

Politesse

Dale City's most prominent FTP Diplomacy newsletter serving the
Baltimore and Washington Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas
and their environs since late 1982 Issue Three January 1983

GREETINGS/GOTTACON

Welcome to Politesse, recently chosen as the official newsletter of 1983 MARYCON. Yes, we do gottacon- not Dipcon, not Origins, not ByrneCon South, PeeriCon East, PudgeCon Thin nor LousyCon Good. This is the very first MARYCON, to be held June 4 and 5 at Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg, VA. There will be overnight accomodations (dorm) including a meal plan at modest cost. There will two rounds, one Saturday and one Sunday, and awards will be presented. Stay tuned for details. Next issue we hope to have registration info and a suggested scoring system. It's your area con, BaltowashNOVa: With a reasonable level of local support, it could become an annual event.

Ed Wrobel

GOTTALETTER

I do have some comments on your "modest proposal" on page four. Unfortunately, I'm not really that convinced it's a good idea. While in such an instance my experience has always been to break out the beer and get everybody so sloshed that they don't know there's a seventh missing, that might not always work. Actually Risk isn't all that bad a game for six players, or five for that matter, and I would think that by far the majority of Dippers know the game rules. (Trying to teach others the rules to frequently complicated wargames in the middle of a con can get a bit difficult, but things like chess, bridge, poker, Risk, even Monopoly are very well known.) However, barring that, we have to deal with making Diplomacy a good game for six players.

I do not favor making Italy bound to a computer-like program of movement (or defense) such as you propose. Why not? Well, for one it is a great help to Austria and France and, to some degree, Turkey, another frequent target of Italy. By doing so, it also hinders the games of England, Germany and Russia. You see, Austria and France have secure backs and need not fear being attacked -- so they can throw their weight against the others. It's the perfect rear guard defense. On the other end, E & G & R can't negotiate with Italy and accordingly find it more and more difficult to attack the others. They are made weaker, their options fewer.

From this, other changes in strategy and geographical laws of Diplomacy become obvious: the board is further divided down the middle, army power in the center of the board becomes more important than before, etc.

No....that can't be the best way. Personally I would suggest another of the solutions you mention, that of randomly selecting a set of orders for the spare power out. But I recognize that this isn't perfect either. I do not know of a perfect solution, but I'll think about it.

Konrad Baumeister
Washington, D.C.

Your criticisms are to the point, Konrad. Any six player accomodation will distort the game. What I dislike about the random selection or "bid" method is the element of luck. Italy generally flails about like a madman, moving in a different direction each turn. She cannot even defend herself, let alone launch a co-ordinated attack on Austria, France or Turkey. The safest course is to sedate the fool before he accidentally disturbs something. (From the Franco-Austrian viewpoint.) There are plenty of variants about. Does anyone know of a six-player variant?

--EW

HADAGAME

Myers Game 1/83A was held January 8, 1983 at your editor's humble abode.

- A - Susan Benson
- E - Marty Ward
- F - Donald Sing
- G - Lanny Myers
- I - Peter Ansoff
- R - Ed Fahrmeier
- T - Ed Wrobel

Result: EFI Draw

Gamesmaster: Louis Newman

The Supply Center Chart

	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13
A	5	5	4	5	3	1	0						
E	4	5	5	4	6	6	5	6	6	7	7	7	7*
F	4	5	6	6	5	6	6	7	7	8	9	9	10*
G	4	5	6	5	6	5	5	3	3	3	1	0	
I	4	5	5	4	4	4	5	5	5	4	5	6	6*
R	6	6	5	6	5	6	7	6	7	4	4	4	3
T	4	3	3	4	5	6	6	7	6	8	8	8	8
Spa													
Tun													
Den													

There were any number of Myers' firsts in this game. First of all, of course, this was the first Myers game of 1983. Further, it was the first to include a player of the female persuasion who was the first to be eliminated (Ms. Benson of the Tidewater Bensons, who, by the way, was playing in her first Myers game), the first to be held opposite a Redskins' play-off game (garnering an 8 share) and the first to be almost busted by the Prince William County police. Politesse's first brush with the law was occasioned by the suspicious nature of our neighbor to the left, one of PW's finest in the grand southern tradition, and the apparently suspicious actions of our benighted GM. It seems our GM arrived late and raced to the door on foot past our observant neighbor's castle, leaving his spacecraft ungaraged against a public curb. Well, Neighbor called in a few of The Boys and GM avoided a heap a' trouble only by explaining that he hailed from a small town in France, drove a Renault Starcruiser VII with Bootis plates and was late for an appointment to consume mass quantities of supply centers. Lucky for us it was Saturday and our public servant didn't notice the antennae. (On the Renault.) Whew!

