anomaly (STA) will form at Picardy (where else!) after Fall 1904 and expand at the rate of one space in all directions after each turn into the past. All units, SC and sea or land territories occupied by the STA are destroyed. (3) STA may only be destroyed by all original, 7-Is-Not-Enough & Russian Rev. players (or standbys) with units on the board submitting a proposal on the same turn (before Fall 1904). (4) After the anomaly is destroyed, Time will return to normal (Winter

VULCAN / SUPPLY CENTERS and VOTING STATUS after Spring 1904

		SC	Votes	Prop	Points
Austria	york	1	1	2	0
Barbary States	wilson, casablanca	2	2	2	0
Boobsheviks	burgess	1	1	2	0
Cathy	gaughan, isengard	2	4	2	0
England	liverpool, edinburgh, yorkshire, skaggerak, jerusalem, catalonia	6	6	2	0
France	goodwin	1	1	2	0
Germany	grönberg	1	1	2	0
GOD	god	1	3	1	0
Italy	lew, marseilles	2	2	2	0
Mensheviks	irving	1	1	2	0
Monarchists	bergmann	1	6	4	0
Nelson	nelson	1	1	1	0
Persia-Arabia	mchugh	1	1	2	0
Rad	minshall	1	1	1	0
Turkey	nicewarner, constantinople	2	2	2	0
Whyte	whyte	1	1	2	0
Totals:		26	35		

Victory Criterion: 18 or majority. Home SCs in bold. SC = Supply Centers / Prop = Proposals Allotted. Neutralized by Black Death: sevastopol (moscow, holland, corsica)
 Neutral regular: afghanistan, alexandretta, anduin, anorien, antarctic, barad-dur, belfalas, beluga-stan, blue mountains, bree, canary islands, city of the corsairs, dol guidor, druwaith iaur, dunland, east emnet, eastern mediterranean, eastfold, edoras, english channel, erebor, esgaroth, forlond, gladden fields, grey havens, gulf of lyon, gulf of sirre, harad, havens of umbar, heigoland bight, helm's deep, hollin, imladris, iron hills, kazakhstan, khand, khazad-dum, lamedon, lebennin, lorien, mid-atlantic, minas morgul, minas tirith, minhiriath, north atlantic, norwegian, nurn, osgiliath, persian gulf, river running, the shire, south atlantic, south gondor, south ithilien, south mediterranean, south thun, tyrthenian, udun, west africa, west atlantic, western mediterranean, wold. Neutral but unadjacent: apporter, convocation, crisis, distain, enchanter, heir, heterogeneous, insoluble, lorn, moneyed, pace, peril, pietism, resultate, seesaw, slash, talisman, verdigris, windore, zati
 The following will be home centers if taken by the appropriate power: Austria moneyed, insoluble; Barbary States talisman, lorn, west africa; Boobsheviks zati; England pietism, heterogeneous; France seesaw, convocation; Germany windore, enchanter; Italy distain, peril; Mensheviks verdigris, kazakhstan; Monarchists pace, slash; Persia-Arabia resultate, apporter; Turkey heir, crisis, alexandretta

1904, going forward) and the map will be restored to its original configuration in all areas occupied by the anomaly. (No units, but SC's will be in original locations) (5)
 This rule cannot be modified or repealed. (This is a test from Q, after all!)

Prop. 246 (Irving): **Church of GOD.** Prayers may be made to GOD each turn accompanied by an appropriate donation to His Church: Apartment of GOD, 1236 Detroit Ave #7, Concord, CA 94520-3651. (If GOD changes the location of His Church to House of GOD or Condo of GOD, the address will change accordingly.) GOD will only listen to those prayers which include a donation at least as large in USS as the person offering the prayer has in SC. GOD will grant at least one prayer (with appropriate donation) to answer each turn (if He gets any). GOD will use His Infinite Wisdom to select which prayers to grant. All donations are NOT tax deductible. (Damn that IRS!) *[[This is a reproposal under Rule 215 and will not pass.]]*

Prop. 247 (Whyte): **Multiple Orgy.** Unless declared hostile to another player specifically in that turn's orders, a player's units may coexist in a province with any other player's. Therefore standoffs do not occur unless at least one of the involved players has declared hostility to another. Supports are therefore often redundant. Ownership of multiply-occupied centres is split between occupying powers, and fractions from various centres can be combined to make whole 'centres' (i.e. a half ownership in Par and a third in Mar and a quarter in Rom = 13/12, i.e. an ownership of one for build purposes. Hostility may only be declared at the start of any movement turn and lasts only the duration of that turn, so does not last into builds. Builds are only available in entirely self-owned home centres. Only one unit per player may be in any one province. If forced to retreat by hostile units, retreats cannot be conducted into spaces occupied by the dislodging power or by any other power supporting the dislodgement, even if hostility was not declared between either the supporter or retreator.

Prop. 248 (Ellis): **Clean Up.** Repeal the following rules: 27, 77, 90, 129, 197, and 199.

Prop. 249 (Wilson): **Repeal** Repeal Rule 32.

Prop. 250 (Wilson): **Repeal Also.** Repeal Rule 77.

Prop. 251 (Lew): **All Creatures Great and Small.** When a player gets a unit on Planet Downfall, that unit and all the player's other units are immediately converted into a new type of unit, named after a Titan character (eg, gargoyle, unicorn, etc.). The type of character is whichever one Cathy decides best resembles the player in terms of appearance, personality, or whatever other quality she deems relevant. No two players may have the same type of Titan unit.

Two conversions take place immediately: All Cathy's units are converted to angels; and all Greg Ellis's units are converted to trolls. For movement purposes, all Titan units are treated as armies; a Titan unit at sea drowns (is removed from the board). Whenever a Titan unit is dislodged, the unit is destroyed and the attacking player scores points (calculated as in Titan) for killing it.

Prop. 252 (Lew): **Passages.** Two spaces are adjacent if one immediately follows the other when the names of all spaces, excluding NNS spaces, are listed alphabetically; also, the first and last spaces on the list are adjacent. This is in addition to current adjacencies.

Prop. 253 (Bergmann): **Small is Beautiful.** Existing spaces are not supply centers. Then, those spaces with six or fewer characters in their names become supply cen-

ters. Any new SC which has been an SC at any previous time in the game still belongs to whatever Great Power owned it when it lost SC status. The 1904 SC chart will be based on the new SCs. *[[This is a reproposal under Rule 215 and will not pass.]]*

Prop. 254 (Bergmann): **Looking Out For Number One.** All of Greg Ellis' units except for F Sahara are immediately removed. Any player except Ellis may build in any of his/her home centers, regardless of who controls it. Greg Ellis is guaranteed survival in the game at least until Spring 1905. *[[This is a 'punching bag' proposal and requires 8 yes/zero no votes to pass.]]*

Prop. 255 (Bergmann): **Composite.** Proposals [Looking out], [Small is Beautiful], [Passages] and [All Creatures] are all implemented, even if they don't pass. Proposals [Ellis's proposal] and [Ellis's other proposal] are annulled, even if they do pass. *[[This is a 'punching bag' proposal and requires 8 yes/zero no votes to pass. The second clause of this proposal is meaningless and would have no effect.]]*

Prop. 256 (Bergmann): **Hey, Greg, Remember This?** All spaces in the British Isles, Scandinavia and the Atlantic Ocean become an "Ice Rink." Ice Rink spaces are as in the Austrian Ice Rink from Glome. *[[If passed, it will be the responsibility of the author to present GOD with the Ice Rink rule, else this proposal will have no effect.]]*

Prop. 257 (Nicewarner): **Bus He's just a Lesser God!** Rule 183 is modified to read "Pete received votes on any one proposal equal to 20% of the votes available or two less than what is requires to pass, whichever is lesser." In addition, two players must vote for any proposal for it to pass.

Prop. 258 (Nicewarner): **Return of the Poet Warriors.** With each turns' orders, each player must submit a piece of original poetry or prose of not more than one page. These original works will be printed with the moves, and each player with a center, a vote, or the ability to propose rules must vote on the best one. The winner of the vote will receive one build, which he may use immediately in any controlled, unoccupied center and three votes towards next turn's proposals. Second-place will receive a build as per the above.

Press

Mensheviks to Agnostic-GOD: I could use a new Babel Fish! BTW, have you read Oolon Colluphid's latest?

GOD to Mensheviks: GOD does not read! (At least, HE doesn't anything written more recently than 700 (what else?) A.D.)

Whyte to all: The Whyte Russians are coming!

Whyte to GM: Does Chinese checkers work if a unit jumped over moves out? does the unit jumped have to remain in the space, or can it move without affecting the jump? What if the space was empty and a unit moves in to be jumped over? Or should I just read the rules and shutup?

GM to Whyte: CC status (vacant/occupied spaces) is determined before moves, and unaffected by them. Don't shut up, I need the exercise.

Ig to Board: Sorry about the boring rule proposals last turn. I was afraid that "Long Rules Suck" would pass, and anything authored by me would be ruled against. The "Vatican" rule was authored by T-Bone Ehli, in Quonset Hut, about six years ago.

MODERAN / Snowball Fighting Champions' Game ASF26

Turn Eight: A Champ Who Makes You Want To UpChuck...

WARRIOR (PLAYER)	loc	segment 1	segment 2	segment 3	new loc	hp	sb-di
Comet Chucker (Clark Millikan)	L10	Di at HP (35,68)	collect Di	Di at HP (85,31)	L10	15	0-0
Desperado (Teresa Armstrong)	Q11	Di at IM (50,97)	collect Di	Di at PM* (60,35)	Q11	7	9-0-0
Hoi Polloi (J.R. Baker)	J11	De at CC, dodge (75,21)	De at CC, -J10 (75,73)	HH at CC (75,27)	J10	6	5-0-0
Ice Man (Andy York)	R10	-Q9-P8-O7, collect Sb	CS at S7 (nobody home)	collect 2 Sb	O7	6	8-2-0
Lasher (Daf Langley)	T10	-run indoors	flirt†	flirt†	kit	9	10-0-0
PeD Mang (David Wang)	S7	-T8-U9, collect Sb	collect Di	Di at D (60,92)	U9	11	5-0-0
Pheckless Phool (Tom Hurst)	kit	sit	sit	W11-V10-U9-S9	S9	13	7-2-0

Weather roll = 21. † = dodge. * marks conditional orders.

Deadline for Endgame Statements is July 27.

† Lasher orders, Seg Two: "Flirt with Snowy while towelling my hair and changing into silver bunny suit. Seg Three: "Continue flirting with Snowy while I whip up something gooey to eat." Both orders fail as Snowy has more vulgar activities in mind.

Segment One: Players react in strange ways when someone is about to win. Some go all out to stop the leader, and others... well, Lasher runs inside, as required. Phool sits there also. PeD Mang runs out from under his tree. Ice Man runs toward Comet Chucker—and Desperado throws at IM, not CC (she misses anyway). Hoi Polloi could run but he knows the value of standing one's ground and hits CC, while at the same time dodging from Chucker's Dirigible!

