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The ODD Rating List

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1179 John Beshara
1173 Brenton Ver Ploeg
1166 Charles Turner
1137 Andrew Phillips
1122 Thomas Eller

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1031 Mehran Thomson
1025 Randy Bytwerk
1012 Richard Miller
989 George Inzer
964 Edi Birsan
962 Jeffrey Power

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940 Donald Miller
940 John Shutelock
926 David Lebling
926 Bob Strayer
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The games listed below have been included in this Rating List:

1963: A, B
1964: A, B, D
1965: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, K, L, M, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W
1966: A, B, C, D, E, F, H, I, K, L, M, N, O, R, T, Z, AA, AB, AC, AE, AG, AH, AI, AK, AL, AM, AO, AP, AQ, AR, AS, AT, AU, AV, AZ, BB, BC, BD, BE, BG, BI, BJ, BK, BL, BN, BO
1967: B, E, H, I, J, N, O, P, T, U, V, W, Y, Z, AA, AC, AF, AG, AH, AJ, AK, AL, AO, AP, AQ, AR, AS, AT, AU, AW, BA, BB, BC
1968: C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, R, S, T, V, W, X, Y, z, AB, AC, AG, AH, AI, AJ, AK, AL, AN, AO, AV, AX, AY, BA, BB, BC, BS, BT, BY, BZ, CA, CB, CF, CH, CI, CK, CP, CQ,
1969: C, F, G, L, M, N, R, T, U, X, AF, BA, BG, BI, BK, BO, BV, CA, CB, CK, CL
1970: A, D, E, J, M, W, AG, BQ.

There are some half-dozen completed games for which I lack some necessary information; these have not been included in the Rating List. I have written to the gamesmasters concerned, and to other individuals who may have information, and I expect that the results of most of the omitted games will be included in future editions of this Rating List. However, I suspect that there are other, unintended, omissions. Since 1969, or perhaps late 1968, my game records have been less carefully kept than previously. I'll be going through Numenor and the earlier game rosters in an attempt to pick up these neglected games to enter in the Rating List; in the meantime if any reader notices an omitted game which should be included, I would be thankful if he would inform me of it.

It will be noticed that the scores of some players are followed by other figures in brackets. The bracketed figure is the highest score that the player had at any time in his postal Diplomacy career; if this listing had been in existence over the years he would have seen this peak as it went by, and I thought it only right to insert it now. Those without the bracket figure are either now at their peak score to date, or they have never been above the score assigned to every player at the beginning.

The peak scores themselves form a list of some interest. Listed below are the peak scores of all players who have had a peak of 1000 or more. Most of these have been regarded, at one time or another, as being among the leading players, whether or not they are still so regarded.

The Over 1000 Club

1210 Rosamalia	1144 Birsan	1048 Naus
1209 Beyerlein	1137 Phillips	1040 Don Miller
1179 Beshara	1122 Eller	1031 Thomson
1174 Smythe	1120 Pournelle	1026 Tretick
1173 Ver Ploeg	1093 Nelson	1012 Dick Miller
1172 Koning	1092 Zelazny	1009 St. Cyr
1167 Goldstein	1082 Prosnitz	1002 McCallum
1166 Turner	1070 Bytwerk	1002 Wells
	1051 Lebling	

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The Rating List, which begins on the opening page of this issue, is based on two principles:

1. The Calhamer idea that it is only wins, and draws, that count in Diplomacy,
2. The handicap idea inherent in the various chess rating systems.

First to Calhamer's idea. It is one that he has often expressed. The object of the game is to win. There is no merit in survival as such. In his view the player who survives strongly with, say, 14 forces at game's end, and the player eliminated in 19 04, have done an equivalent thing, namely, they have lost the game. Indeed, the strong survivor may frequently be regarded as "worse" than the eliminated player - the latter may have had no opportunity to do anything except sell his life as dearly as possible, while it is likely that the strong survivor could have prevented the win by combining with others at an earlier stage instead of devoting all his attention to his own growth. The only thing short of a win that is of any significance is a draw, which is regarded as a fractional win.

The only previous rating list based on the Calhamer idea is the Calhamer Point Count Rating List which I ran for some years, first in Aceldama and then in SerenDip and which is now being conducted by Walter Buchanan in Hoosier Archives. It consists simply of listing, for each player, his total number of "wins". (To save space I will, through this article, use "wins", in quotes, to mean wins or draws,

the latter being counted as fractions of a win, a two-way draw being a half win, and so on.)

This Rating List was never popular and it is, in fact, a bad one. A player who has been in fifty games and who has done moderately well in them will have a score which is five times as great as another player, doing equally well, who is rated on ten games. That he should have a somewhat higher score is justified, but 5 times as great is ridiculous - it makes a mockery of the whole Rating List.

Some sort of averaging scheme for the Calhamer Rating List seems called for. As anyone who knows anything about the statistical theory of small samples will realize, the simple minded arithmetic mean - dividing the Calhamer Point Count score by the number of games the player concerned has entered - will not do at all; just the opposite of the Calhamer Point Count it wildly exaggerates the achievement of successful players rated on only a few games. Last September I started working on a suitable averaging scheme and came up with three separate ones. As will be guessed from the fact that there were three, not one was wholly satisfactory, though all had certain advantages. All of them require a good deal of calculation so that it is not practical to develop more than one of them on a full scale. (I used only 15 representative players to see how the three schemes worked out, their similarities and differences.) I hope sometime to publish an article on these three schemes to obtain the reaction of readers; not immediately, however.

