

THE
POCKET
ARMENIAN

Vol. I, No. 2

Jamaica, N.Y.

July 27, 1974

LUDUS INCIPIAT -- LET THE GAME BEGIN!

Yes, we have filled our first game. Below are the players and their addresses:

AUSTRIA: Dave Darden, 241 Cherry St., Farmingdale, N.Y. 11735

ENGLAND: Don Kellogg, 154 N. Erie, Wichita, KS 67214

FRANCE: Adam Gruen, 470 North St., Harrison, N.Y. 10528

GERMANY: David Barlow, 107 Gladwin Ave., Leonia, N.J. 07605

ITALY: Paul Bean, 379 Marlborough St., Apt. #2, Boston, Mass. 02115

RUSSIA: Wayne Gildroy, 4850 S. Lake Park, Apt. 1809, Chicago, IL 60615

TURKEY: Bob Moore, P.O. Box 328, Loveland, Colo. 80537

Deadline for Spring, 1901 moves is midnight August 16, 1974. We will call this game "PA1" until we get a Boardman number. The Gamemaster is Matthew Diller, 85-07 Avon St., Jamaica, N.Y. 11432. All players will receive a copy of our houserules with this issue; the rest of you will get it next issue, as part of the magazine. All deadlines will be three weeks, unless otherwise indicated.

GAME OPENINGS, PART II

We still have many, many openings in regular games of Diplomacy. Remember, the \$5 includes a subscription to THE POCKET ARMENIAN as long as you're in the game.

The response to our call for a Fall of Rome tournament has been very depressing (read: we got no response). Therefore, I doubt we'll be running one in the near future. We may announce a Youngstown game soon, and maybe another variant. There have been no requests for ORIGINS.

John Boyer wrote in his magazine IMPASSABLE (reviewed elsewhere in this issue) that we are affiliated with THE POUCH (also reviewed) in that we use the same mimeo machine. We do not; we have our own, and are in no way connected with THE POUCH.

Eagles

Eagles is reviewed on page three. I neglected to mention where you can get it. It is available for \$5.80 from Game Designers' Workshop, Box 582, Bloomington, Illinois 61701

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THE POCKET ARMENIAN
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Scott Rosenberg
Adam Kasanof
Greg Costikyan
Matthew "Armo"-Diller

THE POCKET ARMENIAN is a magazine of postal Diplomacy & related & unrelated matters. It is published on every third Saturday. Subscriptions are 10 for \$2.00. The game fee is \$5, including subscription as long as you're in the game. It runs ten to twelve pages per issue. We welcome contributions, paying 4 free issues per article published. Send all letters, comments, game fees, subscriptions, and other mail to the above address, and make checks payable to same.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

ERNIE MELCHIOR -- I greatly enjoyed the first issue; especially just about everything except the tactics article -- I usually don't read tactics articles, a la von Metzke.

I should like to compliment Greg Costikyan on "Worst Opening Moves" which begins what should prove to be a long and enlightened discussion of the subject with a great deal of insight and competence. Greg makes only one mistake. As a GM, under the new rules the support of Bur-Swi, by army Marseilles in the French "Against Switzerland" opening, would have to be ruled invalid. Usually the French can overcome this lack of support into Switzerland by allying immediately with Turkey and playing a Baltic opening.

I liked your article on 1776. The "idiocy rule" fanatics are somewhat mixed up-- the question is (for any wargame) "who is the player supposed to be?" In American Civil War, for example, SPI clearly intends the players to be Lincoln and Jefferson Davis, which is fine. In American Revolution the English player is supposed to be King George. In 1776 the English player is supposed to be a mythical combination of the British commanders active in 1776. This is perfectly acceptable -- the game can be further divided by assigning sub-commanders and so on.

The question that divides S&T and Avalon Hill is no longer money - the two are both charging tons of money for a bunch of paper and cardboard -- but whether the buyer wants to recreate history (SPI) or to have the basic situation with a playable series of alternatives to use in changing or reliving it (Avalon Hill). Criticizing either philosophy or a rule because it doesn't fit in with one particular philosophy is pretty presumptuous.