Segment Two: HP smacks Comet Chucker again, taking CC down to one HP. If only someone will attack Chucker! But no, Ice Man tries to Storm the S7 Conifer (nobody there to victimize).

Segment Three: Mang hurls his last weapon, a Di which misses Despy. Despy returns fire and scores big. Hoi Polloi, unarmed and alone, faces Comet Chucker for one last time and scores again—but too little too late, as this time Chucker's Di is good for 3 points and the championship.

PeD Mang to Pheckless Phool: Thanks for the vote of confidence, but Comet Chucker appears most likely to win. It looks like I should stick to comic strip characters for Snowball Fighting: I've won with Calvin and Hobbes, but lost with Zaphod Beeblebrox and probably now PeD Mang, the Klingon Kid. I also picked a terrible time to go conservative, especially in this zine!

Lasher to Snowy: Tell SnowPoke to put the snowball down. I meant marshmallows.
HP to CC: Not that I'm giving you the game, but if you missed me with that Di then you're going to be toast—plug in the toaster, Daf.

o PP: Let's hope this one's over by the time you get back.

PeD Mang to the Yard: Run away! Run away! Don't be the one to give Comet Chucker the win!

Lasher to Yard: Which one of you ate all the whipped cream? When I find out who did it, there will be snow flying.

HP to L: Q.E.D., women belong in the kitchen.

Lasher to Snowy: That other woman hasn't been in here yet, has she? She isn't the one who used all the whipped cream, was she? And just who did she use it all up with, mister? I think you have some explaining to do, and quickly!!!

SnowMaster to Lasher: She was here and gone before anything could happen!

Phiesty to Whiplady: So nice of you to join me. I've got this nice little cattle prod I've been eager to try out. Do I shock you?

Lasher to Pheckless: Menage á trois, anyone?

SnowMaster to Phiesty: I've found it's easier to shock the Lasher than she lets on.

Phoolish Philosophy #4: NEVER give a phool a second chance!

Lasher to Snowy: Well, if that other woman hasn't been in here yet, where did all the whipped cream go?

SnowMaster to Long Lashes: It's on the bottom shelf, behind the chocolate body paint.

CC to L: Nothing personal, apparently you offended everyone last turn.

SM to CC: In Snowball Fighting, everything's personal, you punk.

LAMETH / 1992AJ

Winter 1907: England builds f lon; Italy removes a tus; Turkey builds a con.

Spring 1908: Sick to Death

England (Stan Johnson): a stp h, f bar-nwg, f nwg-nar, a lvn-pru, f bal-ber (Lkie s /dislodged/), f bor-bal, f hel-hol, f bel h, f lon-eng.

France (Martin Johnson): a pic h, f tyn-ion, f lyo-wes, f wes-mid, a ber-kie (a ruh s), a tvo-ven (a pie s).

Italy (Kathy Caruso): a rom h /dislodged/.

Russia (James Bailey): a war ms a mos, a bud-vic, a rum-bul, f bla-ank, a gal-boh.

Turkey (Tim Goodwin): a con-bul, a gre-ser, f aeg-ion, a ven-rom (f nap s), a tri-ven (f apu s, f adr s), f smy-con.

Retreats: English f kie, Italian a rom.

Deadline for Fall 1908 is July 27.

France to England: A player with your reputation cannot really expect me to buy your excuse that you "forgot" what our deal was... I'll make you rethink your assessment that this game was "winding down."

England to France: The only inconsistencies were in the functioning of your mental processes. If you think you are sorry now, just wait till I have gotten alone with you and you'll know how sorry, sorry can be.

GM to F and E: I hope you will both take the time to write to me with your assessments of the situation—it would make great endgame reading.

Martin to Tim: Believe me that I wanted to work together in the Med, but I couldn't find any motivation for you to cut me a deal and I would be foolish to trust that if I gave you your requested concessions, you would want to stop at Italy. Let's just play four-player chess, shall we?

England to Moscow: If you made the right choice you are now cured.

GM to England: Ah, such an arbitrary god...

Overhead outside of the war room in the Russian Imperial Palace: "Whaddya mean we can't win a three-front war? Has anybody ever tried it?"

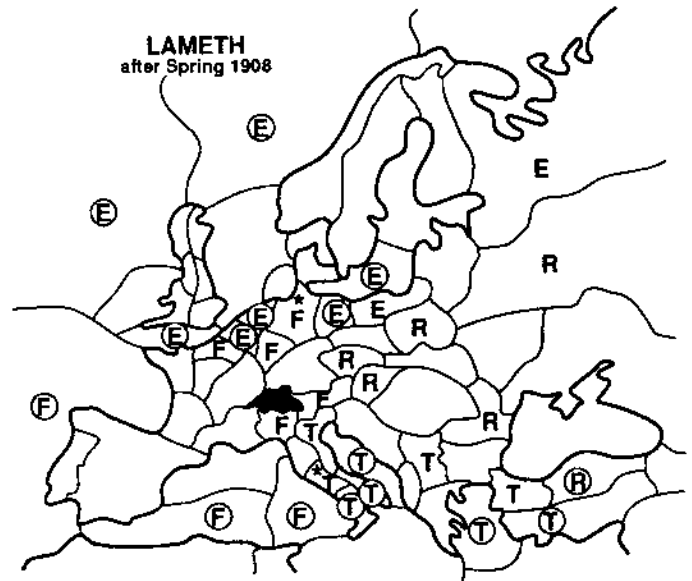
L'Emperor to the People of France: Remember this as we lose ground in this dreary conflict, THE FRENCH ARE FOR THE FRENCH.

GM to L'Emp: Are you playing the right game? How far underground is the French Resistance?

Russia's Obscure Musical Babes: Karen Peris of Innocence Mission, Wendy MaHarry, Siobhan Maher of River City People.



Leprecon Sholtz:
Ken Corbin and friend



ARKON/Gunboat Snowball Fighting ASF27

Turn Three: Fight Events Out as Players Gather Their Wits

WARRIOR	init	loc	segment 1	segment 2	segment 3	new loc	vp	hp	sb-di
Frost Queen	FQ	N2	collect 2 Sb	RR at GC (90,88)	RR at OMW (95,81)	N2	4	5	0-0
George Costanza	GC	J2	collect 2 Sb	CS at E5 (nobody home)	RR at OMW* (90,42)	J2	4	9	0-0
Icedance	ID	F8	CS at E5 (nobody home)	-H8-I8, collect Sb	RR at OMW (95,36)	I8	3	8	1-1
Mr. Freeze	MF	R12	RR at TDM (95,21)	-kitchen	warm hands, drink warm milk	kit	7	5	0-0
Old Man Winter	OMW	E5	-G5-J5-K5	RR at FQ (95,76)	RR at FQ (95,28)	K5	4	5	0-0
Ramtop Chuckers	RC	K15	Di at SH (70,84)	collect Di	collect 2 Sb	K15	4	8	2-1
Splat to the Head	SH	F16	collect 2 Sb	RR at RC (95,88)	RR at RC (95,04)	F16	3	8	0-0
Tatter D. Mallion	TDM	R10	collect Di	collect Di	Di at YS* (55,44)	R10	4	6	0-1
Tigger of the Tundra	TT	kit	-V8-W7-V6	RR at YS (95,14)	RR at FQ* (90,56)	V6	5	6	0-0
Yosemite Sam	YS	S5	-T6-U7-T8-U9	collect Di	Di at MF (fails)	U9	3	4	0-0

Weather roll = 31. † = dodge. * marks conditional orders and "RR at nearest." Deadline for Turn Four is July 27.

Segment One: Tigger of the Tundra comes charging out of the kitchen, but has to swerve drastically to avoid the onrushing Yosemite Sam! Old Man Winter runs out from under his conifer, just in time to avoid Icedance's Conifer Storm. Ramtop Chuckers heaves his Dirigible at Splat to the Head but misses by a mile; Mr. Freeze is the only other active participant this Segment (Rattlesnake-ing Tatter D. Mallion) as all the others are collecting snow.

Segment Two: George Costanza tries that Conifer Storm also, but there's still nobody under that tree. Mr. Freeze is equally evasive, running completely into the kitchen. Icedance steps in a little tighter, packing a ball and watching as the others play Kick the Can: Old Man Winter kicks Frost Queen's can; Splat to the Head kicks Chuckers'; Tigger kicks Sam's; and the Queen, in turn, kicks George's. Several Dirigibles are prepared.

Segment Three: All hands on deck! Except for Mr. Freeze (in the house) and Ramtop (packing snowballs), everyone's on the attack. Yosemite tries to hit MF but his Di splatters harmlessly on the kitchen door. Old Man Winter fires and scores at Frost Queen, but Winter has three enemies around him and they all (FQ, ID, GC) hit him. Splat splats Ramtop again; Tigger selects the Queen as his new target. And Tatter D. Mallion gets off the schneid by nailing Yosemite Sam with a Dirigible!

Chuckers to SM: Whos dis Queen, feller? Don't seem ta like r talkin much. Ifn day new betta, theyd larn that us po folks jus talkin natrl like.

SM to Chuckers: I've had a cold, so I'm talking pretty much the way you write!

Tedium to Over-Vexed: I am, also, irate and nonplussed at the usage of what purports to be language in this contest, but I reckon a few beers ought ta cure it!

OMW to Snow Queen: Call me an iconoclast, but I just have no respect for royalty.

Frost Queen to Sam: OFF WITH HIS HEAD!

Sam contracts laryngitis and an ear-splitting silence falls over the yard.

(SnowMaster: That's the wickedest case of laryngitis I've seen in years...)

Frost Queen to SnowMaster: Surely someone around here has a sharp enough knife to take the little bugger's head off. No one shoots at the royal personage and survives.

Chuckers to Frost Queen: Have you ever read "The Queen and I"? Your press last issue sounds just like the Queen's thoughts in the book.

Frost Queen to SnowMaster: This press writing is tiring when you have to do it weird just so no one will know it's you, you know what I mean?

Icedance to Old Man Winter: That's it. Just hold that pose!

OMW to Icedance: Well, I guess we can call it even (I hope).

T-D-M to SM: "Your is as yet unused..." ??? Looks like something fell off here.

SnowMaster to TDM: Sure look that way, doesn't it?

Chuckers to Splat: Do you really want to get into a one-on-one battle? It might be fun.

Of course, it would be just as fun if the two of us stood back here and hurled snowballs long-range at the heathen masses.

Mr. Constanza to Frost Queen: For a queen, you play dirtier than (Princess) Diana. Since you could never be man enough to approach me, allow me to come before you and present my case at the most convenient opportunity.

Chuckers to Tigger: Are you a tiger or a chicken?

OMW to Ramtop: That was quite prophetic about that Tigger fellow. How do you do it?

Frost Queen to Tigger: No, there are no extract of malt cookies in the kitchen, but there are rumballs.

Tigger to SnowMaster: I checked my lunch box and Kanga did include some Extract of Malt Cookies along with the Extract of Malt sandwiches and the Extract of Malt Pudding—Yum!

