

# Politesse

Journal of the Washington Area Retinue of (Tacitly) Highly Organized Gamesters.  
#52 August 1987

All Ahead Silly...

## Greetings

Well, I'm on vacation and have left Marc in charge. He shouldn't be able to do that much damage in just one month.

One of the nicer things about the Navy is that you get 30 days of leave each year. Not only that, but the Secretary of the Navy has an instruction that requires you to take it. So, to do my patriotic duty, and comply with the orders of those lawfully appointed over me, I'm going to take two weeks off. You know me; I'd be just as happy to keep on working, but if they are going to force me to take time off...<sup>1</sup>

Did I ever tell you how I got to be the editor of *Politesse*? I read in the December '86 issue that Ed wanted to take a hiatus. So I called Ken in January to ask about the job. He was enthusiastic—it seems Ed had just decided to move his retirement up to January. I told Ken that it was a lot of work, and that I probably would need assistance and would try to get Marc to help out. Ken thought that was a good idea, and pointed out that he (Marc) was pretty prolific, and might be able to edit on his own.<sup>2</sup>

I responded, "You must be kidding. I wouldn't dare trust Marc to put out an issue all by himself!"<sup>3</sup> Oh well, I hope I wasn't being prophetic that day.

Anyway, I'm sure Marc will find something safe and sane to put in this issue. Jeff Hoffman has sent in another copy of the Warthog Entrance Quiz.<sup>4</sup> It's pretty much the same as the last quiz, except it has 16 questions instead of 10. For this quiz, each question is worth 50 points, and 70 is passing.<sup>5</sup> However, no partial credit will

(Greetings cont., next page...)

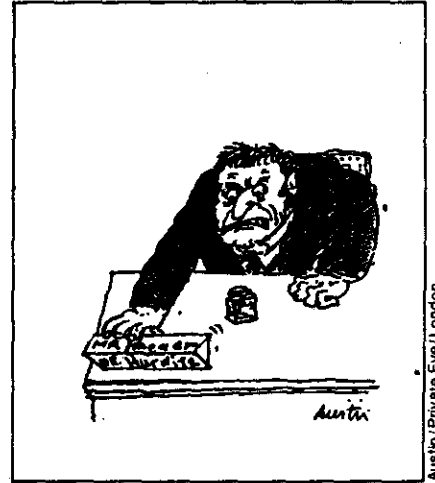
## HavaGame

**Woodstock V. August 21 eve. through 23** – Three days of war and music hosted by Our Man In Richmond, Rob McCarter. Open gaming featuring Pax Britanica starting Saturday 11 A.M., with Diplomacy or Titan Saturday evening. Also, lots of 60's music and videos and various music movies including Woodstock and The

Song Remains the Same. Keg of beer if enough people show. Where? 3101 Cottage Oaks Ct., Midlothian, VA 23113, (804) 744-7160. Directions: (1) Heading south on 95, take exit 195 south (Downtown Richmond); (2) Bear straight (left lanes) when 195 leads into Hwy 76, the Powhite Pkwy. Take the Powhite Pkwy. across James River (pay 30¢ toll, or go directly to jail); (3) Powhite Pkwy. will run out at Chippenham Pkwy., Hwy. 150. Take Chippenham Pkwy south; (4) Get off at Hull Street Rd., westbound exit, Hwy. 360. Follow Hull Street Rd. 5-6 miles to Genito Rd.; (5) Turn right at Renito Rd., and follow it into Brandermill Pkwy., about 3-4 miles; (6) Turn left on Brandermill Pkwy., then take the first right at North Beach. Take the second left at Cottage Oaks Ct., and *you are there!* Rob will send a map to any interested party.