((I quite agree with the comments made on philosophies. Lately I have felt that many of SPI's newer designs are "stale" games -- they tend to hold very little interest. Many gamers I have spoken to agree with this. This, however, has not really shown up yet, because many of the games I'm talking about are in the playtest stage right now. I'm in the process of gathering my thoughts right now and I think I have the answer; more on this next issue.))

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APPLICATIONS OF MODERN TECHNOLOGICAL
WARFARE TO FACE-TO-FACE DIPLOMACY

by Adam Kasanof

The average Diplomacy player shows up at a game with only his preference list and his wits, oblivious to the battery of useful devices science has provided him with and to the veritable arsenal at his command. I hope to delve briefly into this storehouse of resources, much to the profit of everyone involved. The first item on the list is chemical warfare, since it's the simplest.

In Diplomacy, as in any game of skill (or chance, if you intend to cheat), the basic rules for use of intoxicants apply, i.e., don't drink yourself, and encourage everyone else to do so as much as possible. (A good idea which you can appropriate from The Sting is to bring a bottle of watered liquor along with you and drink from it profusely, indicating to everyone else that now is the time to take advantage of you, since you're drunk.)

If you should find yourself playing host to a Diplomacy game in your own home, you might reflect on "augmenting" whatever beverages you serve with vodka, or some other alcohol without a distinctive flavor. Above all, **DON'T DRINK YOURSELF!**

One of the simplest yet most versatile playing aid you can bring to a game of Diplomacy is a cigarette, or better still, a cigar. Anyone who has ever played chess knows the uses of a cigar in breaking an opponent's concentration while sitting at the board at figuring moves, and the greasy smoke produced by a cigar can also act as a screen while pieces are "manipulated" in manners other than those strictly provided for in the rules.

A cigar can also be used as an agent of misdirection when you are playing Diplomacy in someone else's house (i.e., place your cigar a thirty-second of an inch away from a Picasso oil hanging on the wall nearby). Another useful tactic is dropping a lighted cigar into someone else's glass of liquor and watching the blaze. One more tactic of note is passing out cigars or cigarettes to members of various alliances opposing you and then passing out cigarette loads. If you are Italy and Turkey loads Austria's cigarette, the advantages become obvious. An ashtray is a good thing to have on a Diplomacy table, since a connived sneeze or a twitch of a finger can provide the needed diversion for some devious tactic you have in mind.

Incense is not without its uses either. If you are playing in your own home, say that you always keep a few sticks burning for "atmosphere", or to cover the smell of burning flesh from the nightly rituals of your Satanic-cultist neighbors, or to mask the occasional odor of boiling clorox which comes from the chemistry set of some kid down the hall. If you are at someone else's house, comment on the way the place smells like "a vomitorium after a week-long sanitation strike" or something similar, and produce from your pocket the incense which you "always carry" just for such contingencies. It's advisable either to use an incense like "Camel Dung" which has a nauseating tendency, or some other scent which makes the eyes water. Better yet, you can make your own incense with both of the desirable qualities above, if you're willing to invest the effort to improve your Diplomacy game.

Applications of Technological Warfare (continued) page four

When using smoke and incense, it's wise to carry some Silly Putty or sterile cotton which you can shove in your nostrils to blot out the smell, and some Visene, which can prove very useful. Straight Visene can be used to keep your eyes from falling out, and may be sold to the other players for "a quarter a drop". (Even if you lose the game, you can still net a healthy profit, which you can use in the poker game you set up afterward.) Also, you can use Visene that has been cut with alcohol, ammonia, or lemon juice to momentarily disconcert opponents while you "make your move". Another hint that you can apply to ashtrays is to bury a strip of magnesium under a light coating of ashes, so that the first hot ash or cigarette butt will create a ball of fire likely to be noticed by the person whose sleeve it ignites.

A final off-beat note is the use of insect warfare by some enterprising individuals. The idea is this: you simply appear at the game, liberally coated with 6-12 or some other insect repellent (carrying a sufficient back-up supply to sell at a handsome mark-up over cost), along with a jar of mosquitoes, gnats, tse tse flies, or whatever is on sale at your local trick and novelty emporium, which you release (discreetly, of course). And that's all there is to it.

* * *

SMALL CHANGE DEPT.