Anyhow, it seemed that there ought to be a simpler way. It was suggested by Eric Just some years ago that the system of Rating used for postal chess might be adapted to postal Dippy. The suggestion has, occasionally, been made by others since. There are, in fact, a number of chess systems. There is the Chess Review system for postal chess with which I am most familiar, having played using that system 25 years ago; Walter Buchanan has been kind enough to send me a brochure on it to refresh my memory of a few points. There is the Canadian Chess Federation system with which I am also familiar and which is identical except for one small point. There is the U. S. Chess Federation system for use in face-to-face play at tournaments. And, recently, FIDE (Federation Internationale d'Echec), the chess governing body of the world, after years of opposition, has adopted a system very similar to the USCF one: the December issue of Chess Life and Review lists the 600 or so top players of the world as rated under this system. All of these systems are identical in principle; they differ among themselves only in the actual numbers used. The Rating List, above, is a chess-like system; let us describe it in detail:

Zero Sum Feature. A feature of all of the chess systems listed above is that they are zero-sum. That is, if the winner gains 40 points, say, then loser likewise loses 40 points. This is, in my opinion, a highly advisable feature; until now, the only Diplomacy listing to be zero sum is the BROB one, all the others having points that come from nowhere, like manna from heaven. A zero-sum system is hard; a non-zero-sum system is soft. By this I mean that there is a temptation in the other systems, since the points are free,

for the person who is maintaining the system to regard himself as God and to award points here and there to counter act the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. A won the game but B would probably have won if his his 1911 Fall moves hadn't been lost in the mail; let us give him compensatory points as well. From there it is only a few steps to a Raters judgment type listing. With a zero sum feature points to give to B can only be obtained by taking them away from some one else, and there will be less danger of this sort of thing.

Scale. The scale size is determined by the number of points transferred from loser to winner if both were previously equally rated. All of the Chess systems mentioned above use 50 and I have done the same. If 25 had been used the scores of those shown in the top board would have been squeezed closer together; if 100 had been used they would have been spread further apart. However, exactly the same ranking order would have occurred in either case. It is convenient to have for the basic win score a number sufficiently high to allow the handicap feature, to be described below, to be used without the introduction of fractions. 50 has been used in chess scoring for many decades and it seemed as good a basic win score to use as any.

Entry Point, or Zero Displacement. It is in the matter of the point of entry of a newcomer that the 4 chess systems mentioned differ among themselves. In the Chess Review system for postal chess, a D class player enters at 600, a C class at 900, a B class at 1200, and an A class at 1300. (These class designations mean, roughly, D below average, C average, B above average, A much above average.) A new player is allowed to state to what class he belongs. The USCF system for tournament play is much the same except that the entry points are much higher; Walt Buchanan tells me that the difference was deliberate, so that there would never be confusion between a score for postal play and one for tournament play. Multiple entry is probably satisfactory for chess where every player entering postal play, or tournament play, for the first time will have played many casual games and will have a rough idea of his standing. It will not do for postal Diplomacy where many players have not played at all prior to entering a postal game; in any event previous play will not have been very extensive. Anyway, it seemed to me that a single entry point was called for and I first chose 1000, a nice round figure and the mean, incidentally, of the postal chess entry points. After doing about half the games on that basis I changed my mind and altered all the records to an entry of 600; the listing was completed on that basis. The actual value used does not matter very much, provided it is continued. If we went to a 1500 entry point, instead of the 600 used, all that would happen to the ratings as given would be to raise all scores by 900: rankings and even score differences would remain precisely the same. The only practical point to be watched in the choice is that the number chosen should be high enough so that no score will go negative. By some psychological quirk it is much easier to make an error between +40 and -40 than it is between 640 and 560. It might be worth noting in passing that the newly adopted FIDE system also uses a single entry point, rather than several entry points, as the previous chess systems did.

Handicap. The heart of the chess system is the handicap feature. The fifty points transferred from loser to winner apply only if the two players had equal scores previously. If their scores are unequal there is a handicap in favour of the lower rated player. The handicap used in postal chess is shown in the following table:

<u>Difference</u>	<u>Winner higher</u>	<u>Winner lower</u>
Nil	50	50
20	48	52
40	46	54
60	44	56
	and so on for 20 lines or so	
460	4	96
480	2	98
500	0	100
All greater	0	100

As can be seen, for every 20 points difference in the scores of the two players initially, the lower rated gains an additional 2 points if he wins, and loses 2 points less if he loses. Similarly, if there is a draw, for every twenty points difference in the initial scores of the players, there is a transfer of 2 points from the previously higher rated to the previously lower rated. This continues up to a difference of 500 points in their scores. At that point the higher rated can gain nothing if he wins, and loses, double indemnity, if he loses. Greater initial differences are treated as of they were 500. That is, we are in an Alice in Wonderland world where the highly rated player must run as fast as he can to stay in the same place, but we are not in a nightmare where he runs as fast as he can and still slips backward.

The handicap ratio, 2 points handicap for 20 points difference, or 10%, is the one essentially arbitrary figure in the chess system. There is no a priori reason for choosing precisely this ratio. 2% or 50% might be chosen, quite as logically. However, some ratio must be chosen. The 10% one, doubtless initially chosen for ease of computation, has worked very well in chess for many decades. Having no reason to suppose that any other ratio would be preferable it was adopted for this Rating List. With the trivial difference of taking a straight 10% of the difference rather than using 20 point steps.

It needs to be pointed out here that there is an inevitable lack of symmetry in a Diplomacy game, under the Calhaver philosophy that only the winner wins, all the other players, survivors or not, being losers. This means that in every game that goes to a win six players lose a moderate amount each; the winner makes a large gain. In a sense the losers each play only one game, the winner plays six. If all players in the game are originally equally rated then the

winner makes 300 points and the losers lose 50 points each. That is players initially equal can end up, as a result of a single game, 350 points apart. This cannot happen in chess from a single game. It could happen in a 7-man section, or nearly, if one player won all his games; but, even in this case, there would be wins and losses in games among the other players in the section, so that the second best player in the section would also make considerable gains, and there would be a more or less regular distribution of points from the best player to the poorest. Not so here where there is just one winner who wins a lot, and 6 losers who lose moderate amounts. As a result any attempt to introduce a rigid division between the various grades of player into Diplomacy, as is done in Chess, would be difficult. At the very least wider boundaries would be required in Dippy compared with the 300 points each which suffice for the B and C classes in Chess.