OMW to Splat: Nice shot! (Snicker, snicker).

G. C. to Mr. Freeze: I saw your act in the park the other day, and let me tell you, I'm not impressed. While you're cooling off inside, try to think of something more clever.

Chuckers to Old Man Winter: I guess age makes you more analytical. Personally, I'd rather just blast away than analyze who is over there and who is the most tempting target. I say, if I can see them, I'll get them.

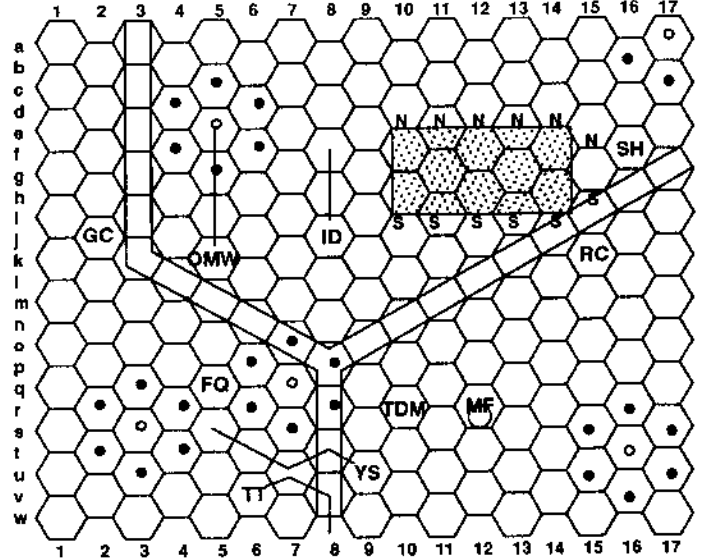
SM to OMW: I'll take old and analytical over young and verbose any day.

George C. to The Old Man: This is for all the grief you've given us; who's got the white stuff now, baby!

Tedium to "Q": The Enterprise is not coming to save you in this one!

Frost Queen to Yard: Let's hear some chatter out there. Snowball Fighting is no fun unless there is a lot of cross talk.

ARKON after Turn 3



LUSITANIA/Gunboat Snowball Fighting ASF30

Gamestart

WARRIOR — loc: Burthead (BH) — B8; Droopy (DR) — V14; Duke of Xeimasia (DX) — S5; Ice Root Beer (IRB) — N2; Pollywog (P) — B14; Señor Beavis (SB) — L10; Thing (T) — H6; X1 — K15; X2 — U9; X3 — C2; Zonk (Z) — Q15

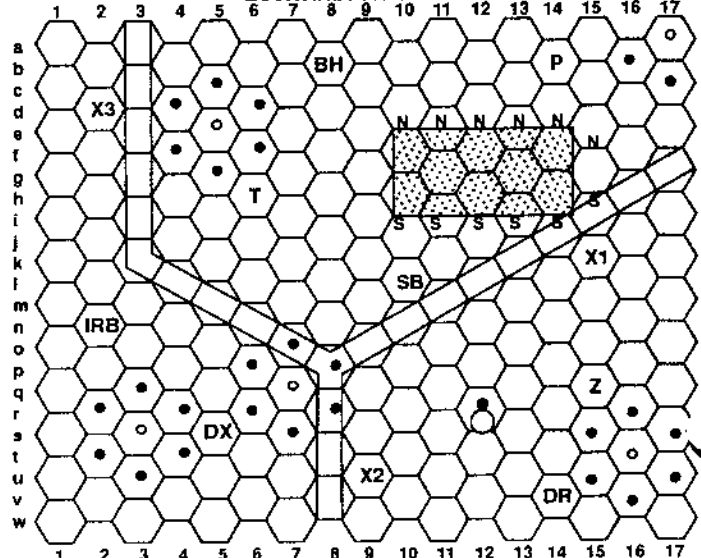
Deadline for Turn One is July 27.

Directions to players: If you're signed up and don't have a copy of the rules, please send me a SASE. If you are signed up but did not send a game name, send that with your opening moves, or else you'll have to play under the "X" moniker.

I believe Xeimasia is χεϊμασια. It's possible I've mistranscribed it.

If you're playing in this one, here's your game name: _____

LUSITANIA before Turn 1



CALADAN / Merchant of Venus

Turn Thirteen: GM Whines About Excess Demand

We're Dell, Men!—Bill Wordelmann, Dell

Dice are 126. Move: Wet Landings—Wei Landing/s.

Trade: sells Dribble Glass *[[and we draw: Demand for Finest Dust at 5]]*; counting: \$78 + 200 = \$278.

Intergalactic Dead Heads—Richard Weiss, Qossuth

Dice are 356. Move: R30—B30—R30—Y30—B—R—A—Dry Port—Mulligan

Gear—B—Desolation Landing/s—Desolation Landing/s.

Trade: sells one Melf Pelt *[[and we draw: Space Spice]]* with Double Demand *[[and we draw: Demand for Space Spice at 4b]]*, buys Yxklyx Factory.

Accounting: \$38 + 210 - 200 - 30p = \$18.

Microsoft Big Deal 5.0—Rich Irving, Eepeeep

Dice are 335. Move: Jewel Port/o—B—Jellybeast Landing/o—A—Y—R—B—Y—R—A—Ice Station (Zebra)/o—B30.

Trade: none. Accounting: \$20.

Mr. Ed—Ed Wrobel, Whynom

Dice are 1456. Move: Open Port—R—B—Y—B—R—B—Y—R20—A—A—R—Y10—Open Port.

Trade: sells Voll Silk *[[and we draw: Megalish Paperweights]]* and Voll Silk *[[and we draw: Glorious Junk]]*.

Accounting: \$60 + 220 + 220 = \$500.

Intergalactic Towel Traders—Clark Millikan, Nik

Dice are 3344. Move: Jellybeast Landing/s—Jellybeast Landing/o.

Trade: sells ServoMechanism *[[and we draw: Canned Trains]]*, buys Qossoth Factory, Infinite Puzzles, and Psychotic Sculpture.

Accounting: \$160 + 330 - 200 - 120 - 160 + 108c = \$118.

Millenium Falcon—Chuff Afferbach, Human

Dice are 256. Move: Open Port—Y—B—NC6—B20—NC6—A—Wet Landing/o—R—B—R—B—Y—Neutron Port.

Trade: Delivers Fare to 4a *[[and we draw: Demand for Immortal Grease at 7b]]*.

Accounting: \$50 + 140 = \$190.

Turn Fourteen

We're Dell, Men!—Bill Wordelmann, Dell

Dice are 566. Move: -R-B-R-B-Y-Neutron Port.

Trade: buys two Finest Dust.

Accounting: \$278 - 20 = \$258.

Intergalactic Dead Heads—Richard Weiss, Qossuth

Dice are 266. Move: none, stays at Desolation Landing/s.

Trade: sells one Melf Pelt *[[and we draw: Demand for Psychotic Sculpture at 2]]* with Demand *[[and we draw: Finest Dust]]*, sells other Melf Pelt *[[and we draw: Fare to Base from 5]]*, buys Shining Slime and two Immortal Grease.

Accounting: \$18 + 160 + 110 - 100 - 100 + 50c = \$138.

Microsoft Big Deal 5.0—Rich Irving, Eepeeep

Dice are 345. Move: -Ice Station/o—Ice Station/s

Trade: sells one Immortal Grease *[[and we draw: Immortal Grease]]* with Triple Demand *[[and we draw: Demand for Melf Pelts at 6]]*; buys Ice Station Port.

Accounting: \$20 + 250 - 160 = \$110.

Mr. Ed—Ed Wrobel, Whynom

Dice are 2235. Move: -R—B—Y—Airhome.

Trade: buys two Bionic Perfume and Aerie Port.

Accounting: \$500 - 160 - 200 + 38c = \$178.

Intergalactic Towel Traders—Clark Millikan, Nik

Dice are 2266. Move: -A—TeleGate 1 (pn 6)—B—R—B—(Y10)—R10—B10—R10—B—(Y)—B—R—Aerie/se—(Y)/ne—R20—R20—Asteroid City West.

Trade: sells Infinite Puzzles *[[and we draw: Demand for Finest Dust at 7b]]*; buys Bionic Perfume.

Accounting: \$118 + 250 - 80 = \$288.

Millenium Falcon—Chuff Afferbach, Human

Dice are 234. Move: (pn 2)—R—Y—R—Space Station—Y20—NC2—Base—R—B.

Trade: none. Accounting: \$190.

Deadline for Turns Fifteen and Sixteen is July 27.

Order of play and dice for Turns 15 & 16, net worth and assets:

1. Millenium Falcon	223 / 233	\$390
Deeds: Shuttlestop		\$200
2. We're Dell, Men!	125 / 236	\$858
Deeds: Terror Station		\$200, Whaleport \$200, Dell Factory \$200
3. Intergalactic Dead Heads	256 / 256	\$338
Equipment: Shield		\$60; Deeds: Yxklyx Factory \$200
4. Microsoft Big Deal 5.0	345 / 235	\$310

Equipment: Shield \$60; Deeds: Ice Station \$200.

5. Mr. Ed.....4566 / 2236\$1076

Equipment: Gate Lock \$100, Shield \$60; Deeds: Volois Factory \$200, Airhome \$200, Nillis Factory \$100, Graw Factory \$200, Aerie \$200

6. Intergalactic Towel Traders.....5556 / 3455\$888

Equipment: Shield \$60, Relic Yellow Drive \$80

Deeds: Neutron Port \$200, Jellybeast Landing \$200, Qossuth Factory \$200

TeleGates 1 through 5 are open. Net worth is total of deeds and cash; equipment or ships, like goods, have value only when traded and their barter value is not included.

Merchant Master to Caladanians: This game is confusing anyway, but then I caught a cold and adjudicated it while not completely coherent. So please be on the lookout for erroneous demand- and good-chit placements (coming/going to the Cup).

ITT to WDM: I saw an 1856 tournament on the Origins schedule, does this mean the game is released?

Merchant Master to ITT: Hey, let's keep the rail-game chatter to a bare minimum, ok? WDM to Merchant Master-on-the-Move: (as you might have guessed) We want a rail game! We want a rail game!

MM to ITT: Sorry, I guess I was talking to the wrong guy.

MBD 5.0 (Get the version number right, will ya!) to MM: Hey, can I use the second roll first and the first roll second?

Larry Bird and Michael Jordan to MBD: NOOO! (and if you change your name every turn you can expect people to get it wrong)

WDM to Macrosift BFG-5000.1: Whaddya mean version 6.22 is out? Does this mean I have to upgrade my upgrade again? (By the way, that's a nice weapon you have there...)

Merchant Master to Weirdell and FaMillia: If I give you guys BFG-5000s, will you go blow up "Whynom World" down there in the corner?

MoFo to Fast Eddie: At last I have the jump on you, and might actually arrive at the planet before you. So when you come galloping in (gasp, choke) to the space station, please use the hitching post outside. In space, no one can hear you fart.

