

The New  
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# Politesse

Journal of the Washington Area Retinue of (Tacitly) Highly Organized Gamesters.  
#55 April 1988

## Greetings

Welcome back, your dreams were your ticket out (Hey, it seemed to work for the *Sweat-hogs...*). Don't worry, explanations will be forthcoming. Eventually. But for now it's enough to know that the new main man around these here parts is (drum roll please...) Richard Dale Martin, *Politesse's* newly christened Grand Poobah Editor and Chief Cookie-Pusher. But you can call him Dick (heh, heh). So, the decision was to reorganize and resume publication. Sub rates have dropped to 30¢ per issue, because we no longer intend to go above 1 oz postage (that's 12 pages). If we do, it will become a 60¢ double issue. As of this issue, (nearly) all subs will be doubled. For the sub conversion, I am assuming that all those in the Warthog calling area (say, Philly to NC to WVa) will want to stay with us, and those outside will no longer be interested in the "new" *Politesse*. Dick plans to concentrate almost exclusively on the local gaming scene, which provides less room for items of general interest. Anyone outside of the Warthog area who wants to stay with us, let me know. Of course, anyone can bail out at any time for any reason. Hey, talk to us! — Ken



## HavaGame

May 28-29 - Dixiecon II... in Chapel Hill, NC. David Hood (604 Tinkerbell Rd, Chapel Hill, NC 27514) is the man

to talk to about this weekend of Dip. Word is that Michael Gonsalves will be driving a veritable bus load of shoats down, hopefully not to be slaughtered by the Tar Heels. To arrange door to door service via Michael's excruciatingly comfortable minivan, drop him a note at 1401 Haven Rd, #T6, Hagerstown, MD 21740-3071.

June 25-26 - Clonecon 88... in beautiful Rockville, MD at the bustling *Politesse* editorial offices. This way, we can take notes and report on happenings live. Better coverage than ABC Sports will provide, let me tell you. There is no set itinerary yet, so plan on open gaming with a dash of Civ, Titan and hopefully the Baltimore Tusk will make a showing for a choo choo game or two. RSVP to me, Dick Martin, 17601 Lisa Dr, Rockville, MD 20855-1319. All past, present and prospective Martin Clones invited. Further details as they happen.

Weekly or so... Steven Wilcox hosts a Dip game at his place most Sundays and some Saturdays. This is currently the center of the Warthog Dip universe. Contact Steve at: 7602 Ledford St., #103, Falls Church, VA 22043, tel# (703) 893-7449. If you're into that sort of thing, this sounds like the place to be.

At the moment the projection is to put *Politesse* back on a monthly diet, with issues coming out soon after the last weekend each month (maybe sooner if Ken and I can tear ourselves away from his computer games...). That means that we've missed HavaGame announcements for April, but if one of you happy souls has something in mind for May or later this summer...let us know! And of course if you have a Hadagame report for us that you've been dying to write, well, we are back in business. Send it in!

A bit of sad news: it appears that Marycon is no more. Typically scheduled for the first weekend in June, it's a bit late to get the ball rolling this year. We remember the many good years, and can only look back on Marycons past with misty eyes. Our thanks to Dick Warner and Mary Washington College for hosting Marycon in years past.

— Dr. Dicko

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*Politesse* is now edited by Dick Martin, Clonemaster Extraordinaire, 17601 Lisa Dr., Rockville, MD 20855 (301) 948-3146. Send "Dr. Dicko" all game announcements, HavaGames, Hadagames, articles, and, well, anything you have for print. Ken "The Voice of the Footers" Peel remains on as publisher and money-grabber, so send your sub checks to Ken at 30¢ per issue at 8708 First Ave, #T-2, Silver Spring, MD 20910. See "Greetings" above for an explanation of our new sub policy. You won't be sorry.

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# HadaGame

## Salvation of the East – An Impressionistic Game Review

by Steven Wilcox as told to Ken Peel

Graduated last year from the UofN Chapel Hill in operations research (studies abstract optimization, kind of sort of like relates to Economics, but includes game theory). I am a lousy Diplomacy player, so I have these weekly games to try to figure out how to play better. Collected dipsters from Wash Gamers, Mensa, *Politesse*, Warthog Directory, game stores, contacts from David Hood. Currently, 35 players in file.

February 28th. Pat Howell (Austria), Steve Brinich (Turkey), Richard Queen (Russia, abdicated), Herb Leventhal (Italy), Jake Dragonetti (France), Rick Keefer (England), Dan Leeder (Germany), Steven Wilcox (Russia, took over from Queen). Rich Keefer excellent player, good gamer. Dragonetti is Wash Gamer. Pat Howell (don't remember where came from), Steve Brinich (ad at Compleat Strat), Keefer (in Compleat Strat), Leeder (on Warthog list). Queen tall! Towered above all, did good job with Turkey, but not so successful in keeping out the invading hordes. When took over from Queen, Russia on verge of losing Moscow and Galicia, Italy collapsing — French had more ships in Med. Aus and Rus ships came barely in time to make the diff.