Some people seemed a little bit confused about our game fee. The \$5.00 that you pay includes a subscription to the 'zine for as long as you're in the game. If you want to join a game and also want to receive The Pocket Armenian, you send \$5.00, not \$7.00.

One important thing I forgot to mention last issue is that if you are the editor of a magazine we trade with, you don't pay full game fee. Our game fee for traders is only \$2.00, not \$5.00.

* * *

NEW YORK WAR GAMING CLUB

This is not a "club" in the literal sense of the word; there's no membership fee or anything. It is basically a meeting place for people to play games. So far no one has played Diplomacy there yet, but there's no reason why you couldn't. It meets every Sunday from noon till 9 o'clock at 75 Columbia St., between E. Houston & Delancey Streets. Many local Diplomacy people (including ourselves) can be met here (if you really want to). For more information, call Dave Waxtel, 228-1261.

* * *

WHAT'S GOING ON WITH THIRD REICH?

Avalon Hill announced in the latest issue of The General that their fall game release would be Third Reich, WWII European theatre, much like SPI's World War II. Rand Game Associates, already involved in one legal squabble with SPI for supposedly stealing a mailing list (or something), announced that their next game would be called Third Reich, same subject. Does anybody know anything about this? Are they different games, or the same? What is happening?

EAGLES -- A REVIEW

by Scott Rosenberg

Game Designer's Workshop is one of the newer entrants into the field of professional wargame publishers, and I feel has the potential to become the best. Besides their massive Europa Series undertaking -- which will eventually cover the entire World War II European Theatre on a divisional level (I'll believe it when I see it) -- they have published three other games: Triplanetary, which I may review next issue, in one form or another; Chacol, an excellent game on what must be the most obscure wargame topic yet, the Chaco War between Bolivia and Paraguay in the 1930s; and Eagles, which I believe is the best of these.

Eagles simulates, on an operational level, Drusus Germanicus' expedition against the German tribes in 15 A.D. Six years previous to this, three full legions had been ambushed by the Germans and wiped out, their Eagles (standards which supposedly embodied the spirit of the legion, in one way or another) being captured in the process. This expedition was for the sole purpose of recovering these eagles.

The mapboard provided with the game is on a level of quality equal to the best SPI has to offer; The rules are typeset in booklet form, which I feel is easier to use than the accordion folder, and have only a few inaccuracies, all of which are corrected in the errata provided. The unit counters are, again, on a par with SPI and Avalon Hill, and even do SPI one better in that they are glossy-coated.

The game's entire victory system is based on the eagles. The Germans start with three of these (which they had captured); each of the Roman legions comes ready-equipped with its own. The legions may break down into cohorts and half-legions (the historical basis for which seems a little shaky to me). They are invincible in open terrain, because they can concentrate ninety strength points (forty-five per legion, at two per hex maximum) in one hex. In rough terrain, however, the Roman player is limited to one legion per hex. It is here that, if the German is to attack at all, he must.

The Roman player's only strategy is to go after the eagles without any further ado. If he ends the game with only a fraction of his army but in possession of all the eagles, he will win. Therefore, the German player must do anything to deny the Roman his Eagles. This usually means running as soon as possible. The eagles can't move until a Roman unit moves within four hexes.

The Roman player receives no reinforcements. The Germans receive new units by having a tribe become mobilized. This occurs when Romans move into that tribe's territory or when Arminius (the German leader, whose native name is "Hermann") moves into the same hex with that tribe's chief. Arminius usually spends the game running from tribe to tribe, trying to persuade recalcitrant chiefs to raise their levies.

All things considered, Eagles is one of the best games to come along in a long while. Although it tackles the period on a level never before placed into wargame form, it nonetheless is a highly enjoyable, balanced, and playable game.

DIPLOMACY 260 A.D. (First Edition)

A Diplomacy Variant designed by Scott Rosenberg

1. All rules are the same as regular Diplomacy except as noted below.
2. There are six players: Rome, Empire of the Gauls, Germans, Goths, Empire of Palmyra, and Persia. Starting positions for spring, 260 are as follows:
 - ROME: Army Rome, Army Cisalpina, Army Dalmatia, Fleet Africa, Fleet Achaia, Army Bithynia, Army Asia. (7)
 - GAUL: Army Lugdunensis, Army Narbonensis, Army Lower Germany, Fleet Britannia, Fleet Far Tarraconensis. (5)
 - GERMANS: Army Lombards, Army Suevi, Army Burgundians, Army Quadi. (4)
 - GOTHS: Army Amadoci, Army Bastarnae, Army Huns, Fleet Alans
 - PALMYRA: Army Antioch, Army Palmyra, Army Mesopotamia, Fleet Aegyptus. (4)
 - PERSIA: Army Ecbatana, Army Susa, Army Persia. (3)

The provinces listed above are the home centers; all other supply centers are considered neutral at the start of the game.