**Vertigo Games. August 29 & 30** – Long time PoliSubber, Brad Wilson, will be hosting another weekend game fest, this time, no, not in North Carolina, but in Paoli, Pennsylvania (just outside Philadelphia). His parents will be out at the time, and have asked Brad to take appropriate care of the family mansion. Needless to say, all shoats invited. If interested, contact Brad at 302 Friendship Dr., Paoli, PA 19301 (this is actually his parents

(HavaGame cont., next page...)



*Politesse* this month is edited by Marc "Assistant Editor" Hurwitz, Warthog Labs, P.O. Box 191, Owings Mills, MD 21117. RegEd, Budd Haemer, 1758 Dogwood Dr., Alexandria, VA 22302, will be back next month, and all submissions for print should be sent to him. Lotsa gaming comin' round the bend. To hang out in these here parts, send 57¢ per month/issue, for however many months/issues you want, to Ken Peel at 8708 First Ave. #T-2, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

(...Greetings, cont.)

be give for incomplete answers. With luck, maybe the quiz will even filter its way into the issue this month. Enjoy!

**NOTES ON THE GREETINGS:** First, Dr. Marc Hurwitz was too busy at the laboratory to do the first rate editing job *Politesse* readers deserve. So, he whipped up, not a Dick Martin clone this time, but an Ed Wrobel clone—looks like Hurwitz, sounds like Hurwitz, but edits (sort of) like a Wrobel. That's me, Marc too two too. Furthermore:

1. The USN barely gets by with Haemer aboard 11 months each year. If he worked 12 months a year, we may just as well hand the keys to the White House over to Gorbachev.
2. Dr. Hurwitz extends his thanks to Mr. Peel.
3. Frankly, I don't think I'd trust Dr. Hurwitz with an issue, and I'm his creation.
4. Budd alluded to this quiz in a previous Greetings, but Ken Omitted it from the issue ((*So I lost it. So shoot me! —Ken*)).
5. Why not just say one must answer two or more questions fully and accurately to pass?

(...HavaGame, cont.)

house, where the gaming will occur). Home ph.# (215) 696-3880, work # (215) 688-3000, ext. 127.

**Titans of Harte, September 5 & 6** – This is the Saturday and Sunday of the Labor Day weekend...and there's still Monday for the family! Starting at 10:00 a.m. Saturday, Bob Masso will be hosting a full weekend of Titan (well, other games may be tolerated as well). Particularly encouraged to attend are those who might be interested in representing Warthog at the National Titan Tournament in Charlottesville, VA, in October, but all shoats invited. Here's the vital stats: Bob Masso, 8102 Harte Pl., #203, Vienna, VA. Phone number: (703) 698-0147. Bob' digs are metro close to everywhere. (Mustering possibilities in the Metro terrain include girls, bores, and underlings. See enclosed map. This event serves as practice for—

**Titan National Tournament, October 16 through 18** (2 p.m. Friday to 2 p.m. Sunday) – Hosted in Charlottesville, VA, by the University of Virginia's Historical Simulation Society. Competition is in teams of at least four, playing in separate games of 3 to 6 players, earning points for order of finish. You must play at least four games over the course of the weekend. The winning team takes home the TNT trophy, engraves it, adds an appropriate statuette (perhaps a warthog?) and hosts the tournament next year. Registration is \$7.50 before August 15, and \$10 after that date. Lodging is reasonable at the Days Inn. I'm not quite sure who will be coordinating the Warthog team(s), but a good bet would be to contact Bob Masso, address and telephone number in previous listing. We are hoping for at least eight players to make two teams of four. Ed Wrobel, Bob Masso, Phil Rennert, Phil Dancause, Carl Russell, Tom Swider, and Mark Larzelere have already expressed interest. Hey, why isn't the Yoda of Titan yet on this list? Wake up, Dicko! For more information, see elsewhere this issue, or contact Brian Bouton, Historical Simulation Society, P.O. Box 485, Ivy, VA 22945.