Russian player had to leave, and so he made me Czar. My problem was what to do with the English army in St. Pete and the Germans in Warsaw. My predecessor had just cooked Turkey and had his main force stranded there. Plus the frogs, closely allied with Germany, were swimming up the Med. Getting the junkers out of Poland was the first order of business. Fortunately, the Austria-Hungarian emperor came to my rescue and moved into Tyrolia, Bohemia and Galicia without serious opposition. Then he attacked Poland, which was successfully defended until we switched tactics and went for Silesia and also Munich for good measure. To my surprise, the Austrian took both. The army taking Munich was eventually pushed into the sea off Denmark but I got Poland. Meanwhile, Italy was stalemating the frogs with Austrian and Russian assistance. Results: a genuine East-West stalemate line, leading to 6-way draw.

Worked because we had Livonia, Silesia, Bohemia, Tyrolia and Venice and enough fleets in the Mediterranean...

Now for the plug: we have well-fought Diplomacy games at my apartment near Falls Church on most Sundays and a few Saturdays. Both beginners and advanced players play, so give me a call (Steven Wilcox) at 893-7449 (home) or 893-5900 (work) to schedule a game. That's area code 703.

## *Sort of Another Game Review*

by The Editor

Normally I don't go in for variants of tried and true games, and Titan variants in particular seem sort of pointless. The game is close to perfect as it is, so why mess with a good thing?

Thing is, not only did they talk me into giving the sucker a try, but I ended up enjoying myself in the process. The date: sometime in February. The place: Chez Masso in the heartland of Northern Virginia. The opponents: well...so I can't remember everything.

If you've been a Polisubber in good standing for very long you've seen the variant in question printed in these pages (correct me if I'm wrong), designed by Bob Masso. The main thrust is directed at recruiting, with a slew of new creatures available and easier recruiting of the old reliables. Sure, there are new battle maps, but I never figured out how they worked and they must not have been very important.

While there were several games of variant Titan played over the weekend, your editor only participated in one, owing to a dire need for sleep and other niceties of modern living. So view these comments as sort of a "first look" at a new variant which is still in the playtest stages. If there are any other comments on the game, we would of course welcome them in these pages.

As mentioned above, the thrust of the variant is recruiting. There are more types of high-level creatures, and additional methods of recruiting the standard fare (for instance, griffons can be mustered in the plains in addition to the desert). Some creatures seemed to be too good at mustering (Rakashas seemed to sprout large, powerful stacks wherever they went), and others not good enough (whatever is next up from Hydrae and Colossi—Rocs? Jotun? Juggernauts?—never even came into play). Rangers and Gorgons transformed from evolutionary dead-ends into powerful recruiters.

At first, it was all very disorienting. Only Our Host knew the secret: grab the exotic new creatures and ditch the mundane oldsters. Unfortunately, he also left his Titan unprotected at a crucial moment.... It is reassuring that the fundamentals still matter. A bit more of a "Monty Hall" game than I prefer, but still quite enjoyable. Our congratulations, Bob, on creating a very playable variant and the pretty new pieces to go along with it. Now if you only tone down the recruiting blizzard a little bit...

## Interview With An Editor or, Electrical Banana is Bound to be the Very Next Phase

EW: Dick, you are, without a doubt, *the* most mellow individual I've ever known. How do you maintain your cool under the myriad pressures that inevitably bear down on a major league player in the world of postal gaming?

DM: Pressure? What pressure? Mostly I try to keep gaming "pressure" in perspective. After all, it's not like real life or anything. Then again, I often wonder if real life is like real life (possibly why I seem so mellow—I'm just extremely confused).

EW: How's your sex life? Get any last night?

DM: Ed, I am shocked that you would ask such a personal question in an interview like this. A gaming zeen is not the place for such talk, and such intimate topics should be avoided out of a sense of common decency. In other words, no not *last* night...today.

EW: Last year, your postal Dipzeen, *Retaliation*, went through an unprecedented expansion—what possessed you to do such a thing? Did it burn you out?

DM: It was just one of those things that happened. I put an ad in the General for Magic Realm and Dip players, asked Woody to refer novices to me, and before I knew it I was running fifteen regular and fifteen gunboat Dip games. As a result I've burned out a little, but meeting all the new interesting players and helping introduce them to postal gaming balances that out.

EW: You've GMed postal Diplomacy for what—15 years?—why have you stuck with it? What's in it for you? Is it fun?