Sticky Ed to WDM: I finally shake you and now Mr. Falcon sets up shop on my turf! Hey, Hey, You, You, Get Offa My Cloud!

Merchant Master to Ed: They're both offa 'your' Cloud. Satisfied? Or can't you get no sat-is-fac-tion?

MBD: Hey Intergalactic Dead Meat! I think Nick-At-Nite would be more helpful than the Oxford English Dictionary in defining what was meant by Wilbur! Besides, you can't count either! Eight is NOT enough! (Another TV reference?) Try counting with both hands! (Sorry, I forgot the Qossuth don't have any!)

Horny Ed to MBD: Forget Minuer—what a hokey name! Now Counseller Troi—she's one hot half-breed. I'm a sucker for a woman busting out of a uniform, a 25th century Lovely Rita Meier Maid.

Aboard the Millenium Falcon: "Sure, Princess, I said I would take you to your rebel base, but the Knights-Who-Say-Nick-At-Night made me a better offer to bring you to their space station. And no, you can't keep the silk!"

MBD announces: Welcome to the new Ice Station Zebra, where we sell and service the finest in Servomechs, Red Drives and Clipper ships! Free ice with stay!

kNicks to Bulls Fan: Never put your money where your heart is.

MM to kNicks: Too late, he's only buying there because it's the old homestead. Can you say "Rosebud"? I knew you could...

Salesman Ed to Potential Customers: NOW—convenient access east or west of the asteroid belt. Experience true equine hospitality while you stop and smell the perfume. Remember our slogan: "Smell us!"

MBD to Han & Chewie: Took your advice, but mainly bought the place because the IRS tax deduction. (Intergalactic Revenue Service) How much you pay for that condo in your prime central location? I had to buy mine out in the boonies, but I got a STEAL!

MM to Nik: These pitchmen are enough to make me give up salesmanship. Looks like you've had enough of them to stay away, too.

Leprecon
Shotz:
Russ
Russnak



IX / SUPPLY CENTERS held as of Winter 1903											
Austria	vie	ven	tri							3/1	remove one
England	lvp	edi	lon	SWE						3/2	remove one or even
France	par	bre	mar	por	spa	LVP	EDI			5/7	may build two
Germany	kie	ber	mun	bel	hol	den				6/6	even
Italy	rom	nap	tun	bud	VEN					4/4	may build one
Russia	stp	mos	war	rum	owe	sev	nwy	BUD		7/7	may build one
Turkey	con	ank	smv	bul	gre	ser	TRI			6/7	may build one

IX / 1993HG

Error: Map last time did not show Russia's a war.
 Summer 1903 Retreat: Austrian a tri-tyo, English f nts-edi.
 Germany proposes F/G draw.

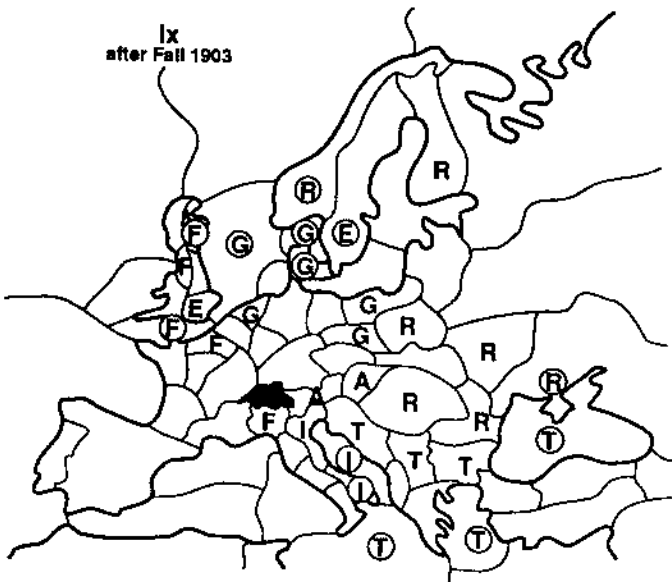
Fall 1903: The Twinkie Defense

Austria (Kenneth Burke): a tyo & a vie s turkish a tri.
 England (Mick Taylor): f swe h, a lon-lvp /impossible/ (f edi s /dislodged/).
 France (Don Scheifler): f nwg-edi (a lvp s), a mar-pie, a pic-ion (f eng c).
 Germany (Roger Cox): a sil-pru, a mun-sil, a hol cheers the French occupation of
 England, f nts-nwy, f den-ska, f hel-den.
 Italy (J.R. Baker): a bud-tri /annihilated/ (a ven s, f adr s), f apu s ven.
 Russia (Michael Quist): a fin-swe (f nwy s), a war h, a gal-bud (a rum s), f sev-bla, a
 ukr-sev.
 Turkey (Vincent Springer—note COA): f gre-ion (f aeg s), a tri s german a mun-tyo
 /no/ (a ser s [a bul s ser {f bla s bul}]).

Retreats: English f edi.
 Vince says he'll be moving again around the first of August. The Turk A Tri survives in
 spite of itself...

Deadline for Fall 1903 is July 27.

Italy to Russia: You're welcome.
 Eliza Fan to GM: A taste for Broadway musicals? Or was it the linguistics of Professor
 Higgins that interested you?
 GM to Alfred P.: Yuck. 'Enry 'Iggins' linguistics were atrocious.
 Brest to Brit in Exile: Sorry, but I just can't resist. Nobody can eat just one.
 Italy to England: Bye.
 Marseilles to Rome: Welcome! Now that I reread the letter I sent you, I think there's a
 possibility you could take it the wrong way. Hope that's not the case. Hope to hear
 from you.
 Italy to France: I accept.
 Italy to Austria: Sorry, I would have liked to play the I/A with you but I ran out of
 time. Perhaps in our next game I can make up for the first.
 A-H to Italy and Russia: Ain't I a stinker?
 Turkey to G/F/E: What's going on over there quiet ones?
 Germany to France: If this doesn't prove my trustworthiness, nothing will. I draw the
 line at signing in blood.
 Paris to Munich: Where have you been all my life?
 Italy to Germany: Out of enemies already?
 Ex-Arrakeen to GM: This looks a tad familiar.
 GM to Ex-Arrakeen: Can I help it if you lack imagination?
 Turkey to World: World Cup Soccer—Catch the Boredom!



GM to Turkey: I find that international soccer has more activity and about the same
 number of scores as NFL football. The NFL only 'plays' about 10 minutes out of
 60—it's just the 700% inflation of NFL scoring that makes people think more is
 going on!
 Italy to Turkey: I removed my fleet as a symbol of good faith... Building your fleet in
 the Med without Permisso was a mistake. I'm sure you won't be surprised when I
 rebuild. But perhaps you'd be surprised to know that while you were silent, France
 has written and offered his help.

BELT 17 / 1993F

Autumn 1905 retreat: Austrian a nap-apu, Russian a swe o.t.b.
 Winter 1905: Austria disbands a smy; England builds f edi; France builds f bre, a mar;
 Russia builds a stp.

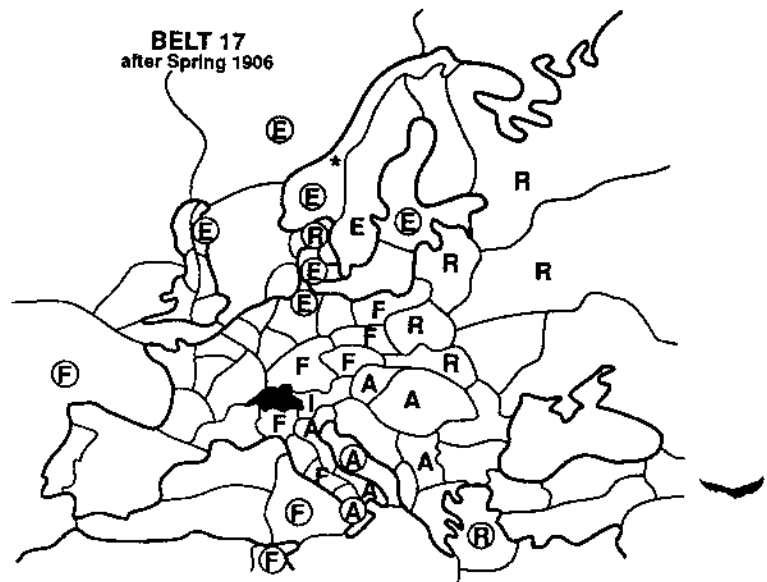
Spring 1906: Bye-Bye, Broadway Baby

Austria (Rich Irving): a tri-vie (a bud s), a ven-rom, f adr-ion, f ion-nap (a apu s), a
 ser-tri.
 England (Les Casey): f edi-nts, f bal-bot, f nts-nwy (f nwg s, a swe s [f den s swe]), f
 kie s den.
 France (Randy Havens): f bre-mid, a mar-pie, a mun s italian a tyo /orm/, f wes-tun, a
 rom-ven, f tvn-ion (f nap s /annihilated/), a sil-gal (a boh s), a ber-pru.
 Italy (Victor Thomas): a tyo-tri (a vie s /annihilated/).
 Russia (Tom Johnson, Nathan Trent): a lvn h, f ska-nts (f nwy s /dislodged/ [a stp s
 nwy]), a sev-mos, a gal s austrian a tri-vie (a war s gal), f con-aeg.

Summer 1906 Retreats: French f nap, Russian f nwy.
 Thanks (and welcome!) to Nathan for taking over the Russian forces. Let him be a
 press example to you all!

Deadline for Fall 1906 is July 27.

Standby Russia to World: ἀναρχία δε μείζον οὐκ ἔστιν κώκον (There is not a
 greater evil than anarchy. —Sophocles, *Antigone*)
 Standby Russia to World: Little known monk, Rasputin, revives Czar from coma.
 Mother Russia rejoices. Czar's first words: "What a party! Where's that ballerina?
 Where's my drink?"
 GM to Standby: Sounds like Czar will be shut up in Betty Ford Clinic soon, no?
 Russia to England: I would have let you use my Swedish vacation property each Spring.
 All you had to do is ask!
 GM to England: Nearly as generous as Tom, wouldn't you say?



PLATEAU / 1994??

Spring 1901: Reddy Freddy

Austria (Matthew Lahtinen): a vic-gal, a bud-ser, f tri h.

England (Tim Goodwin): f lon-nis, f edi-awg, a lyp-yor.

France (Don Williams): a par-bur (a mar s), f bre-mid.

Germany (James Battle): a mun-ruh, f kie-den, a ber-kie.

Italy (Victor Thomas): f nap-ion, a ven h, a rom-nap.

Russia (Jeff August): f stp/sc-bot, a war-gal, a mos-ukr, f sev-rum.

Turkey (Dave Golias—note COA): a con-bul, a smy-arm, f ank-bla.

James is in Tennessee for the summer (2309 Granite Drive, Johnson City TN 37604) but says that his dorm will forward mail to him. Dave says he'll have another change of address in August.