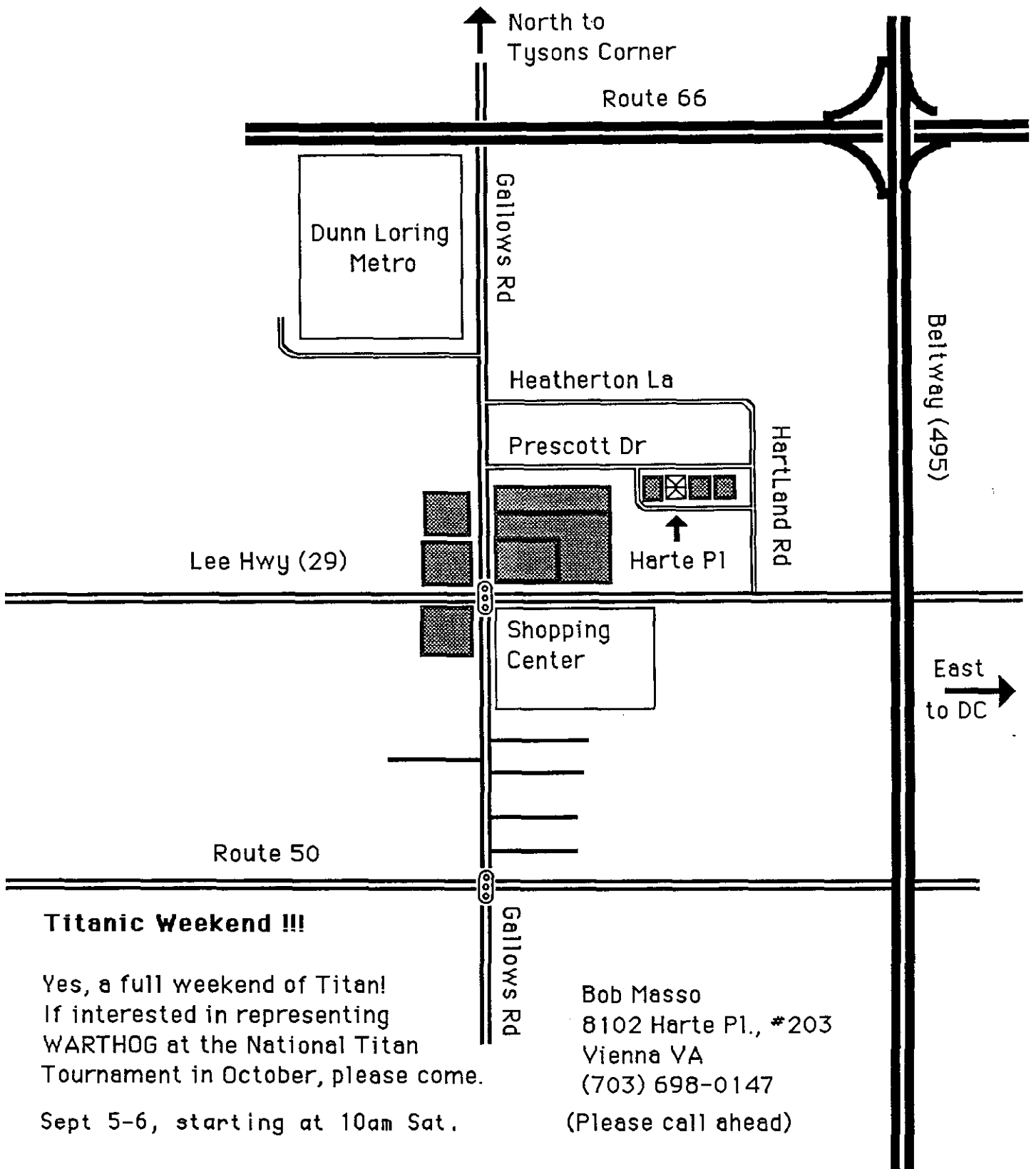
**Halloween Games sometime in late October**, are an annual tradition at the Wrobel household. Will they be held up in 1987? No word from Ed yet, but my creator, Dr. Marc Hurwitz tells me that if Ed can't host them, Warthog Labs in Owings Sty will (host them, that is).