3. The following provinces have two coasts: Cisalpina, Etruria, Rome, Macedonia, Thracia.

4. The North Sea area, which is unmarked on the map, should be considered impassable. Thus Galedonia & Eboracum do not have two coasts. Also, the northern German provinces are not coastal.

5. There are two "impassable borders" on the map. You may not move from Near Tarraconensis to Aquitania, and vice versa; you may not move from Cisalpina to Upper Germany, and vice versa.

6. The province of Bithynia is treated like Constantinople on the regular Diplomacy map; that is, fleets may move through it.

7. Cyprus is a province and a supply center (neutral); this may be unclear on some maps.

8. I have attempted to make it as easy as possible to place the two halves of the board together; however, there may still be a little cutting and/or folding necessary. Sorry.

9. As the situation stands at the beginning of the game, the German player can not build fleets. To enable him to accomplish this later on in the game, allow the German player to treat the province of Lugdunensis as a home supply center solely for the purpose of building fleets, if he captures it.

*

*

*

As you may have noticed it says "first edition" up there. This variant has not been fully playtested. I intend to playtest it either in this magazine or in another one solely for the purpose of playtesting variants which Gil Neiger may publish. In any event, there would most likely be no game fee. I'll keep you posted. And those of you who have objections to variants being playtested like this, be forewarned!

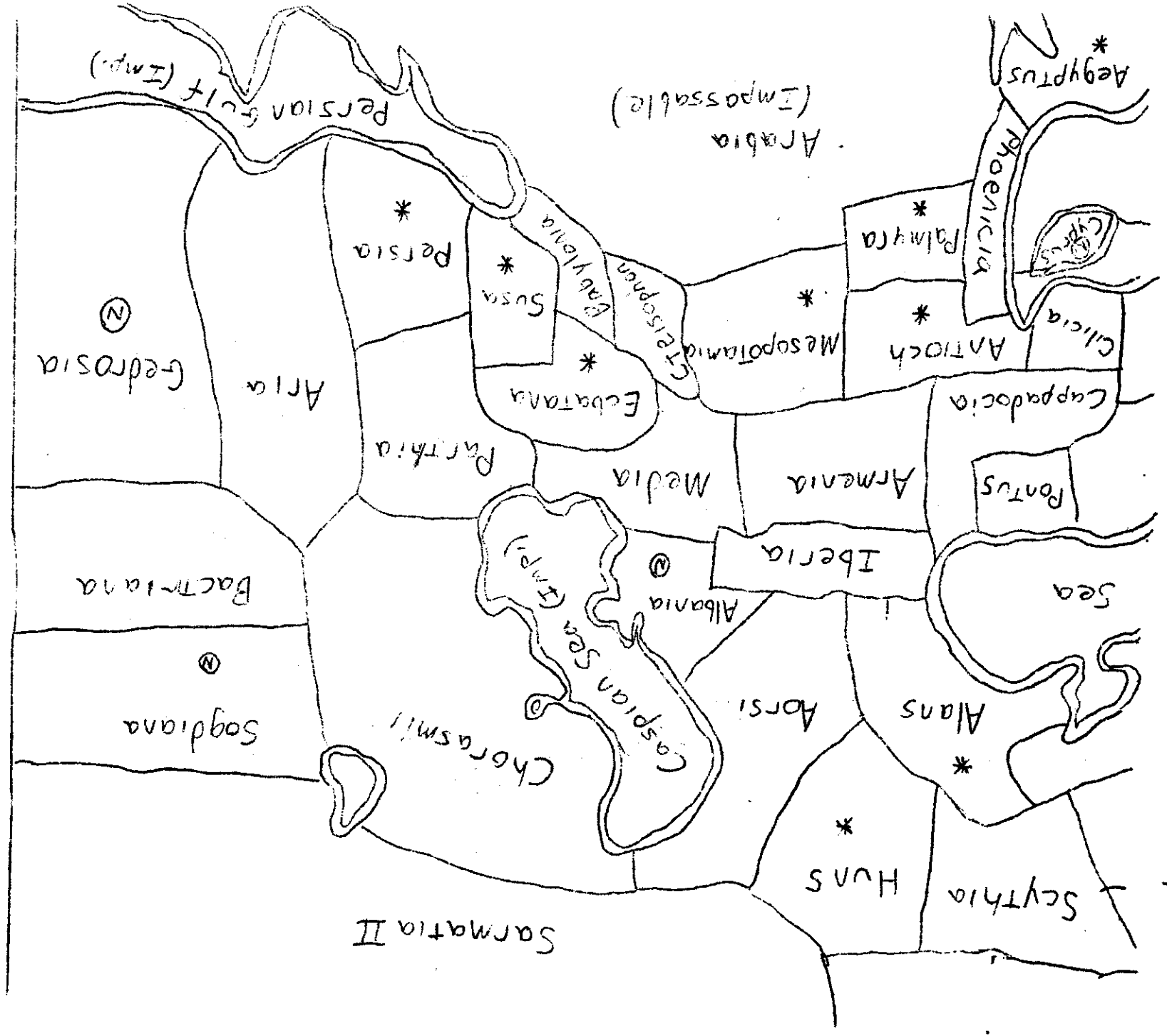
DIPLOMACY
260 AD.
(first edition)