This 10% feature probably warrants a little more discussion. The scheme is rather like being on a hill-side which gets steeper and steeper as one climbs it. We enter the hill from a mine shaft part way up. Those who find that they are good climbers move up past the mine shaft exit but the higher they climb the steeper and more difficult the hill becomes; eventually they reach a point where they can climb no more, represented by their final score. Others will find the point of starting, the mine shaft exit, as already too steep. They will slide down a little way. But as they go down the slope of the hill becomes less and less, so that eventually they reach a point where they are able to hold on; that will be their final score. The percentage used is a measure of the rate of increase of the slope. It is instructive to see what happens in the two extreme cases, when the percentage is zero, and when it is 100%.

The zero case represents a hill of absolutely constant slope. Those who can't maintain their footing on a hill of that slope would slide downward, and continue to slide downward fore-ever. A person who can climb a hill of that slope would do so and just march up it at a steady rate. Of two people climbing the hill at the same rate, the one who started earlier would always be higher than the other. This corresponds exactly with the Calhamer Point Count Rating List, the very system that we are trying to improve.

((Well, not exactly, one can never make an unqualified statement in this business. It corresponds to what the Calhamer Point Count system would be if it were made zero sum by subtracting from each person's score one sixth of a point for every game he entered and lost. The principle will be familiar to Poker players: you can't partake of the spoils unless you are willing to call prior bets. A zero-sum Calhamer would, in fact, be an improvement over the present Calhamer system. However, it would not cure the main defect of the Calhamer system, namely that a player credited with 50 games would always have a score 5 times that of another player with only 10 games, if both were doing approximately as well as one another in those games. That is, as a measure of performance, it is an excellent guide to activity.))

At the other extreme, 100%, especially if we also ignore to 50 points for the neutral win which will usually be allowable since the handicap points will vastly overwhelm it, we have what is, to all intents and purposes, the familiar ladder competition used in many local competitions. This system works very well when players are only allowed to compete with their immediate superiors or inferiors on the listing. It is, in fact, used for the world title in many sports or games where other systems are used at lower levels. For instance, boxing, where an aspiring young boxer, after many successes will win the right to meet the #3 or #4 man. A win against them will have the right to meet the #2 man, usually the former champion. Only after beating him will the contender have a chance at the champion. It is exactly the same in chess, at the world champion level. To compete for the belt - I mean the crown - Bobby Fischer had first to beat the #2 man, Petrosian; only now can he meet the champion, Spassky. And the right to meet Petrosian had to be earned by beating a number of people just below on the scale.

However, useful the ladder competition may be with a limited number of players and when used in pure form, i.e. all matches being between players immediately adjacent to each other, it becomes highly erratic, really manic-depressive. To take that hill analogy a player can go from a gentle incline to an overhanging cliff in the course of a single game. To illustrate this, consider Andy Phillips. As most will know he has won a number of games. One of the more recent was 68CF in which he beat, among other, Peter Rosamalia. Without computing the whole thing from scratch I can't tell where this would put him on an Interchange Ladder Competition type Rating List, but he would certainly be near the top. Simultaneously with his wins Andy has been eliminated in a number of games. When these games where he has been eliminated come in to be rated his score will drop in most Rating Lists. But in an Interchange Ladder type the drop would be catastrophic if the winner of one of them happened to be a player previously lowly rated as well may be the case; Andy could go from fifth to 70th place in one easy slide.

Another way at looking at the difference that the percentage factor used influences the result is to consider the matter in terms of memory. The 0% system, i.e. Zero-sum Calhamer, has perfect memory. The game that Derek Nelson won in 1963 counts just as much and just as little as another 5-man game among neophytes would count in 1972. As soon, however, as we bring in a handicap, in an effort to consider the strength of the opposition that our player defeated, loss of memory ensues. If we go to the extreme case that loss of memory is complete; only the last game is considered. As we saw, Andy Phillips could go from, say, fifth place to 70th in one step; the system forgets that he has beaten many famous players and only remembers his latest game where he has been beaten by a comparative nobody. Somewhere between the two extremes is the optimum handicap percentage. With it memory is preserved but not to the extent that activity completely out weighs performance as with the 0% of the Calhamer Point Count System. With it the strength of the opposition is considered, but not considered to the extent that the previous rating of the person you have just beaten, or who has just beaten you,

completely out weighs everything else that you have previously done. Ten percent has been used for years successfully in chess and I have used it here. That is not to say that some other value might not be better. If the readership can stand an article on the variation of parameters, I might even study the question of the best handicap percentage in a future issue. And one thing we can be certain of, 10% is superior to either of the logical extremes of 0% or 100%.

Since we are using a handicap ratio of 10% let us look at some of the particulars of its use. Consider two New Blood players, each, therefore, having a score of 600, as all New Blood players do. They each enter two games, all the other players in all four games also having initial scores of 600. Our players each win one of their two games and lose the other. For player A it happens that his win is entered first and then his loss; his score will then be 820. B's results are entered in the reverse order, loss, then win. His score will be 880. That is, our players have really performed identically, each winning one game out of two entered, against identical opposition, but there is a difference of 60 points in the scores they earn based on the chance event of the order in which their two games happened to be entered. This is an inevitable result of the fallible memory which the system has. For player A the system sees Win-Loss and remembers the final loss better than the earlier win, for B it is the other way around. This in turn implies that the resolving power of the system is only about 50 points. Walt Buchanan can correct me if I am wrong but I would suspect that the same is true in chess: if two players with scores closer than 50 points apart are to have a match it would be foolish to bet on the higher rated on the basis of his higher score. But differences much greater than that are probably real. At least so I would guess. Walt?

Note, however, that that difference of 60 points won't mean anything in the long run, it will gradually fade away. The system has a time constant of about 7 games. By this I mean that an initial difference of D will be reduced to D/e after 7 games with identical performance. If our two players now proceed to do the same as one another, one winning when the other does, one losing when the other does, getting similar draws, and against the same competition in both cases, the 60 points will be reduced to 23 after 7 games, and to 9 after a further 7. So that though the fallible memory introduced the difference in the first place, it also gets rid of that difference in time. In other words there is no point in worrying unduly about accidental differences of this nature - they will cure themselves.