**October Revolution Games, November 14 & 15** – this will take place at Warthog Labs in the event that Dr. Hurwitz fails in his bid to usurp the Halloween games.

**DragonCon '87, October 2 through 4** – in Atlanta, Georgia at the Pierremont Plaza Hotel and Conference Center. Guests of honor include Gary Gygax, Richard Garriott (*aka, Lord British, designer of the Ultima computer game series...but where's the Ultima IV Mac version, eh, Lordie?? —Ken*), Robert Asprin, Lynn Abby, Brian Herbert, Michael Moorcock, Greg Costikyan, and Steve Jackson. There will be gaming, a dealers's area, panels and seminars, a masquerade party, a banquet, an auction, a 24-hour fantasy, SF and animation video, and a 24-hour hospitality suite overlooking Atlanta. While largely oriented toward RGP and SF, gaming is said to include Axis & Allies, British Rails, Civilization, Diplomacy, Cold War, Empire Builder, Junta, Magic Realm, Titan, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Pax Britannica, Illuminati and many others. Game memberships are \$30 through Sept. 15, which includes four preregistration game competition entries. Convention room rates are \$50 per night for a single or double, \$65 for a triple or quad. (You can even request party floor, non-smoking floor or quiet floor.) DragonCon '87, P.O. Box 148, Clarkston, GA 30021. DragonCon states that it will be the official host of Origins '90, June 28 through July 1, 1990.

**Football!** – *Statis Pro Football*, to be precise. Don Tatum of Hyattsville, MD (ph.# 927-1350) needs coaches to take over franchises in his draft league. He plans to play an 8-game season with at least six to eight teams competing. Season starts September 1, so don't delay. Call Don after 7 p.m. one evening. Phil Dancause and Ed Wrobel are already planning to join.

*And that's it for HavaGame for now...hey, we can't have too much of this stuff!*



**Titanic Weekend !!!**

Yes, a full weekend of Titan!  
 If interested in representing  
 WARTHOG at the National Titan  
 Tournament in October, please come.

Sept 5-6, starting at 10am Sat.

Bob Masso  
 8102 Harte Pl., #203  
 Vienna VA  
 (703) 698-0147  
 (Please call ahead)

# HadaGame

## A REVIEW OF ATLANTICON

by Bob Addison

(I was an enthusiastic participant at Atlanticon '87, aka Origins, inasmuch as it was 30 minutes away. Fortunately for you toads, Ed Wrobel and Bob Addison also attended and wrote HadAGames, so I shall limit myself to a review of the Sachs Britannica tournament. Ed Wrobel needs no introduction. Bob Addison, one of Politesse's biggest dipsters and a jewel in the crown of Wart hog, can be found in a small Post Office Box in Silver Spring.)

I was attending Origins in Baltimore and signed up for the Diplomacy tournament. I promptly drew a red star. Guess who's playing Austria? In two tournament games, this was my 2nd try at "Big Red". In the other game I managed a 3-way draw and a "Best Austria" Award.

Turkey was inflexibly determined to head west in alliance with Russia. On the other hand, Russia was content to hang loose and await developments. Italy wanted peace with me while he went off to fight France. I made the unusual play of capturing Greece with an army, leaving my fleet to safely move to the Ionian in the spring of '02. I built a fleet. Is this any way to play Austria?

Russia allied with me in 1902. We promptly split Bulgaria and Constantinople. Meanwhile, Italy was obliviously occupied in the west. With a new-found friend in Russia, the lure of easy Italian centers was more than I could resist. I gained 3 centers that year, and I built my 3rd fleet.

When Turkey saw the guantlet about to drop, he swore allegiance to me against Russia. I hesitated at first, until Russia got paranoid and started sending armies to my border. I attacked Russia in 1903. Turkey was my biggest fan, enjoying every minute of the attack.