Legend:

* = home supply center
 (N) = Neutral supply center

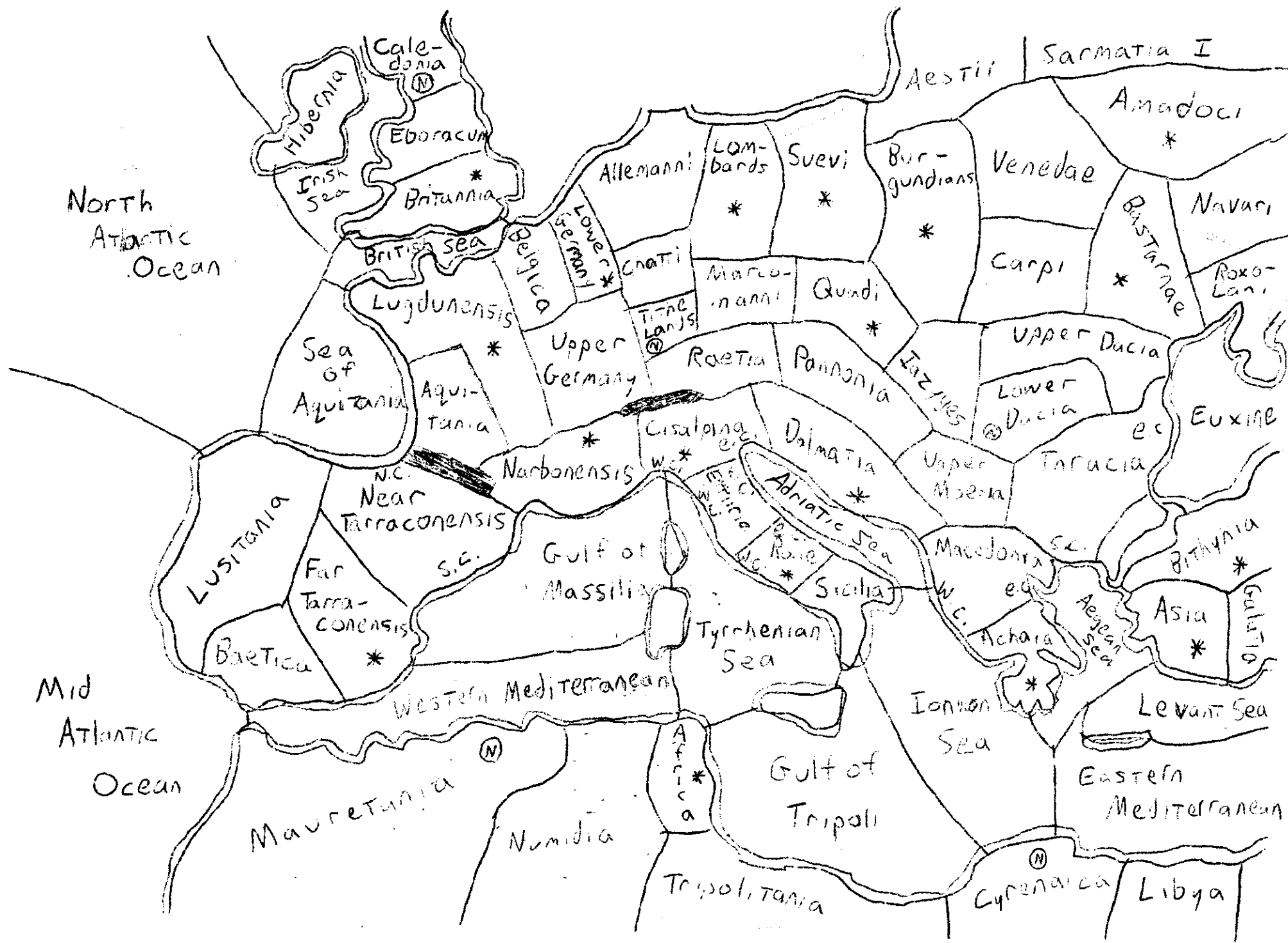
Imp. = Impassable
 E.C. = East coast
 W.C. = West coast
 N.C. = North coast
 S.C. = South coast
 (Alps + Pyrenees) = Impassable