DM: No, no, only GMed for about nine years now, though at times it *seems* like forever. Sure, it's still fun, and knowing that I can do a good job and have people enjoy the game as a result makes it even more so. I get a kick out of seeing new players do all sort of weird things.

EW: More fun than sex? Less? The same?

DM: Well, let's not get carried away. Dip isn't *that* much fun.

EW: You've been going to college for over 20 years—is there a sheepskin in your future? When?

DM: We're projecting degree number two in May of 88. Stay tuned, as my quest to gather the most credits in University of Maryland history marches on.

EW: You're into computers in a big way. Will every

household have a pc in the near future or will they go the way of quadraphonic sound?

DM: While I don't expect personal computers to become household fixtures in the immediate future, they won't pull a quad sound either. They can be very useful, and are particularly handy if you have to work at home, or use a pc at the office. But pcs certainly aren't a necessity, and most folks just aren't interested in them.

EW: How do you know? What makes you think you can predict the future?

DM: Not only can I predict the future, but I'm a mind reader too. Wanna see me do it? I bet the next question you ask will have something to do with technocrats.

EW: How do you feel about arrogant technocrats? Do you think it's rude to talk computers around computer illiterates? What about smoking around non-smokers?

DM: See? Arrogant technocrats like those in the Wang commercials on TV just drive me crazy. Spitting jargon like that is just annoying to me, along the same lines as sprinkling Latin cliches throughout personal letters to demonstrate how "literate" one is. But, as they say, *de gustibus non es disputandum*. But it's not necessarily rude to talk computers around computer illiterates. For example, Ken and I often talk computer talk, and he rarely seems offended. Certainly not as if I'd just blown a cloud of fetid smoke in his face.

EW: Why don't you tell our readers a little about *House of Lords* and *Retaliation*?

DM: *HOL* is a zeen about publishing, and what Julie feels publishers may be interested in (after all, she's the pubber for *HOL* now). I thought it might be an interesting thing to do, and enough pubbers agreed to make it so. But now it's in Julie's able hands (along with *Lord of Hosts*, just to confuse the ignorant masses), and I'm putting myself out to pasture there. *Retal* has been around since 1979, and has featured lots of Dip games, lots and lots of good press, a fair number of short fiction stories (mostly humorous—remember "Sex and Potatoes"?), and whatever I happen to toss in when I need to get an even number of pages. My emphasis is on having a good time above all else. Some folks like it, and others just don't get the joke.

EW: How does *Politesse* fit into the Martinesque Publishing Empire? What can Shoatdom expect from *Politesse* in the future?

DM: *Politesse* fits because it's something I think is worth doing. You came up with a good idea there, Ed, and *Politesse* has served the BaltoWash multiparticipational generative gaming community well over the years. I'd hate to see it fade away for lack of someone to put it out until you can come to your senses and resume the helm. Shoatdom can expect a return to the roots from me. Our emphasis will return to the local gaming scene, and a shorter, more timely zeen. Even as *Politesse* became a bigger and "better" zeen, with better reading material, it lost touch with its basic constituency and eventually ran aground. I'll try to avoid that, and see if there's still a valid reason for its existence. I hope so. My other hope is that Ken will see it in his heart to continue his fine work as publisher and poliprettifier, thereby making this all possible.

EW: You've announced a CloneCon for the summer of 1988. Tell us a little about the origin of CloneCon—where did the name come from—when was the first CloneCon—how many have there been—what goes on at CloneCon—am I invited?

DM: This is only the second CloneCon, the first being in about 1981 or so. As with most of my efforts, it just seems like the right thing to do at the time. A number of people have expressed an interest in getting together, so I just call it a "con." I expect a weekend of open gaming here at the new house, and a good time will be had by all. Of course you're invited, we still need the upstairs hallway painted....

EW: What's your favorite non-computer game? Fave computer game?

DM: *Titan*, no doubt about it. Fave computer game? There are a lot right up there, but the all-time favorite is *Rogue*, with *Strategic Conquest* and *Daleks* close behind. Given a choice, though, I prefer a human opponent. They're usually more interesting to talk to.

EW: Still listening to WHFS? Seen any Willy the Shake lately? Movies? What's in the playlist for this interview?

DM: Yep, it's HFS in my car since the tape deck is a dicey proposition at best. It's a party, it's a party-party. No Willy lately, my idea of culture has been the NCAA tournament these past few weeks. Movies...hey, a VCR can be a wonderful thing: Patton, Fistful of Dollars, The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance, The Shining, The Devil in Miss Jones, Chinatown, Play Misty For Me, Catch-22...all really fine productions. At the theater it's been DQA (Dennis Quaid is good but the movie isn't), Moonstruck (a nice little movie), Broadcast News (a little too contrived, and the main characters are too unlikable), and School Daze (of course it gets bad reviews from the middle-aged honky reviewers, they don't have a clue what it's about). Playlist for this interview: Billy Joel, 52nd Street \*\*\*\*, La Bamba soundtrack \*\*\*.