Germany was growing in the north. Not nearly as fast as me, but I suppose 11 centers in 3 years is hard to keep pace with. With hopes of a 2-way draw, the Kaiser renewed our peace and asked for a piece of Russia. Who was I to argue? I'd rather sail west with the legendary Austrian navy.

Passers-by were now beginning to stop briefly to cheer Austria on. It's fun being the underdog! France was on the ropes and had no objection to me moving fleets through the Atlantic, so I headed for Liverpool, etc. I attacked Germany in 1905 and France in 1906. I slowed down, capturing only 2 centers each year now.

After 1906, the players unanimously voted for a concession to me. Because of some technicality, the tournament director vetoed the concession and the game continued. The players, two anyway, thought this was a silly ruling and didn't offer much defense. I scored a 20-center victory in 1907.

Antoehr win was scored by Jim Yerkey as Italy in 1906. The scoring system doesn't do justice to such a quick win, so I was leading the tournament after the first day. In the final round, I played top board and ran into four veteran players from Baltimore. They were all friends of ten years, and joined forces against the other three players. I never had a chance, and was out by 1905.

Jim Yerkey won the tournament and two best country awards. Bill Thompson finished second. I managed to squeak into third place and, of course, I was "Best Austria".

(Thanks alot, Big Red! And now, my creator wishes to recount his 2nd place finish in the 40+ entry tournament of Pax Britannica.)

### SACHS BRITANNICA!

by Dr. Marc Hurwitz, Chief Scientist

At Origins I entered several tournaments, including Nuclear War, Pax Britannica, Victory in the Pacific, War at Sea, and Axis and Allies. Since the only one I did well in was Pax Britannica, that's the only one that could possibly be of interest to you worms. (Incidentally, the extra "t" stands for tough- if you're not tough, you won't win at Pax.)

There were, if I recall, about 14 boards each with 5 or 6 players. Robert Sachs and John Boardman did a splendid job of organization. There were a few rules modifications, and the tourney was organized as a "duplicate" competition.

First, the rules changes. Each Balkan war altered the borders in the Balkans, mainly with an eye towards allowing Austria to get into Anatolia. Second, the duplicate rules. Each board had the same random events each year. This meant that every board had a big US colonial office income on turn 1, and a Spanish-American war on turn 1. Sachs had tables of die rolls to be used in each conceivable situation, so that if French and Japanese forces were combining to attack the Chinese in Shang-Tung in the third round of a Boxer rebellion in 1904, for example, on two different boards, they would each get the same die roll.

Now, in duplicate bridge every table gets the same 4 hands of cards, so that a "Best South", "Best East", etc. can be selected fairly. Robert Sach's attempt to duplicate (no pun intended) this system in Pax Britannica was a massive effort, and I feel he overdid it a bit. I can see giving each board the same unrests, minor power activity, Chinese Rebellion rolls, etc. as a fair way of balancing each table against the others. One wouldn't want Best Japan won by someone who had all the breaks, when someone else playing Japan superbly had bad random events. However, his attempt to keep the combat die-rolls the same for every conceivable war was, I felt, too excessive. It slowed down the games as we had to wait for a moderator to come announce the die rolls. Given that only one round of play would be held, some degree of duplication was necessary, and having random events, etc. pre-rolled and ready for each game saved time. Duplicating combat rolls did not.

Another cute feature was that some turns, the random events cutely fitted together, such as on turn 1.

In my game, I drew France. I won because, frankly, I knew the tournament scoring rules and my opponents didn't. Basically, we were not competing against just each other but against all the other tables. In Pax, if everyone allies then everyone will have a large score. My table realized this, so we put co-dominiums everywhere, never had a war, shared and shared and shared, and never saw European tensions rise above 50. In fact, we were the only board that reached the end of the game without a great war.