Format. It will be noticed that only the first three boards are published in ranking order, all other players are listed only in alphabetical order. The reason for doing it this way is the following. It will be impossible to publish the full listing more than once or twice a year. Culling out the names of no longer active players will reduce the length of the list by about a third but it is still a very long list and all I can do at frequent intervals will be to list changes brought about by recently completed games. It seems to me that it will be easier for a reader, wanting the recent rating history of Joe Blank, to look him up in the main list, and in the revisions,

under B, than to search up and down all of those lists until his name is stabled upon in a ranking order. It is my plan, however, to include the top boards in the revisions if there are any changes in them. If the demand for a ranking order is sufficiently vociferous I could do it but I am sure that it will be found more inconvenient.

Games Rated. The games rated include all postal games which have been published and which come reasonably close to following the standard rules. Five man games have been included, but they are automatically somewhat downgraded, since the winner of one of them will have beaten four rather than six opponents. Games with variant boards, e.g. an extension into the Persian Gulf, are not rated. But minor rule interpretation differences, e.g. with or without Koning's rule, make no difference in rating. Non-postal games of the LASFS type, games played with a one week deadline over the board, are not rated. Games without an independent gamesmaster are not rated. Games which lack a substantially complete published record are not rated. Telephone games are rated provided that the primary means of informing the players of outcome of moves was letter or print and provided that a published record exists. Some dozen or more games qualifying under all of the above, have had to be omitted from this first edition of the List due to my records being incomplete. I expect to include them in later revisions.

Order of Rating. As the example in the first paragraph beginning on page 11 will indicate, the order of inclusion of games is of some importance in this Listing. For future revisions it will be possible to rate games in a rough and ready approximation to the order of their completion. To have attempted anything like that for the games included here, which represent 8 years of postal Diplomacy history, I considered to involve far more additional research than seemed warranted. Therefore these games were rated in order of their Boardman numbers.

This does, however, bring up a difficulty. As older readers will know, there was in the case of game 1964C a case of fraud which resulted in the game being deleted from all the Rating Lists current at the time. The deletion occurred about a year after completion of the game once the matter had been aired in the Diplomacy Press. Systems then in effect were all totalising schemes, and there was no problem in removing the game. Had such a thing happened with this system many handicap scores in the intervening year would have been affected and there would have been no way to completely rectify matters except to recompute the whole listing from the point of the inclusion of the bad game onward. That might have been possible then with very few games intervening; now games are ending at the rate of 100 a year and a thorough going correction of that nature would be impractical. If such a case again arises, and it will be a miracle if it doesn't, I propose adding in a dummy game, the reverse of the bad one, but not attempting to correct the mistaken handicaps which would have occurred in the interval. I don't think anything else is at all practical. In the same way if an error of calculation of mine is detected, it will be corrected as far as the principals are concerned. But if the score for another game has been affected, as a result of a mistaken handicap having been used, nothing can be

done about it, particularly if a long interval elapses between the occurrence of an error and its correction. For this reason it would be helpful if players monitored their own scores and informed me as soon as possible if they think they see a mistake. Chess Life and Review, in their brochure on the Chess Rating List, state that it is impossible for a player to completely calculate his own score. The reason is clear: a player reporting a win doesn't know what other wins or losses his opponent may have had just before entry of that game. However, in the usual revision, which ought to include 3 or 10 games, say, most players should know if there is an appreciable error in their scores. Should appreciable errors occur I would appreciate hearing about them as soon as possible.

Player history. Due to the fact that our game is a multi-player one, the average player can expect quite a few losses for every win or draw. For this reason, to get the most out of this listing, one should know not only a player's most recent score, but the general trend of his score over its recent history. To illustrate what is meant we will take the case of Jerry Fournelle, a well known and successful player, though one now in only one remaining game. Here is his history under this scheme:

Game	Game Score	Total Score
		600
1965C	+355	955
1965D	+122	1077
1965K	- 69	1008
1966A	+112	1120
1966B	+ 0	1120
1967AF	- 78	1042
1967AS	- 58	984
1968I	- 47	937
1968N	- 85	852

There are a number of things in this history which reveal features of this listing:

1. Jerry's first two games, 1965C and 1965D were played simultaneously. Both were Wild 'n Woolly games, begun the same issue, in which Jerry took over a position in the early years of play, and went on to win them both. The previous scores of the other players were much the same in both; in fact one opponent - me - was in both games. Yet the second of the two wins netted only a third as much as the first. This same effect appears even more startlingly in the other pair of simultaneous won games, 1966A and 1966B, where he gains nothing at all for the latter win. This is an example of the fact that as you climb the hill-slope in this Rating List, the slope becomes steeper and steeper.
2. Let us look again at 66B where, as a result of a win, Jerry gains zero points. This is the only case of this so far, although the same thing has happened to Beshara in a game which will be entered in the first revision of the listing.

There are, however, many cases of winners getting negligible scores for a win. We also note that Jerry, who in one case received nothing for a win, in another case dropped 85 points, almost double the normal 50, for a loss. A proposed cure for such unevenness will be suggested later.

3. Finally we note that neither Jerry's peak score, 1120, nor his present one, 852, would alone give an adequate picture of his achievement. We need something like his whole history, or a graph of his points, or the like, to see him properly.

A year from now it will be possible for anyone who wants a graph of a person's ODD Rating List score to prepare one for himself by the simple expedient of taking this issue, and every future issue published in the next year in which a Rating List revision occurs, abstracting the scores of the person he is interested in, and making a plot of it. This is not possible for the past, however, as those scores on the first pages of this issue condense 8 years of postal Diplomacy history. Within reason, I am willing to provide a history of anyone else, similar to the one for Jerry Pournelle, given above. From this point onward, however, it is up to the reader to maintain his own.

Draws. Draws are a damnable nuisance in this system, taking 5 or 6 times as long to work out as won games do. Each person drawing wins from each loser. These are treated just as standard games, the wins of each winner and the losses of each loser then being totalled and divided by n , the number of people in the draw. We then consider the people in the draw, among themselves omitting the losers. These scores are arrived at as in the chess system, totalled for each drawing player, and divided by $n-1$. These scores are then added to those earlier obtained, counting drawing players against losers.