Designed by
 Scott Rosenberg



260 A.D. -- Provinces and their Abbreviations (*=supply center)

*Ach= Achaia	Iaz= Iazyges
Adr= Adriatic Sea	Ibe= Iberia
Aeg= Aegean Sea	Ion= Ionian Sea
*Agy= Aegyptus	Iri= Irish Sea
Aes= Aestii	Lev= Levant Sea
*Afr= Africa	Lib= Libya
*Ala= Alans	*Lom= Lombards
*Alb= Albania	*LDA= Lower Dacia
All= Allemanni	*LGe= Lower Germany
*Ama= Amadoci	*Lug= Lugdunensis
*Ant= Antioch	Lus= Lusitania
Aor= Aorsi	Mac= Macedonia
Aqu= Aquitania	Mar= Marcomanni
SAqu= Sea of Aquitania	*Mau= Mauretania
Ari= Aria	Med= Media
Arm= Armenia	*Mes= Mesopotamia
*Asi= Asia	Mid= Mid Atlantic Ocean
Bab= Babylonia	*Nar= Narbonensis
Bac= Bactriana	Nav= Navari
Bae= Baetica	NTa= Near Tarraconensis
*Bas= Bastarnae	NAt= North Atlantic
Bel= Belgica	Num= Numidia
*Bit= Bithynia	*Pal= Palmyra
*Bri= Britannia	Pan= Pannonia
BrS= British Sea	Par= Parthia
*Bur= Burgundians	*Per= Persia
*Cal= Caledonia	Pho= Phoenicea
Cap= Cappadocia	Pon= Pontus
Car= Carpi	*Qua= Quadi
Cha= Chatti	Rae= Raetia
Cho= Chorasmii	*Rom= Rome
Cil= Cilicia	Rox= Roxolani
*Cis= Cisalpina	SarI= Sarmatia I
Cte= Cteisophon	SarII= Sarmatia II
*Cyp= Cyprus	Scy= Scythia
*Cyr= Cyrenaica	Sic= Sicilia
*Dal= Dalmatia	*Sog= Sogdiana
Eas= Eastern Med.	*Sue= Suevi
Ebo= Eboracum	*Sus= Susa
*Ecb= Ecbatana	Thr= Thracia
Etr= Etruria	*TiL= Tithe Lands
Eux= Euxine Sea	Tri= Tripolitania
*FTa= Far Tarraconensis	Tyr= Tyrrhenian Sea
Gal= Galatia	UDa= Upper Dacia
*Ged= Gedrosia	UGe= Upper Germany
GMa= Gulf of Massilia	UMo= Upper Moesia
GTr= Gulf of Tripoli	Ven= Venedae
Hib= Hibernia	Wes= Western Med.
*Hun= Huns	



Trades (continued)

page eleven

DIPLOMACY WORLD Walt Buchanan, R.R. 3, Lebanon, Ind. 46052

Bi-monthly. Offset. Subs at 6/\$3.00. No game openings.