Deadline for Spring 1901 is July 27.

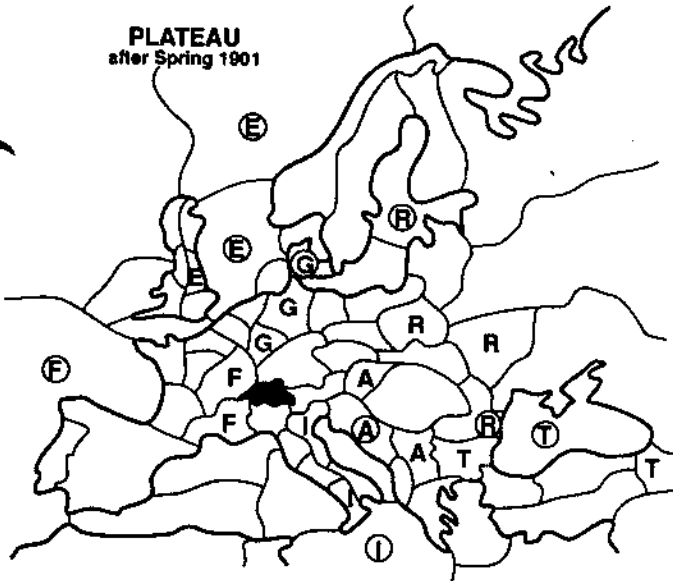
GM notes: At least one of you failed to notice my change of address. Your orders were forwarded to Concord, but remember that the Post Office will only forward mail for 60 days! And since someone asked, yes, I *love* to be clued in as to what's up in negotiations. Any plans you reveal to me will be kept confidential, and I will send you a copy at game's end to help you write your endgame statement.

GM questions: Yes, you may send more than one set of orders—the set with the latest date will be the one used.

Notable Openings: Two of the openings in this game are 'unusual' (used less than 20% of games). Italy's move "rom-nap" is one I've never seen, and don't even have an entry for in *Diplomacy A-Z*. If it were rom-apu it would be the first touch of a Lepanto series, but let's hold off naming this one until further action. Austria's "f tri h" is called the Houseboat Opening (keeping the ships at dock), in this case the complete openings is the Southern Hedgehog Variation—the standard Hedgehog Opening would have Austrian units speared out in three directions.

Turkey to All: Unite against our common enemy! Invade the U.S.A.!

PLATEAU
after Spring 1901



Leprecon Shotz: Crystal, Shannon & Samantha

VEXVELT / 1992R

EFRT draw: EF(G)R yes, T no, A nvr.

AEFRT draw: (G)R yes, EFT no, A nvr.

Turkey proposes F/T, E/T, and R/T draws, and both Turkey and England propose an EFT draw.

Winter 1908: Austria removes a sil; France builds a par; Turkey builds a con.

Spring 1909: Disembodied

Austria (Michael Alterio): a mun s english f kie-ber / nso, annihilated/.

England (Lance Anderson): f kie-hoi, a den-kie (f hel s), f nts-den, a ruh-mun.

France (Tom Hurst): a par-pic, a mar-pic (f lyo s [f spa/sc s]), f tun ms f wes, a bur s english a ruh-mun.

Russia (Russ Rusnak): f ber h, f bal-swe, a mos-ukr (a war s), a stp-mos (a lvn s).

Turkey (Steve McKinnon): a vie-boh, a ukr-gal, a gal-sil, a sev-mos, a pic-tyo (a ven s), f rus-pic, f tyn-rus, f ion-rvn (f nap s), f eas-ion, a apu h, a con-rum (f bla c).

Deadline for Fall 1909 is July 27.

Turkey to England: Who is Carla Bruni?

Shameless Plugs: The Smiths, *The Green is Dead*, Alice Donut, *Mule*, Testament, *The Ritual*.

Turkey to France: A chance, yes. Likely? No. But I doubt you and I will agree on anything if you continue to *not write back*. Come on, make me an offer.

GM to France: "Write!" said Fred.

Turkey to GM: At least Williams is only France, so we'll only get Frog press instead of a rehash of that *Upsari* Austrian Archduke drivel.

GM to Turkey: Take a look across the page—you see any drivel there? I was truly disappointed...

Turkey to England: "You want the good life..."

Turkey to France: "...You break your back."

Turkey to Austria: "You snap your fingers..."

Turkey to Russia: "...You snap your neck."

England to Austria: Give up that sc that you're sitting on—preferably before the Turk arrives. Otherwise, you'll be put back where you belong—in Austria/Hungary.

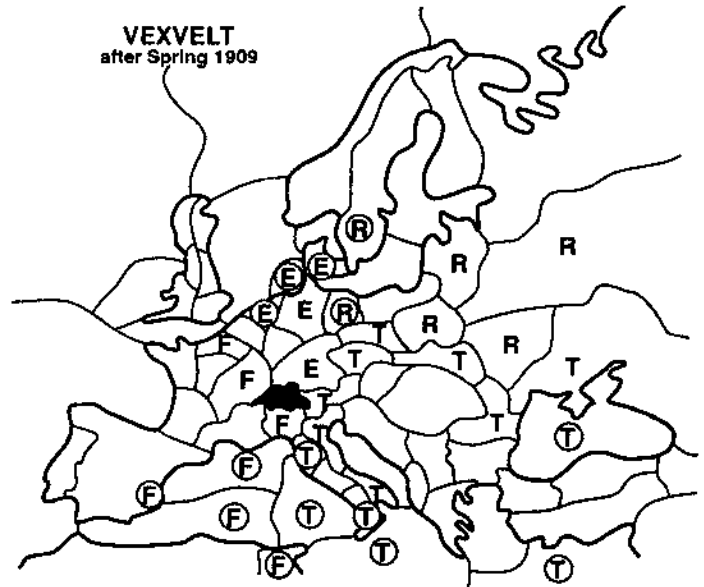
Think about it.

Turkey's Babes o'the Moment: Alexandra Vandernoot, Elizabeth Gracen, Elizabeth Perkins, DeeDee Pfeiffer, Courtney Love.

GM to Turkey: I know you told me otherwise, but "Courtney Love" sounds like a porn star.

Ever More Babes o'the Moment: Sandrine Holt, Annabella Sciorra.

VEXVELT
after Spring 1909



Leprecon Shotz:
Daddy Eric is Beefcake!

Game Openings

X-23/Regular Diplomacy (\$5 gamefee): Peter Evett (pd), Lance Anderson (pd), Jim Bailey (notpd), Ward Narhi (notpd) signed up, can take four more.

DURLA/Gunboat Diplomacy (\$5 gamefee): Six signed up; needs one more. Will allow grey press. Note: you are signed up and paid if this box is checked:

'INVASION'/Regular Diplomacy by Guest GM Russ Rusnak (\$5 gamefee): Russ will GM and will mail reports separately to players. He'll run the game with Immediate Return Mail retreats and adjustments—that means, if you have a retreat, build or removal to make, you must make it within ten days of the previous deadline. That way, a Spring or Fall turn can be produced *every* month. Can take seven, sign up with Pete.

TRALFAMADORE/Youngstown Diplomacy XV (\$8 gamefee will include rules and maps): This will be a playtest—the game has not been run postally before. Michael Alterio, Jim Bailey, John Bryden, John Galt, Charles Goetz (notpd), Matt Heppc, Richard Irving, Martin Johnson, David Kovar (notpd), Matthew Lahtinen, Steven McKinnon, Jamie McQuinn, Ward Narhi, Steve Nicewarner (notpd), Michael Quist, David Schlosser, Vincent Springer, Victor Thomas, Chris Warren, Brad Wilson (notpd)—2 positions remaining. I have sent the rules to everyone who is currently signed up for this game—if you haven't received them, would you please say so?? Steve and Brad, time to make up your minds. I'm going to insist that players give me a phone number or email address for NMR insurance, I want to have the fewest NMRs possible in a game requiring so many players!

Ward is concerned that the game is seriously imbalanced (Chile and Egypt among others, may be inviable). My response is that I would like to try the game once as written before suggesting changes to the inventor—and if there are problems, we need played-out proof anyway. I suspect that everyone is going to *know* that Egypt and Chile are in trouble (just as everyone knows that Austria is weak in Standard) and play accordingly. Nothing wrong with that. I will, however, offer to refund the fee of anyone eliminated in the first two years. (Drops and resigns won't count.)

LUSITANIA/Gunboat Snowball Fighting ASF29 (free): Too many signed up, that's it, see gamestart inside.

SILVERRUN/Snowball Fighting ASF30 (free): Narhi signed up, can take nine more.

circulation of this issue: 110

You may use your subscription balance and free issues to pay gamefees or to purchase copies of *Zine Register*, which costs \$2 in North America and \$4 elsewhere.

Poetry Shelf (the standby list)

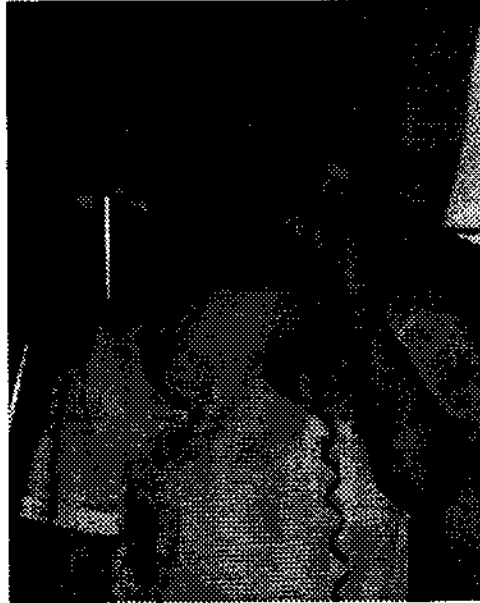
The Poets are, for Diplomacy: J.R. Baker, Roger Cox, Randy Davis, Dave Golias, Tom Hurst, Stan Johnson, Jack McHugh, Steve McKinnon, John McLaurin, Jamie McQuinn, Chuck Mercer, Mike Stewart, Nathan Trent, Richard Weiss, Andrew York.

For Diplomacy variant games (and/or Merchant of Venus): J.R. Baker, Randy Davis, Dave Golias (+MoV), Chris Hassler (MoV only), Tom Hurst, Steve McKinnon, Mike Stewart, Nathan Trent, Chris Warren, Richard Weiss, Andrew York (+MoV).

Some of you have been on the standby list for a long while without reconfirming. If you want off, would you please take this opportunity to tell me so that I don't drag you into a game you don't want to play?

A free issue goes to each standby when he picks up a game and when he plays it out. Standbys are not called for Snowball Fights or rail games. Subber currently in fewest games will be chosen first, but if a position nms more than once I try to call the same standby again.

CALLED THIS MONTH: nobody!