From a Rating keepers point of view the system is self defeating. If this system ever becomes the standard one - or if any system based on the Calhaver idea that it is only wins and draws that count becomes the accepted listing - there will inevitably be an increase in the proportion of draws to wins. No doubt some sage has said that work is the reward of work.

Player Replacement. In Diplomacy we are faced with a problem that

Chess raters are mercifully exempt from. In Chess if a player resigns his opponent wins and that is that. In Diplomacy, on the other hand, due to its multi-player feature, players who leave a game are often replaced by others who take over their positions. In such cases the problem arises as to whether initial player, replacement player, or some combination of both should receive the points which the position earns in the game. There are, of course, Rating systems in which it is possible to assign scores, good or bad, to every player of a position. It will be apparent that it is impossible to run this system in that manner. In a game that goes to a win, one country beats six. In assigning points for this achievement we have to consider the previous standing of the players

for the countries. It would be extremely difficult to arrange a scheme whereby the standing of a country in a game was some sort of amalgam of the previous scores of the players who controlled it for various parts of the game. It is essential, as far as this system is concerned, to consider each country in a game as being played by one player. If in a game a country has been played by several players in turn it remains to decide which of them shall be regarded as having played it.

For the losing countries there is not much of a problem. When Charles Reinsel introduced the first Diplomacy Rating list in the pages of Graustark back in 1965 a flood of letters of comment followed. A point made then, and made frequently since, is that a replacement player should have his score suffer no loss as a result of his playing as a replacement. Many replacement players take over hopeless positions merely in order that the interest of the game may be maintained; it would be unfair if their ratings were damaged as a result. In this Rating List it is the initial player who is regarded as the player for all defeated countries.

The position for winners is not so easily settled. What I have done is to take the final player for the country as being the official player for it if the country wins or secures a draw. I am not altogether happy with this and may go into this at greater length another time. However, as the Listing now stands, that is what has been done.

Advantages and Disadvantages. It seems to me that this type of Rating List has the following advantages:

1. It is based on the Calhamer idea of win and draws being the only achievement meriting recognition.
2. It is relatively easily maintained. Not as easily as the Calhamer Rating List, of course; but the subsidiary records required are much less than in the EROB system for instance.
3. The chess system, on which it is based, has been in use for decades to the general satisfaction of those who use it.
4. It is not heavily weighted in favour of the player who has played many games.

These advantages are bought at a price, however:

1. It is based on the Calhamer idea of wins and draws being the only achievements meriting recognition. There will be two groups who will object to this:
 - (1) There are those who feel that the greatest credit should go to the winner of a horse race, but that the horses who place or show deserve some modicum of praise as well. These people feel that a player who furnished the major opposition in many games, the man whom the winner of those games had to go all out to beat, deserves more recognition than the player regularly wiped out in 1903. There were people who held this

view before the first Rating List was proposed by Charles Reinsel back in 1965, there are people who hold it now, and I have no doubt that there will be people who will hold it as long as the game is played. This Listing gives no credit whatever to the runner-up or other survivors.

- (2) People like Andy Phillips never cease from pouring scorn on those who "try for second". They seem oblivious of the fact that an equal contempt is felt for themselves by those who feel that wins only count. No quote marks around wins: wins alone, not wins and draws. This group is not large; but it is made more impressive by the fact that some of the best players the game has ever seen belong to it. They have no use for the attitude "If I can't win, no one else will win either" which playing for draw amounts to. Their position is somewhat undermined by the 1971 rulebook which mentions draws and implies that a draw is a legitimate secondary objective worth striving for if a win is impossible. All of the games mentioned on page 4 were played under older editions of the rulebook which made no mention of draws; so that in law, as well as in logic, for these games a draw should count no more than any other kind of non-winning survival. This listing does, however, count a draw as a sort of partial win.

2. There is a large element of luck in the score that a player earns. There is an example of this in the first paragraph beginning on page 11. The order in which games are counted has a serious effect on the scores. For a continuing player, in many games, these chance elements will, presumably, balance out; for a player in only a few games his score is very much at the whim of chance. For any player it is not the current score but the run of the last half-dozen or full dozen scores which is the real indicator of his standing.
3. Our system of make-up of games is incompatible with this Rating List. This is a point of sufficient importance that I would like to expand on it in the next section.

Make Up of Games. The system of making up games used in postal chess and in postal Diplomacy are very different. In chess the same organization that assigns players to games also keeps the rating list. It is therefore easy for them to put players of similar scores in games with one another. Chess Life and Review is the journal which runs most of the organized postal chess in the United States. The majority of the games which it runs are so-called class competitions. In them an A class player meets only other A class players, B players meet other B players, and so on. If a new comer decides to enter himself in the lowest category, D, he will meet only other D's. If he proceeds to win all, or most, of his games his score will become that of a C player and, if he enters more games, will automatically find himself matched with other C players. And so on. In addition they run open competitions open to anyone regardless of previous score. But there are more games played in class competition than in open. Those playing in open competition will have scores which, for the most part at least, were previously established in competition among equals. The result is that every veteran postal chess player has a feeling

for a postal chess score. Walt Buchanan, for example, would have a very good idea of the competition to expect from a 500 player, or an 800 player, or whatever. The score, of course, cannot condense into a single figure the whole multi-dimensional picture of a player. There is the aggressive player and the defensive one, the player who has studied the game a great deal and the natural player with little theoretical background, the man who cracks when surprised and the one who plays better when at a disadvantage, and so forth and so on. Only extensive play against him will give you some inkling of all facets of his play. But, in a rough and ready way, any postal chess player knows what opposition he has to expect from another from his score. This has been made possible by the thousands of games played between players who were in the same general class, the ups and downs resulting from wins and losses being determined by their score differences.

In Diplomacy things are very different. We have no central agency for assigning players to particular games. We will now pause for a moment while writer and readers render thanks to whatever deities they believe in.