This is the Big Bad Wolf that will destroy the hobby and is out to get all of us. Of course this really isn't true; the problem that DW creates is that it is not treated in the right perspective. It should not be considered along with most Diplomacy 'zines because it is very atypical. It has a tremendous subscribership and can call on all the "Big Name Fans" for articles. It is an excellent magazine of its type, that is, a strategy-and-tactics 'zine. But there should be no fear that all small-'zine publishers will throw up their hands in despair and give up at the sight of DW because the heart of the hobby is the individuality and heterogeneity of its members and their magazines. Even if you think Walt Buchanan is the worst traitor to the human race since the serpent in Eden you should sub to DW because otherwise you really won't know what's happening to everyone else in the hobby.

YE OLDE DOUBLE-HANDLED PUSHBROOM Ernie Melchior, 209 S. Elmwood,
Oak Park, Ill. 60302

Ditto. I'm not sure about frequency. subs at 6 for \$3. I don't know about game openings.

The one issue of this I've received so far is quite good. Ernie has one game going, with a lively press section. He also has a very interesting article about how publishers can use Diplomacy World to their own advantage. There's a comment on the semantics of game results, which I think is worthwhile enough to include in house rules; I did in mine. Ernie says his 'zine's goal is to be easy to read, and he succeeds in this, as well as making it very interesting.

BLACK HOLE Douglas Reif, 67 Grosvenor Rd., Kenmore, N.Y. 14223

Triweekly. Computer printout. Subs are 7 for \$1. I don't know about game openings.

This is a different concept in a game-zine, in that it really is just a game, and a few other items of interest. I may be wrong, since I've only gotten one issue. Besides the game, Doug includes bits of news which are hilarious.

More reviews next issue.

Talking about news clippings, I have a few myself...

A NEVADA BOY, 8, BRINGS DYNAMITE HOME TO MOTHER -- Reno (UPI) --
"Look what we found, mommy," said 8-year-old Mike Anderson as he put the three objects on the dinner table. Mrs. Anderson gingerly lifted the items and then called the sheriff's office. Mike and his friend, Dawn Edwards, 6, had found what turned out to be a cache of dynamite while they were inspecting an old "fort" near their house. A deputy disposed of it.

WORM WHO LIVED IN A SHOE -- Novata, CA (AP) -- For some time Mrs. Eleanor Keeg noticed that her shoes, which had been made in Taiwan, had an odd sound when she walked. Finally, the heel on one shoe disintegrated. It exposed a worm, which apparently had been living within, hollowing out the inside of the heel.

Last Minute Additions to all those Reviews

IMPASSABLE John Boyer, 117 Garland Dr., Carlisle, PA 17013

Mimeo, Irregular. I don't know about openings. Subs at 12/\$2 or 6/\$1.

As has been said before in other 'zines, IMPASSABLE is the most neatly produced 'zine in the hobby. John recently spent \$65 on a can of red ink so he could have a two-color cover. (It did look nice...) The one issue I received so far has many articles, including ratings, a crossword puzzle, a dozen 'zine reviews, and an article about 1914. On the basis of this issue, I'd say that there should be no hesitation to subscribe to IMPASSABLE.

DOMINATION John Coleman, 277 Curry Ave., Apt. 10, Windsor, Ontario,
Canada N9B 2B4

Ditto. Monthly. \$2 openings in Youngstown 2-week-deadline. \$3 openings in regular Diplomacy, only if you've won one game so far. All games carried in a sister (brother?) 'zine called Domination Games. Subs to Domination: send John a lump sum, he'll keep the books. Domination games subs at 6¢ a copy plus postage.

This is an excellent 'zine encompassing wargames and Diplomacy, plus extraneous miscellany. "Waffling and wargasms", as it says on the cover. Lots of good articles. John is starting a series on Diplomacy strategy, one installment per country. All in all, ~~one~~ of the funniest magazines I've ever read (Diplomacy magazines that is...)

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