Leprecon Shotz:
Joan Extrom

Conventions

CHUFFCON*

is now set for August 19-21! If you like to play games then be at Chuff's place that weekend: 1632 Oakgrove Avenue, Berkeley 94618 (phone 510-655-7393). Don Williams will be in attendance from L.A. and Jason Bergmann will have become a naturalized Californian by then. Dip game scheduled to start 1pm Saturday but come any time between 5 on Friday and 5 on Sunday for lots of fun.

*Alternate names include the Bay Area Game Group, the Games of August, or "Another 48 Hours". I have a map for those who need it. "Le Chuff" is in France for a couple of weeks, so don't call him before the All-Star Break.

Origins

Too late, but here's the correct address on Origins '94 (San Jose): Andon Unlimited, Box 3100, Kent OH 44240.

Vertigo Games

Also a correction regarding Brad Wilson's annual Labor Day game party: Brad has his own P.O. Box (see Roster) and phone: 610-296-9474.

Pacificon

Don't know what difference it makes, but I've decided not to attend. I hope to be in Yosemite for a week starting Labor Day, though!

EuroDipCon

Per Westling writes: The EDC was maybe not the success that I hoped it would be, but I think the gamers enjoyed themselves.

"Iain 'behaved himself' and got quite a lot of "Mr Nice Guy" votes.

*The final standing:

1. Xavier Blanchot (France)
2. Kalle Stengard (Sweden)
3. Nisse Linderberg (Sweden)
4. Lorge Emmanuel (France)
5. Thomas Andersson (Sweden)
6. Stephane Genric (France)
7. Shaun Derrick (England)

"Iain ended up somewhere in the middle."

DipCon XXVII

Michael Lowery reports there were 90 attendees, 75 in the Diplomacy tournament:

1. Bruce Reiff
2. Mark Franceschini
3. Marc Peters
4. Tom Mainardi
5. Tom Kobrin
6. Jeff Asik
7. Carl Willner

Next year's host will be AvalonCon, the Avalon Hill-sponsored (and AH-game-only) con in Baltimore, probably the first weekend in August. One report has Robert Sacks getting so riled about a point of order involving Antarctica that he fell down some steps and cut himself; another says that Marc Peters will be turning over *So I Lied's* games to Michael and other GMs. Still waiting for the British reviews, though, as they will have the most unbiased view of our national con.



Leprecon Shotz:
Samantha Corbin

Calendar

July: 13 Andy Marshall, 24 Tom Johnston
 August: 15 Brent McKee, 16 Brendan Whyte
 October: 17 Randy & Melanie Davis's anniversary, 28 Andy York
 November: 5 Kathy Caruso, 22 John Caruso.
 December: 1 Bruce McIntyre, 6 Brad Wilson, 8 Melody Lutterbie, 16 Randy Davis
 January: 8 Lance Anderson, 19 Pete Gaughan, 25 Chuff Afflerbach
 February: 9 David Hood, 21 Gary Behnen
 March: 16 Claire Brosius, 29 Casey Elaine Ellis, 31 Daf Langley
 April: 30 Cathy Gaughan
 May: 12 Richard Weiss, 17 Vince Lutterbie, 19 Steve Langley, 26 Walter Devin Ellis
 June: 1 Fred Davis Jr., 12 Ed Wrobel

Picks and Pans

I actually had a huge backlog of zines this month. See, late in May the database in which I kept all zine data for *Zine Register* got corrupted somehow (a single record, actually). I was unable to print anything in the file—and then, all of a sudden, I was unable to even open the file.

Thank god this happened after ZR23 came out, but it is still a major inconvenience. I will have to reconstruct about half the entries, then enter information on incoming zines—publications dates, changes of address, even new listings—from the past month. Yuck.

John Schultz has officially folded *Well, Martha, Is Kinda Sorta Looks Like a Dip Rag, Don't It?* Games are being continued on a flyer titled *Air Martha*.

Mondo Diplomatico 115 had a back cover that purports to reproduce the 12/31/1901 London Times. Of course, it's the first time that newspaper has ever been published in Italian!

The Abyssinian Prince has been really thick with music comment the last few issues, and the most recent (146) even includes an exchange regarding Mort the Hoople! Mark Nelson calls Jim Burgess a feuder, which lowers my esteem of Mr. Nelson considerably.

Northern Flame 50 is a milestone, observed quietly but with the radical news that Cal has met his biological family for the first time—finding out he has *ten* siblings.

Damn the Consequences continues to provide a couple of pages, every issue, of the most interesting personal jottings in the hobby. Brendan (who graces the pages of this *Perelandra* at length) can ramble without stopping for fifteen minutes on bike touring in New Zealand and still keep any reader's attention.

Conrad Minshall's return to the Dip hobby is now complete. Not only is he a correspondent in *TAP* (by way of Usenet posts), but in the first issue of *Gateway* (the new incarnation of *Electronic Protocol*—this is the *Dip World* of email Diplomacy) 'Rad publishes a completely new Dip rating system, the Diplomacy Skill Index. Basically a Calhmer Point Count system, 'Rad intends for it to combat the prevailing pbem system of rating by accumulation. That is, the Hall of Fame system currently in use is a rating based on points added from all games played, where Conrad's index is an average.

Also culled from *Gateway*, as of 7 May 1994, there were 269 games running on Internet Judges (Dip, Gunboat and all variants totalled).

Herb Barents' *Boast* is coming up on a huge milestone: within the next four months it'll reach issue #376, placing it second in the all-time, all-world list of issues published (John Boardman's *Graustark* is at a Ruthian 631 and counting). Congratulations to Herb on his staying power—like *Grau*, if you spend more than two years in the hobby and you never see *Boast* you have missed a big chunk of the experience.

Ramblings by Moonlight is another zine full of personal reporting—more organized and mellow than *DiC* but just as engrossing. Eric runs his Leprecon review in issue 39.

In an intriguing development, we have a fake that springs from a satire in a different zine! Here's the sequence: in *Cossaguana* 240, Conrad von Metzke announced the opening of the "Lepages Poll", where zines would be ranked based on ease of use as backing paper when pasting up your own zine. The announcement mentioned that results would be printed in "Tom well's *Off the Wall*, John Boardman's *Graustark*, and Douglas Kent's *Foiled? Hardly!*"

Part II: This week, a single sheet of paper arrives in the mailbox. It's a four-page digest zine, and in font and feel (right down to a cover illo that came out of the same

book as issue 15) it matches *off-the-shelf*. But it calls itself *off-the-wall* #16, and page three consists of the Lepages Poll results, a list of about 50 zines from around the world in no readily obvious order.

Pros and Cons: This might be Tom Howell's work. It does mention his trip to Southern California for his daughter's graduation, and a game session with Bill Scharf and Steve Sulzby. But the postmark (17 June) is Tacoma, while previous *o-r's* were marked Seattle, and it was sent to my old address even though I emailed a COA notice to Tom well before. Still, I'll come down on the side that says Tom faked his own zine here, and we'll see what he has to say about it.

Dave Wang also faked his own zine, an April Fool's edition. Where Stephen Glasgow chose to go the serious route with his April Fool's *War Fair* (so serious that he fooled his own subzine editor), Dave's *Metamorphosis* 14 fools nobody as it gives away the joke in several places. Still a fun read, and even another installment of the (quite real) Star Trek debates. ST continued into issue #15, which also carries the introduction of Jake Halverstadts' latest creation, Gonzo Monopoly.

Phil Reynolds reports (*Akrasia* 5) that his immunological disorder—common variable hypogammaglobulinemia—is being well fought by monthly treatments of gamma globulin, which is an expense he fortunate does not yet have to cover by himself. He's employed now, and the latest issue has five pages of talk, so there's good news springing up in several varieties.

Mark Nelson's most recent zine is *The Wreck of Ogilias* and the May issue runs the Top Ten Zines of several BNFs: Mark, Jim-Bob, Andy York, FlapJack (who continues to pull a Cheshire Cat-like disappearance all over the hobby), and Neil Duncan.

Empire Builder and its associated games are interminably long by mail. So it's very admirable that Steve Courtemanche not only managed to stick out a whole game, and win, but also stick out another whole game and win *that* one too! Two wins, with the games ending in consecutive issues of *ark*—nice going, Steve.

Keith Sesler now has a large zine collection, and his zine *I Still Live* has revived the old *Europa Express* feature, the Picture Contest. A subscriber's photo is published and readers are invited to guess who it is (with slams and jokes the main purpose). The best part of this so far is the reprinted contest from *EE* in 1983, where in the very same line of *ISL* 17, we get both Steve Arnawoodian and Simon Billenness! Talk about your history—editor Keith Sesler has managed to unearth the Dip-fossil version of the Missing Link!

Best Zine in a Political Role is awarded again this year to *Y Ddraig Goch*; in issue 83 Iain says, "Next month, there will be votes for the Euro-Elections and the Conservatives will be taken behind the bikesheds by that unruly gang known as 'The Electorate' and given another kicking until their bruises turn Yellow." Great stuff, you wonder what his writing would be like if he was sure of his opinions.

A new zine is on the scene, though not a Dipzine. *Declination* is published by the Quake Coast Game Club and is devoted to the AH game History of the World. Two- and three-player variants, strategy & tactics, and new event cards are just a few of the early features. Coverage may expand to Kremlin and other multi-player games but for now, this is *the* source on *HorW*. Send \$4 for a year's sub to editor Charles Bahl, 1281 Ashcraft Lane, San Jose CA 95118. (It doesn't appear that they know folks have *already* developed pbm systems for *HorW*!)

Richard Weiss' move to the East Bay brings the NorCal publishing scene into a tight region—only Don Del Grande is beyond the Pale. But Richard expresses some suburb-phobia in *Zero Sum*; after all, he did wind

up in Walnut Creek only after considering a position in *Hawaii*. But with him so close we just can't resist; we've already gotten together once for games (British Rails with Chuff Afflerbach) and may be doing so again after Chuffcon. If you're in the area and want a one-night stand, give one of us a call.

Rambling WAY 43 contains a quote which proves that just because someone has a distant, unbiased view doesn't mean they're more reliable. John Breakwell (of Britain) says, "Richard Nixon was a pretty average president—the only difference was that he got caught and that is a crime people will *never* forgive you for." <rude buzzer noise!> Thanks for playing, John—next contestant?

Hoodwink drops Scattergories, as Steven Carlberg steers the zine ever further toward Dip-intensity. Games and S&T articles will rule here.

Spring Offensive is the best zine currently being produced anywhere. Stephen Agar has tons of games, as many as *Perelandra* and *Maniac's Paradise* combined, plus pages of letters and at least two feature articles each issue (some culled from a large zine archive). Add in a feature variant each time, a devotion to variant play, and constructive suggestions on hobby offices and you have as complete a zine as we've seen since *Europa Express*.

Aren't You The Guy... is the zine where I've recently been taking my potshots at wild-eyed conservatives (I always have at least one outlet for that kind of hunting). My reward is Andy Marshall's editorializing, "Thanks, Pete. It's a great pleasure to headline this column with you every month."

The Swiss Observer needs one more player to start a second game of Global Dip. Write to John Armstrong, 2400 Mellwood Avenue #813, Louisville KY 40206.