Games are made up on any basis that any particular gamesmaster fancies. There have been a fair number of beginners' games. In some 200 completed games, and about an equal number of games now in progress, there have been two, count them 2, games restricted to previous winners. With these exceptions all games are made up purely at the whim of the gamesmaster. There can be the widest differences of scores of players in the same game. As an example in a game begun last November there is a player in the first 10 of the above rating list and another player in the last 10 of the same listing. As a result we find many games in which a winner makes only a negligible advance (two games in which the winner netted nothing at all); had the actual winner been among the losers in these games he would have lost nearly double the amount that would be lost in a game among people of equal scores. It seems to me that if this listing is to achieve its full potential and if, in particular, it is to be fair to the higher rated players, there will have to be more games offered which are restricted to players with similar scores.

At the present stage it is neither practical nor desirable to have A-class, B-class, C-class, and D-class games. Though this system is based directly on the postal chess system we do not have a single player with an A-class score. We do have a few B's but they are so few in number that every B-class game would have essentially the same players in it as any other. That is, a rigid boundary between the various groups, a la chess, is totally impractical for us. But there are myriad other possibilities. Gamesmasters could offer games for players as close as possible to 800, for example. Or for those between 600 and 800. Or for the highest rated of those applying. The possibilities are endless. In fact, something along these lines could be done with no essential change at all in current procedures. Twice in the last few months I have seen zines that began two new games in the same issue. As far as I could make out players were assigned to the games in order of receipt of application. It is

reasonable that the first 14 to have their applications in should be in these two games, and that the 15th applicant should have to wait 2 months until the next game opens. But why should the first seven be in game X and the next seven in game Y? The two games are due to start at the identical moment; neither the gamesmaster nor anyone else knows which will turn out to be the more interesting. So why not put the seven who are higher rated in one game and the seven who are lower rated in the other. My feeling is that such a procedure would likely produce more interesting games; in any event it would make the Rating List more meaningful.

What are the score limits that it would be desirable to have in the make-up of games? If there is a player who is 500 points above or below the average of the others is decidedly to have a game with limits that are too wide. A player 500 points or more above the average of the others risks double jeopardy losses if he loses and gains little or nothing if he wins. A player who is rated 500 points below the average of the others in the game can become a pirate, since he risks nothing at all if he loses. About a third of that figure, say 150 points, that is, no more than 150 points between the score of any player and the mean of the scores of the others in a game, would be highly desirable; in practice I think it would be difficult to achieve as much homogeneity as that in the general run of games. Let us say that 150 is about what we should be aiming for, with differences of double that, 300, being more or less acceptable.

This appeal to gamesmasters to consider the current ratings of players is addressed, in particular, to the better establish gamesmasters. A new publisher often has difficulty enough finding seven players without having to bother about their current scores. But old timers who have no difficulty in filling games might consider current scores when making up their games.

Comment. I would be glad to hear from any reader who has questions or comment concerning this Rating List. I plan to maintain it, that is, to publish revisions and updatings, for a trial period of about 6 months. That should be a long enough period to see whether or not it appeals to players in general.

Oh, yes, the name, the ODD Rating List. It was chosen in analogy with the FIDE Chess Rating List, now used for international competitions by the world chess governing body, the Federation Internationale d'Echec. ODD stands for Organisation de Diplomatie.

Those interested in Rating Lists, and those who are not will find this a very dull issue, should note that Jeff Power has taken over publication of the BROB Listing. A copy can be obtained from him by anyone sending him an 8¢ stamp to cover postage. After the publication of the next BROB listing, at Easter, I plan on having a look at the correlation between it and this listing. They are formed on very different principles but may give reasonably similar results anyhow. Jeff's address is c/o Gauss Hall, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey.

The Leap Frog Rating List

- | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Doug Beyerlein | 27. Charles Reinsel | 53. Joseph Proskauer |
| 2. Randy Bytwerk | 28. David Lindsay | 54. Jerry White |
| 3. Brenton Ver Ploeg | 29. George Inzer | 55. Rich Rubin |
| 4. Peter Rosamalia | 30. Charles Wells | 56. Lewis Pulsipher |
| 5. John Beshara | 31. Eduard Hille | 57. Margaret Gemignani |
| 6. Dick Miller | 32. Monte Zelazny | 58. James Dygert |
| 7. Bob Ward | 33. Thomas Eller | 59. John McCallum |
| 8. George Grayson | 34. John Shutelock | 60. Harold Peck |
| 9. Gene Presnitz | 35. Mike Goldstein | 61. Hank Reinhardt |
| 10. Edi Birson | 36. Walter Buchanan | 62. James Mackenzie |
| 11. John Koning | 37. Bob Strayer | 63. Bruce Pelz |
| 12. John Smythe | 38. Buddy Tretick | 64. George Schelz |
| 13. Mehran Thomson | 39. Paul Leitch | 65. Alan Huff |
| 14. Jeff Key | 40. Jeff Power | 66. Don Miller |
| 15. Banks Hebane | 41. Gary Jones | 67. Dan Barrows |
| 16. Tom Rosenbaum | 42. David May | 68. Jack Greene |
| 17. Bob Kinney | 43. Larry St. Cyr | 69. Hugh Anderson |
| 18. Dave Lebling | 44. Larry Peery | 70. James Latimer |
| 19. Ron Dellbringge | 45. Frank Clark | 71. James Luroe |
| 20. Glen Hertz | 46. Bud Pendergrass | 72. Thomas Griffin |
| 21. Peter Ansoff | 47. Derek Nelson | 73. Brad Payne |
| 22. Andy Phillips | 48. Russ Jones | 74. Don Berman |
| 23. Charles Turner | 49. Hal Hous | 75. Steve Bobker |
| 24. Rod Walker | 50. Conrad von Metzke | 76. Malcolm Watson |
| 25. Jerry Pournelle | 51. Robert Johnson | 77. Robert Katzive |
| 26. Norman Zinkhan | 52. Robert Heathley | |

Back on page 10 it was mentioned that a ladder competition, where two players interchange their positions if, in a match, the previously lower rated beats the previously higher rated, corresponds to a chess type rating with a 100% handicap feature. Actual ladder competitions are not usually run that way. Rather the winning lower rated player leap frogs to the position one ahead of the man that he has beaten and the latter and all intervening players move down one notch each to make way for him. The two forms are identical, of course, if matches are only allowed between immediately adjacent players. I thought it might be of some interest to prepare a rating list using the usual ladder competition scheme. The games listed on page 4 have again been used, once more in Boardman number order. Only the names of players who have won one or more games appear in the listing. Since the effect of a draw in this type of competition is to leave everything as it was drawn games have, effectively, been disregarded.