EW: What epitaph do you want on your tombstone?

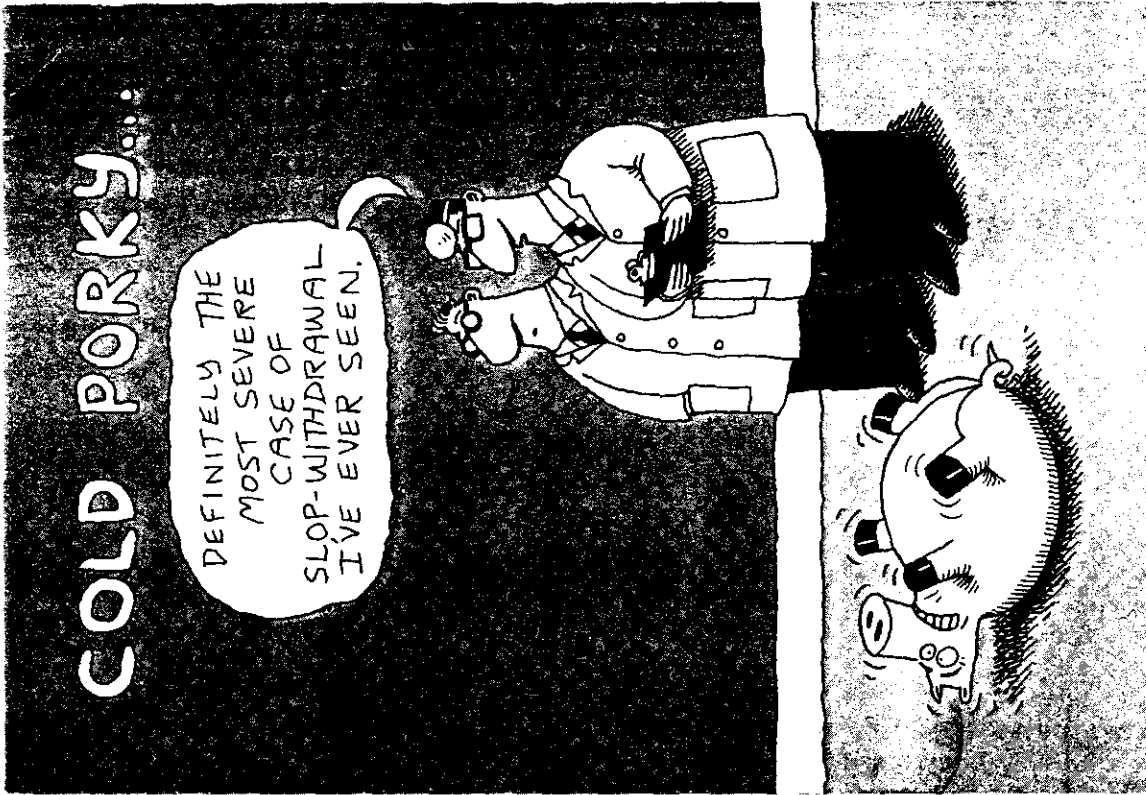
DM: I'd really rather not have a tombstone, given a choice. Do I have to? Oh well, how about the lyrics to "Nobody Does It Better?" Nonono....how about "Hey, no problem."

## TCP

Well, since we have the space, a few thoughts about the Presidential race: Action Jackson blew his surge with his recent foreign policy antics, but like or not like the politics of the man, there is no doubting that this is, indeed his *style*. In fact, lately he had been unusually subdued. But there is no doubt that Jackson will remain a major actor in the Democratic race. While his appeal among white Democrats remains a distant second to Dukakis, remember that his is unassailable in the largest ethnic base in the Democratic Party—black Americans—who comprise over 20% of the Democratic electorate. Jackson, however, will not win the Democratic nomination. That would be a Republican dream, and the loss in November would be so dramatic that it could even lead to a near (or actual) loss of the House of Representatives. Dukakis, on his part, seems to understand this, and is taking a relative high road to position himself for the fall. This will be helpful, because it will make him a stronger candidate. It will hurt him, however, (assuming he keeps it up) because it will make it virtually impossible for him to deny Jackson the Vice Presidency, which is the least that he will have earned. This, in turn, will lead to a solid loss in the fall (although not be as dramatic as if he headed the ticket). Jackson, essentially, is a second Williams Jennings Bryant. An orator who no one can touch, with politics that few would want to. (Hmm...but then Bryant *did* finally make VP under Wilson after years of failure going for the tip spot...) Next month, the Republicans. — Ken



Whew! That was close, wasn't it?



*Politesse*

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*Larry: I'm assuming that you want to print let me know if otherwise.  
-Ken*

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