Doug Kent buys into the fantasies that the media is predominantly liberal, and that welfare cheats are the norm rather than the exception, and that speculating on the future price of lumber is 'work'. No wonder his *Maniac's Paradise* sublist doesn't overlap much with mine! At any rate, he's moved (57 Charnwood Road, New Providence NJ 07974).

Voting on the Rusty Bolts is due July 27, and Daf Langley and Steven McKinnon of this zine are both up for the Ms. Nar Award (for most entertaining game press), so send Doug a SASE for a ballot.

Won If By Land has separated from parent zine *War Fair* and has openings in eight variant games. Write to Jason Wilke, 2042 Dalton Avenue, Deltona FL 32725.

Also for variant fans, the publication of the Belgian Variant Bank, *Spice of Life* 5, is now out (a few months late). Besides a catalog of game-rules in the Bank, it presents the rules to Banzai II (a variant based on a Japan/Oceania/Australia map) and information on playtesting and pbm playing in Europe. £1 to Jef Bryant, rue Jean Pauly 121, B-4430 Ans, Belgium.

James Goode is getting ready to start another section of his election-campaign system, Call Me President, in his zine of the same name.

Cognisciensi is huge, and Randy Cox has finally found a sensible organization of his massive missive. One staple holds the letters and editorials. Another holds the subzines. A third holds Randy's own games. That's 78 pages in issue 9, twenty of which are chat and all of which are dense and opinionated.

Finally, Michael Lowrey reports the winners of the Hobby Awards, announced at DipCon:

Holley Award: David Hood
Koning Award: Jim Yerkey
Walker Award: David Smith
Miller Award: Doug Kent

In the issue of *Carolina Command & Commensary* that brings con and award news (#72), Jeff Taylor goes into length on the in-development Diplomacy 2.0 computer game.

Tonight's Cast

If you don't have NMR insurance (=collect calls), it could be because I don't have your phone number, or because I have to call you for orders too often.

Bold indicates a new address.

PLAYER	ADDRESS	EMAIL	NMR INSURANCE?
Chuff Afflerbach	5632 Oakgrove Avenue, Oakland CA 94618		yes
Michael Alterio	P.O. Box 713, Millbrook NY 12545		yr
Lance Anderson	1200 Dallas Drive #824, Denton TX 76205	LancerA@aol.com	yes
Teresa Armstrong	P.O. Box 3124, Radford VA 24141		no
Jeff August	5057 South 12th Street, Arlington VA 22204		yes
James Bailey	8337 La Riviera Drive, Sacramento CA 95826-1654		yes
J.R. Baker	2709 Colonial Drive, Dickinson TX 77539		yes
James Battle	290 Massachusetts Avenue #435, Cambridge MA 02139-4196		yes
Jason Bergmann	10740 Lathrop, Dallas TX 75229	72163.3104@compuserve.com	email
John Bryden	Dept. of Math., U. of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta T3C 2M2, CANADA	bryden@acs.ucalgary.ca	email
Jim Burgess	100 Holden Street, Providence RI 02908-5731	burgess@world.std.com	yes
Ken Burke	6 Meadowbrook Road, West Hartford CT 06107		no
Kathy Caruso	636 Astor Street, Norristown PA 19401-3745		yes
Les Casey	10 Wrenwood Court, Nepean, Ontario K2G 5V3, CANADA	aa158@freenet.carleton.ca	email
Roger Cox	57 Coastline Drive, Inman SC 29349-9655		yes
Randy Davis	3019 Bertram Court, Concord CA 94520		yes
Greg Ellis	2005 Dublin Drive, League City TX 77573	GregE625@aol.com	yes
Peter Evett	4819 D Swiss, Dallas TX 75204		yes
John Galt	701 Welch Road #323, Palo Alto CA 94304-1705	john_david_galt@cup.portal.com	email
Cathy Gaughan	1236 Detroit Avenue #7, Concord CA 94520-3651	SingerBear@aol.com	yes
Dave Golias	509 South Brian, Fort Collins CO 80521		yes
Tim Goodwin	49 Williams Street #2, Portland ME 04103	BGoodw31@portland.caps.maine.edu ??	yes
Joel Grönberg	Sjohagsvagen 51, 141 71 Huddinge SWEDEN		no
Randy Havens	2626 West Olive Avenue, Fullerton CA 92633		yes
Matt Heppie	26 Meadowbrook Lane, Chalfont PA 18914		yes
Tom Hurst	5628 Byrneland Street, Madison WI 53711		yes
Rich Irving	1505 Caceras Circle, Salinas CA 93906	RR11@pge.com	yes
Martin Johnson	113 Carey Court, Windsor CA 95492		yes
Stan Johnson	3712 W. Northern Ave. #454, Phoenix AZ 85051		yes
Tom Johnston	11112 Second Street, Mokena IL 60448		yes
Matthew Lahtinen	P.O. Box 10786, Zephyr Cove NV 89448		no
Daf Langley	14609 203rd Avenue SE, Renton WA 98059		yes
Mark Lew	5390 Broadway #2, Oakland CA 94618		yes
Hugh Magen	P.O. Box 131, Redondo Beach CA 90277		n
David McCrumb	3636 Old Town Road, Shawsville VA 24162-2038		yes
Jack McHugh	280 Sanford Road, Upper Darby PA 19082-4708	76646.334@compuserve.com	yes
Steve McKinnon	240 Sheridan, Albany NY 12210		yes
Jamie McQuinn	214 E. Church Street, Adrian MI 49221-2902		yes
Chuck Mercer	1250 Garden Lane, Sebastopol CA 95472		yes
Clark Millikan	778 Center Avenue, Martinez CA 94553		yes
Conrad Minshall	6295 Shadygrove Court, Cupertino CA 95014	conrad@apple.com	email
Ward Narhi	46 S. Adolph #4, Akron OH 44304	R2WEN@vm1.cc.edu	email
Mark Nelson	21 Cecil Mount, Armley, LEEDS, West Yorkshire LS12 2AP, U.K.	amt5man@amsta.leeds.ac.uk	email
Steve Nicewarner	3602 Abercromby Drive, Durham NC 27713	steve@plume.ics.ncsu.edu	yes
Michael Quist	2875 Irving Avenue #24, Minneapolis MN 55408	73312.1677@compuserve.com	yes
Russ Rusnak	1551 High Ridge Parkway, Westchester IL 60154		yes
Don Scheifler	16122 Affirmed Way, Friendswood TX 77546	Donnno@aol.com	yes
David Schlosser	2041 N Street, Eureka CA 95501		no
John Schultz	Box 41-19390, F-W43, Michigan City IN 46360		no
Vincent Springer	(thru 8/5) 101 Andrew Place #211, West Lafayette IN 47906		yes
Mike Stewart	901 North Citrus Drive #10, La Habra CA 90631		yes
Mick Taylor	311 1/2 W. Roosevelt Street, DeKalb IL 60115-3647	t20mgt1@corn.cso.niu.edu	yes
Bob Theriault	156 Lyman Street Ext., Westbrook ME 04092		yes
Victor Thomas	22782 Via Santa Rosa, Mission Viejo CA 92691		yes
David Wang	P.O. Box 1564, Piscataway NJ 08854		no
Chris Warren	2425 Purdue #104, Los Angeles CA 90064	cwarren@annex.com	email
Richard Weiss	1480 Creekside Drive #A316, Walnut Creek CA 94596		yes
Mark Weseman	Hwang Mok Park & Jin, CPO Box 98, Seoul KOREA		no
Don Williams	25252 Via Sistine, Valencia CA 91355		yes
Brad Wilson	Box 532, Paoli PA 19301-0532		yes
Bill Wordelmann	541 Canyon Trail, Carol Stream IL 60188-1364	bill.wordelmann@subsoft.com	yes
Ed Wrobel	6204 Bardu Avenue, Springfield VA 22152		yes
Andrew York	Box 2307, Universal City TX 78148-1307	wandrew@aol.com	yes

Core Dump

This issue is pretty bollixed up—it may not be obvious to you, but it should be (lazy picture layout, for instance, unclear page splits, and very little press from me). I've been busier than I planned on being the past week—and as soon as the business calmed down and our friends from Texas had caught their red-eye back home, I came down with a cold! Only two days, but the fever was just high enough that I couldn't sit at the keyboard. Now, of course, I'm supposed to run off to Origins this weekend, and then our vacation to Maine next week, and how am I supposed to get this thing copied and mailed in between all that?? I'll debate the options privately while you read this.

I had a lot of fun at Leprecon. It was a wonderful time, although it was a long drive. We stopped in Chico and Redding so could make sales calls on camera stores there (but I didn't make a dime); however, on the return trip we drove non-stop and discovered just how far 650 miles really is! We also stopped in Ashland, Oregon (home of the Shakespeare Festival) to visit the best-known nature shop in the Northwest, and for lunch in Medford. Combined with a traffic block north of Eugene (a half-hour's wait), we took the whole trip in a collection of small steps.

Philomath was just what I thought a small town should look like—Main Street, school, firehouse, coffee shop—but Wren went one step further, being maybe six homes and a volunteer fire garage. Our arrival was announced by Russ, who got a hug from Cathy (and is probably still gloating about that). We met Joan and Ken, although I had met them back in 1984 at the Seattle Dipcon.

The weekend was pretty much set up so that Joan could have Russ and few other gamers around. Ken was devoting his free time to Civilization and DOOM on his computer (and because he's a programmer, his computer was one hellacious setup). Joan doesn't play games but, like Cathy, likes the people who do. Mike Ehli and a friend (forgive me, but the name has completely evaporated) were already there and they started clamoring for a game now that another player had arrived. I agreed to play 1830, which game lasted well past 1 a.m. All during the game we speculated on whether the Ozogs were coming, and they arrived in the wee hours telling tales of terrible traffic in Tacoma, and as they trundled off to bed the other 1830 players got wimpy and tried to throw in the game. I insisted that, at the very least, we should continue it in the morning.

Which we did (yawn!). Russ won the 1830, and I acquitted myself well for a novice. There were many games of Survive (the one I played, I also won, and it was even more satisfying to beat Crystal Corbin while I was at it) (make of that what you will, Williams). Cathy wandered off to take a walk around Wren, and came back with interesting pictures of the local flora (but no fauna). We never did get down into the yard to see the pond (which could just be glimpsed through the trees and vines).

Joan's Diplomacy Dinner featured salads with Russian dressing, turkey... you get the idea. She was a generous host, supplying all the pieces for meals—it's too bad we couldn't do more in return than say 'thanks!'

There was a mondo Titan match with rotating personnel; I was knocked out, but then when Cathy Ozog had to watch after Shannon she stood up and I took over her stacks. I kept her pieces in the game quite a long time, piling up Warlocks, Dragons and points but losing stacks, until Russ' Titan legion bested mine.

Midday Sunday the Ozogs finally got Shannon quieted down and Cathy O. had the chance to play a game or two, so we fished out Acquire and I was promptly trounced. I just haven't played that often enough to get the rhythm down yet.