This listing has, in exaggerated form, the disadvantages of the ODB Rating List. It is extremely chancy. About half of the players on the list could be brought into the No. 1 slot by the simple expedient of changing the order of listing of the games. Closely related to this is its extremely short memory. One result of this is the relative ranking of John Smythe and John Koning. As all old timers will know both of the Youngstown players have played quite extensively, 19 games each as games are counted in this system. Koning has won three games and Smythe 8. Fairly frequently they have been in a game with one

another; in those circumstances Smythe would usually win if either of them did. One would therefore expect Smythe to have a higher ranking than Koning and, in fact, he did so during most of the period that the Rating was in preparation. However, the last game included in which both played was a game that Koning won. Therefore he ranks ahead of Smythe in the listing, the memory of the occasions on which Smythe beat Koning being totally forgotten as a result of the more recent win of Koning over Smythe. An even more glaring instance of the same thing is seen in the case of the two Florida players, Ed Hälle and Monte Zelazny.

I don't think that this Rating List is worth continuing and publish it here only for its curiosity value. It is a very easy listing to maintain, however.

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New Game Offered.

Since I am urging others to consider ratings in the make up of their games I ought, I suppose, to follow my own advice. In a recent issue I indicated that I might soon begin a game for those replying to the SerenDip quotes contest. Two readers sent in applications to enter it, in advance of the game actually being offered. These two have scores which are reasonably close to one another and I have asked them if they would be willing to transfer their applications to a game based on the ODD Rating list to which they have both agreed. Therefore, a new game in Pfennig-Halbpennig is hereby offered. If there are more than five additional applicants the five will be chosen who have scores as close as possible to the mean of the two already entered. (I will depart from this a little, however, to secure a good geographical distribution; if two applicants live in the same city, and if they are closely associated in the mind of the Diplomacy public, only one of them will be admitted to the game.)

Rule interpretation will be based on the new 1971 Rulebook. Playing procedures will be similar to what I have used in the past. Deadlines will be about 3 weeks for regular moves, Spring and Fall, and about 2 weeks for auxilliary moves, e.g. builds. I expect to make up the game on or about April 1st, which seems an appropriate date for beginning a Diplomacy game. The game fee is \$2 and it should accompany the application. (American players should note that U.S. cheques are expensive to cash in Canada. Either send cash in folding green stuff, by Money Order, or add 50 cents to a cheque to cover transfer charges.)

Scores used to determine who enters the game and who doesn't will be those in effect at time of make up of the game, not those listed on the first 4 pages of this issue. Players not yet rated are considered to have a rating of 600 points. And I suppose it is only fair to mention that the two players, the mean of whose scores is being used as gather point for the game, are both well up in this and other Rating Lists.

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Bob van Andel has just won a section of the SerenDip quotes contest and is therefore entitled to a free game in the journal of his choice. Name your zine, Bob. Others interested in getting free games through this contest, which is continuing, should write to Rod Walker, 4719 Felton St., San Diego, California, 92116 for a copy of the rules.

The following have written indicating an interest in postal Diplomacy.

Andreas G. Lang, 12 Adler Road, Toronto 16, Ontario, Canada
Paul Perell, 1 Fountainhead Road, Apt. 209, Downsview, Ontario, Canada
John R. Biehl, 4002 West 32nd, Vancouver 8, B. C., Canada
R. Henn, 2401 - 30th Ave., Vernon, B. C., Canada
R. Pchajek, Apt 1206, 150 MacLaren, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K2P 0L2
Allen K. Oshita, 1024 Blaine Ave., Salt Lake City, Utah, 84105, USA
Bob Bauthininer, 157 Bruce St., Apt. 1, Mitchener, Ontario, Canada
Charles Donahue, P. O. Box 908, Iowa City, Iowa, 52240, USA
Donald J. Kirk, 215-68th Ave., N. E., Calgary 70, Alberta, Canada
Allan Stewart, 256 Emily St., St. Marys, Ontario, Canada
Yale F. Edeiken, 2635 Cranston Road, Philadelphia, Penna., 19131, USA
Major Elliot S. Lipson, Rocky Mountain Arsenal, Denver Colorado, 80240.
Donald A. Tikkala, 20 Vine Crescent, Barrie, Ontario, Canada
Peter Walker, RR3, Belfact, PEI, Canada
Joel Covey, J-25 McKinnon Village, Raleigh, North Carolina, 27607; USA
B. L. Hoole, 2917 Pickford Road, Victoria, B. C., Canada
Michael Willner, 3099 Br. 6th St., Brooklyn, N.Y., 11235, USA
Paul Juniper, 2135 Avenue Road, Apt. 304, Toronto 12, Ontario, Canada
Len Scensny, 317 Linwood, Rochester, Michigan, 48063, USA
Bob Stoughton, 138 Howard Hall, Notre Dame, Indiana, 46556, USA
Reg. A. Forester, 1347 "A" Notre Dame Ave., Winnipeg 2, Manitoba, Canada
Henry Daniszewski, 169 Delatre St., Woodstock, Ontario, Canada
Jin Ronson, 868 Falcon Blvd., Burlington, Ontario, Canada
James E. Fish, 2077 Elmwood Ave., Buffalo, N.Y., 14207, USA
David Carawan, c/o Mr. H. W. Deeler, 931 Park Ave., Washington,
Penna., 15301, USA
T. R. Durette, 220 Myrtle St., Manchester, N.H., 313, USA
Roger D. Oliver, 25 Dogwood Drive, Denville, N. J., 07834, USA
Bill Abbott, 5018 Brookside Drive, Jackson, Michigan, 49203, USA
William H. Osmanson, 1015 Union St., Morris, Illinois, 60450, USA
T. J. Kutta, Box 200A, High Hall, L.H. S. C., Lock Haven, Penna.,
17745, USA
Stephen Cressman, Box 236, Lashburn, Saskatchewan, Canada
Merrill Ansher, 13102 Middlevale Lane, Silver Spring, Maryland, USA
James E. Schot, 604 Logan Ave., Lewisburg, Penna., 17837, USA
Rick D. Stuart, 903 Ellison Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio, 45226, USA
Ens. R. J. DeJonghe, Jr., USNR 778848, BOQ 3246 Rm 329B, NAS,
Pensacola, Florida, 32508, USA