This was also the longest Myers game- in game years as well as actual playing time- and it was the most inter-areal, with players from Baltimore, the District and northern Virginia. Last, but not least, the first to include Doctor Myers himself, the eccentric inventor of the Myers Number, since 3/82A, the very first Myers game!

My appreciation goes to the participants for traveling so far and playing so long with such intensity. Rarely have so many come such distances to propagate so many blatant and subtle untruths for hour after hour.

On the downside, there was another first to this game. It was the first to generate absolutely no end-game statements. A Myers game without end-game statements is like...well, like a game told only from the editor's viewpoint. And you know what that means. You'll learn all about how Italy, Austria and Russia were determined to destroy Turkey from the very beginning because they feared the Turkish player's tactical acumen and negotiational cunning. And you'll discover that only his uncanny ability to portray a sow's ear as a silk purse saved the valiant Turk from obliteration early in the game. And how the entire weight of the western alliance was required to stymie the Turkish advance. And how the Italian player allowed the Frenchman to write his moves beginning Spring 07. And how with the entire board against him, except for a weak and ineffective Russia, the embattled Sultan still managed to maintain control of eight supply centers. (This player's best performance in six months.) And finally, you'll learn how the Turk was unfairly excluded from the draw while inferior English and Italian players coasted into the glory. Now you don't want to hear all this, do you? Well, then, tell the truth...as you see it. Besides it's very bad luck to not write.

Myers Game 1/83B was held January 13, 1983 at the home of Don Pfanz in a Fredericksburg battlefield.

	01	02	03	04	05	06	
A - Mike Kelly	5	5	4	4	3	2	
E - Dan Kelly	4	6	6	6	8	9	
F - John Thrall	5	6	6	6	6	5	
G - Ed Wrobel	4	5	5	2	2	2	
I - David Lilley	4	4	2	3	2	1	
R - Dick Warner	4	2	2	3	2	1	
T - Don Pfanz	5	6	9	10	11	14*	Conceded win

Again no end-game statement, but I can report this one accurately as I was instrumental in ensuring the Turkish win. (There's just something about the Ottoman Empire.) The concession was somewhat grudgingly accepted by the Englishman who had made hay at the expense of his loyal German ally. Note that the German even declined to take a second build in 1901 to reassure his English friend. Of course, the Russian invasion of Silesia did call for extraordinary measures. But I digress. This is about Turkey, not Germany. The Turk played a very slimy game and gained the first Myers win.

The concession to Turkey really was reasonable. He had 14 centers and two embittered Toadies, Germany and Italy. The Italian Northern Piratical Fleet was bumped out of Norway on the last turn by a Russian desperate to curry favor with his English puppet-master. And the German Franco-Iberian Expeditionary Armies held both Paris and Spain in Winter 06. Good prospects for a textbook victory within a couple years.

WANNAGAME

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Some Saturdays free, limited transportation.

Steven Ralston ~~222 St. Paul St.~~, 222 St. Paul St., Apt. 1905,
Baltimore, MD 21202. Within the Politesse service area.

Donald Sing, 9005 - 50th Place, College Park, MD 20740.
The Post Office only delivers half his mail. Write twice.

We know you are out there, those of you who wannagame but have not notified us for one reason or another. Perhaps you are reluctant to be associated with a Diplomatic version of "In Search Of..." Perhaps you already know every other Diplomacy enthusiast in Maryland, Virginia and D.C. Perhaps you know a few and don't want to know any more. We sincerely believe that the vast majority of the 80-plus Politesse recipients are probably reasonably well-behaved human beings. Those we've met are polite (of course), honest (to a fault) and reliable (except for certain absent Italian players). WANNAGAME was envisioned as a list of those currently interested in getting into a game. Any preferences or geographical limits will also be printed (e.g., "Baltimore area only" "prefer Saturday afternoons" etc.) HAVAGAME is for those who wish to host a game on a specific date and need players. Speaking of which...

HAVAGAME

We don't really havagame this time, although there may be an opening or two in Dick Warner's MARYCON facility playtest game January 29, Saturday, in Fredericksburg. Also Dick may be organizing Fredgames in the future. Write him at Department of History, Mary Washington College, Fredericksburg, VA 22401. David Lilley was instrumental in organizing 1/83B but will be busy the next couple months.

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SUPPORT MARYCON
JUNE 4 AND 5