The whole con was very easy-going, with music and chat taking a front position. We were occasionally shaken by the two-way radio in the front room—Ken is a volunteer fireman and the dispatcher ran a check from time to time. And I found out the hideous truth of small towns—even after you drive around looking for a 'big city' newspaper, you wind up buying the Portland *Oregonian* and discover it's a podunk paper! Apparently Portland is less than 400,000 persons and the *Oregonian* is as provincial as that sounds. My Sunday-morning ritual of coffee and news was nearly interrupted when I went into the kitchen for a refill: Mr. Ehli sat in my place and started fiddling with the newsprint until I re-entered the room and shouted "Nice try, T-Bone!" She is, as they say, a bit petulant when she hasn't had her coffee...

Good to see Eric again, I poked and prodded him a bit about his job but mostly we dredged up old MadLad and Stone-Age-Dipdom stories. Cathy's (deserved) preoccupation with Shannon meant we had little conversation. The whole Ozog clan ran off Sunday evening, wending their way home via a couple of nights on the Pacific coast.

The Ghost of the Toadfather hung over the proceedings (Joan had pictures to prove he *had* been then, in some previous incarnation), and yes we recited the tale of How T-Bone Got His Name. Mike is playing 'perpetual student' at the U. of O. and so strikes me as a fitting successor to a long line of Dipster-academics like Jim Burgess and Don Williams. Russell continues to mellow—his politics haven't changed but his expressions are becoming nearly Richard-Simmonsish! And our dear hostess put up with all of this with a big smile, which was much appreciated.

I will try to get this copied at a print shop (ARRGH!) and mail it from Origins, since I will be away from the office copier for three weeks. You are encouraged to send stuff via USPS! I will be picking up telephone messages by remote, and email will patiently sit in the spool until I return. As I vacate, I hope you all are enjoying the summer—get out there and stomp those trails!

— PETER

GIEDI PRIME / 1992AK

Error: I failed to underline England's "F nat-mid" last turn.

Autumn 1908 Retreats: Italian f bel-nts, Russian f bul/ec-bla.

Winter 1908: Austria builds a vie, f tri; Germany builds a kie; Russia disbands a sev. Austria proposes A/I draw.

Spring 1909: Peas in Our Thyme

Austria (Roger Cox): f bul/sc-aeq / annihilated/, a gre-bul, a ser-rum (a bud s), a vie s italian a boh-gal, f tri-alb.

England (Jamie McQuinn): f pic-nts / impossible/, f eng-mid (f nat s, f iri s).

France (civil disorder): no units.

Germany (Lance Anderson): a fin h, f bal-bot, a ber ms a mun, a kie s a ber, a bel h, a ruh s a mun.

Italy (Hugh Magen): f bre-mid (f spa/nc s), f nts-lon, a gas-bre (a par s), a pic-tyo, a sil-war / annihilated/, a boh-gal.

Russia (Greg Ellis): a pru-sil (a war s), a gal-bud, a rum-ser, f bla s turkish a con-bul.

Turkey (Andy York): a con-bul (f aeg s), a ank-con.

Deadline for Fall 1909 is July 27.

London to Moscow/Berlin: Thus endeth Pax Scandinavium.

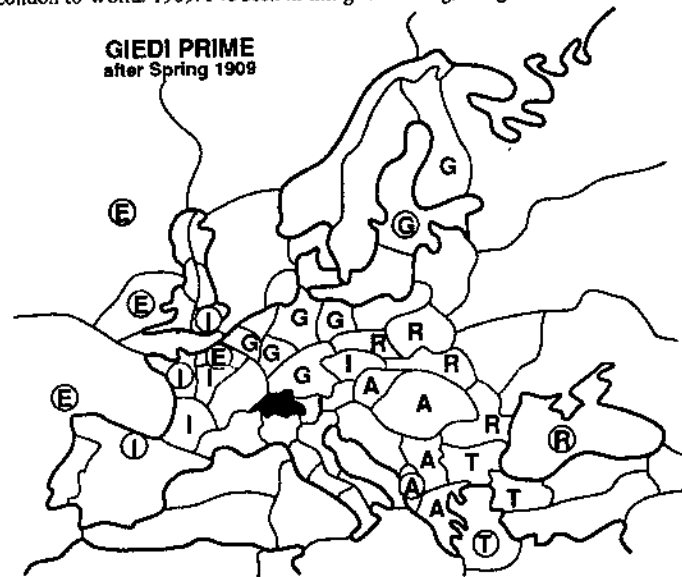
Rome to Berlin: Could there be... peace in our time?

Austria to Italy: Hugh! I'm still alive! And by God, I'm gonna stay that way. Let's roll.

Italy to England: I did want to break off hostilities, but now... what do you think?

That I would not retreat to Nth Sea?

London to World: 1909! I've been in this game so long, I forgot I came in as a standby.



Where It's At

page item

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9	Aurora / Railway Rivals endgame
16	Belt 17 / Diplomacy 1993F
15	Caladan / Merchant of Venus
18	Callboard / announcements of Openings, Cons, and dates"
20	Cast List / player roster"
21	Giedi Prime / Diplomacy 1992AK
10	The Interim / Bruce McNyre's subzine
2	It's Me Again! / Cathy's editorial
16	Ix / Diplomacy 1993HG
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14	Lusitania / Snowball Fighting 30
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19	Picks and Pans / zine reviews"
17	Plateau / Diplomacy 1994??
3	Roar of the Greasepaint / the letter column
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11	Vulcan / Deviant Diplomacy
9	Zebra / Snowball Fighting endgame

"I've decided to extend the 'theatrical' theme a bit, begun with "The Roar of the Greasepaint." "Callboard" is the place where you find out what parts are up for audition and whose performing what, hence the Calendar, Game Openings, etc. "Cast List", obviously, is the Player Roster. "Picks and Pans" are the traditional terms for good and bad reviews (though I don't typically *review* each zine, it was close enough).

ANOTHER 48 HOURS!

That's right--we're doing it again... another weekend of fun and games!

Call it what you want ... an Open House, the Bay Area Gamers Group, Chuff-Con, or the Games of August... but call us if you can make it! In fact, you should call us if you can't make it, too.

WHO: Chuff Afflerbach, with active encouragement from Pete Gaughan and Richard Weiss.

WHAT: Two days of round-the-clock gaming, with time off as needed for eating, sleeping, and socializing.

WHEN: From 5:00 p.m. Friday, August 19th to 5:00 p.m. Sunday, August 21st.

WHERE: 5632 Oakgrove Avenue, Oakland, California 94618. Phone (510) 655-7393. Map is included.

WHY: For some strange reason, Richard wants to play Diplomacy face-to-face. To insure this happens, Pete promises he will GM a game starting at 1:00 p.m. Saturday. Other than that, it's open gaming: Rail-building, "Merchant of Venus", "Buy That Guy!", and whatever else shows up.

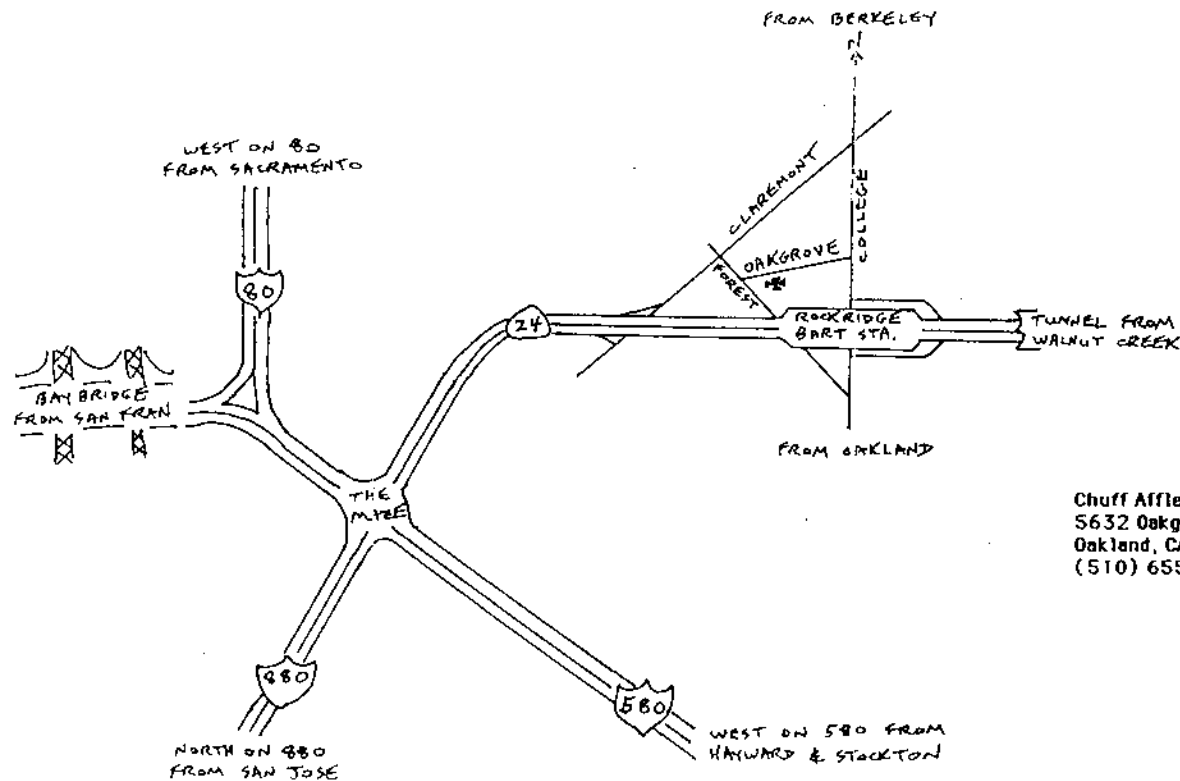
There will be plenty of space for playing and for snoozing, so bring your favorite game and a sleeping bag. Cheap drinks will be provided; the Rockridge "gourmet ghetto" is a block away. We expect a good mix of local gamers and postal players, newcomers and oldtimers. (Already on the guest list: Ben Williams and Jason Bergmann.) So come see old friends and meet some new ones!

FROM SACRAMENTO, SAN FRANCISCO, SAN JOSE, & HAYWARD:

Follow the freeway into the "Oakland Maze" and watch for the signs that say "24 East to Walnut Creek". Once on HWY 24 East, take the first exit to "Claremont Avenue." Turn left onto Claremont and go under the freeway. Turn right at the second traffic light onto Forest. Oakgrove is the first left. The house is the fourth on the right.

FROM WALNUT CREEK:

Take HWY 24 West through the tunnel to Oakland. Exit at "College Ave" and turn right onto College. Take the first left turn (at the Lucky Store) onto Oakgrove Avenue. The house is near the end of the block on the left.



Chuff Afflerbach
5632 Oakgrove Avenue
Oakland, CA 94618
(510) 655-7393