Arteries Old and New

The following journals are believed to have openings for additional players. Sometimes the openings are only for variant games, or for replacement player positions. Newcomers writing them should ask about type of opening as well as such matters as fee, playing speed, playing procedures, and so on.

Arena, Edi Birsan, 48-20 39th St., Long Island City, NY, 11104.
Edi is one of the grand-masters of postal Diplomacy, level with the great John Smythe for the greatest number of games

- won, 8 each. After years of successful play Edi has just branched out into publishing; Arena will, undoubtedly, soon become one of the outstanding Diplomacy journals.
- Platypus Pie. Brenton Ver Ploeg, 520 Park Ave., Apt. 202, San Francisco, California, 94118. Another zine by an outstanding player who has recently turned publisher.
- Marcus. Mark Weidmark, 520 Park Crescent, Pickering, Ontario, Canada. The only Diplomacy journal now published in Canada, except for the rag you are reading.
- Pfennig-Halbpennig. John McCallum, P. O. Box 52, Ralston, Alberta, Canada. For conditions of entry to its game see page 20 of this issue although it is not likely to appeal to newcomers.
- Saguenay. Conrad von Metzke, Box 8342, San Diego, California, 92102. There will be two additional games open to Canadians only. In his many other publications Conrad may have other openings as well.
- Legatus. Tony Pandin, 10406 Shaker Blvd., Cleveland, Ohio, 44104. Openings for replacements only, I think.
- The Voice, Stan Wrobel, 7 Poland Village Road, Poland, Ohio, 44514. A reading knowledge of Polish helps.
- Graustark, John Boardman, 234 East 19th St., Brooklyn, N.Y., 11226. Where the whole madness started. Openings only for replacement players. Fredonia also has openings for a game of "The Origins of the Second World War".
- Bushwacker, Fred C. Davis Jr., 5307 Carriage Court, Baltimore, Maryland, 21229.
- Yggdrasil Chronicle. Paul Wood, 24613 Harman St., St. Clair Shores, Michigan, 48080.
- Carbon 18, Fred C. Winter, Jr., 2625 El Rancho Drive, Brookfield, Wisconsin, 53005.
- SerenDip, Rod Walker, 4719 Felton St., San Diego, California, 92116. And, for replacement positions, in other journals of his vast publishing empire.
- Shaft!!!. Andy Phillips, 123 Oliver St., Daly City, California, 94014.
- Hoosier Archives, Walter Buchanan, RR3, Lebanon, Indiana. No game openings but, if you want to read about Diplomacy, the best articles in the business. On the other hand, if you want to read press releases, music criticism, discussions of the war in Asia, or what not, you can do far better elsewhere.
- En Passant, Greg Warden, 4500 Walnut St., Philadelphia, Penna., 19139.
- Liaisons Dangereuses. Len Lakofka, 1806 Richmond, Chicago, Illinois, 60647.
- Diplophobia. Don Miller, 12315 Judson Road, Wheaton, Maryland, 20906. It is likely that openings are for replacement and variant positions only. One of the old stand-bys.
- Xanadu. Charles Welsh, Box 3197, or Tom Leahy, Box 1387, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, 02912.
- Armadillo, Steve Coeper, 30373 S Buchanan St., B-2, Arlington, Virginia, 22206.
- Atlantic. Christopher Schleicher, 5122 West Carmen Ave., Chicago, Ill., 60630.

Xenogogic. Larry Peery, 816 24th St., San Diego, California, 92102, usually has vacancies, at least for replacements.
Courier. Don Turnbull, 6 St. George's Avenue, Timperley, Cheshire, England. Designed primarily for players in Britain, this also carries occasional international games. It has one at present with players from Canada, the U.S., England, Ireland, Sweden, South Africa, and Israel, and plans another of the same type. Such games are necessarily slower than others, but, even so, are about as fast as the slowest games on this continent.
The Diplomat. Eric Just, P. O. Box 131, Paoli, Oklahoma. 60525.

There are doubtless others but this should be sufficient for anyone to find a game.

Stop Press New Blood - John Hendry, 17 Price Road, Peabody, Mass., 01960

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New Game Announcement (See page 20)

I omitted mention of one important factor. All applicants should include a list of all seven countries in order of their playing preference. The lowest rated of the seven players will be given his first preference; the second lowest will be given his first choice unless it has already been assigned, in which case he will be given his second. And so on, up to the highest rated player who will take the remaining country. This gives some slight handicap in favour of the lower rated players.

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Bourse

The Bourse report will have to wait until next issue. There is one, in case any of the players in the 1969BH Bourse were wondering. Those interested in Bourse should note that Conrad von Metzke, P. O. Box 8342, San Diego, California, 92102, is organizing a Bourse to be played based on one of the Diplomacy games soon to begin in Saguenay. This is the first Bourse to be offered in well over a year. It is also the first Bourse ever to allow short selling and margin buying. Those interested should write Conrad and ask him for the issue which contains the Bourse rules.

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The Origins of the Second World War is a new Avalon-Hill game which does, in a general way, for the second World War what Diplomacy does for the first, although there are wide differences between the two games. Edd Birsan has asked that it be noticed that he will be assigning index numbers for postal games of it, similar to the Boardman numbers for Diplomacy games with which we are so familiar.