However, what my opponents didn't realize that the winner of the game at his table got bonus points in determining his tournament standings! Most players on the other tables realized this, leading to a bloodthirsty Imperialistic attitude. No one realized this on my board but me. So, I underhandedly threw a monkey wrench or two into everyone else's plans to emerge winner of my board.

When the dust cleared, my tournament score was over 600- only one other player got more than 600. He, a Germany, got two points more than I. Damn! Still, we were so far above the others that I consider myself to have virtually won the tournament.

A few notes. First, I quickly arranged a Herman Higgins deal with England. Herman realized that a treaty which gained VPs for only one party could be made balanced if that party gave money to the other party. Thank you for the idea, Herman. Second, on one board (not ours) the US player was so inept that he lost the Spanish-American war! Alaska became a Spanish possession! Third, the players were for the most part well prepared, coming, as I did, with lists and tables of the most lucrative provinces to grab early. All in all, a great deal of fun.


**ORIGINS 87  
REGISTRATION**

EDWARD WROBEL #195  
3932 FORESTDALE AVE  
DALE CITY, VA 22193

Oh, Baltimore...

What does Randy Newman know anyway? He wrote Short People, a wonderfully ironic ditty (misinterpreted by a few stupid short people), followed it up with Baltimore ("Man, it's hard just to live"--one would think the city inhabited only by winos and pigeons) and, for the coupe pop art du absurd, graced our living rooms with the video-phonc "I Love L.A.," a sunglassed, top-down paen to superficiality, skin cancer and tardiness. I would like to believe that Randy's ironic touch was not extinguished by the brutish reaction to Short People. But "Baltimore" is genuinely tragic and "I Love LA" is surely fun. I still think you're fine, Randy, even if you don't know my home town.

Origins was a gas. On Thursday, I looked at the downtown traffic from the skywalk and tried to convince myself this was just like D. C. By Saturday, when I stood up at the Inner Harbor pavilion eating steamed crabs and mussels (with only the aid of a little wooden cocktail fork), I knew it wasn't true. I suppose everybody knows that people are friendlier in their home town. Hey, there's Janis Ian, not quite maudlin, with "We all play the game...cheat ourselves at solitaire...at 17." That's what I like about Baltimore-- it's not quite maudlin. Anyway, the pavilion was wall-to-wall with people on the 4th of July but I didn't take a single elbow. No one tried to steal my wallet. Nobody cursed me or made an obscene gesture. I shared my little stand-up table with a couple eating oysters on the half-shell, a holy communion by the bay. Next came a grandma with an unmistakably Bawlamer drawl, waiting for her bacon burger. Several people on the way by asked "Where did you get the crabs?" Crabs are a given in Baltimore, a bit of shared meaning. Everybody likes to talk about them. How are they running this year? Are they heavy? What bait do you use? And the strange rituals practiced by other states! Delaware serves them cold and Virginia boils them-- shudder...

Oh yeah, there was a game convention. And what fun it was! Round one, session one of cosmic Encounter began Thursday afternoon. There were several round one sessions of this popular, silly sci-fi game with the world's record for rfp-off expansion sets. (Round one used sets one through three.) Expansion sets are one of my pet peeves. Maybe one or two...okay, if you've got some really good ideas. But I can just envision the CE people racking their brains to come up with new aliens. Some are nearly unplayable; some powers are next to useless; many aliens interact poorly, causing difficult rules quandries. (Was the ever any cosmic expansion playtesting?) "Lucre" is an unnecessary complication. The moons add to the general silliness-- which is fine by me, I like them-- but they disturb serious CE enthusiasts. "Serious CE enthusiasts" is a curious expression, not unlike "jumbo shrimp" and "Grateful Dead." Make of it what you, they do exist. Being enthusiastic doesn't necessarily mean obnoxiously overcompetitive but, well, sometimes it does, and it's particularly humorous when a silly game is involved. I mean, somehow, I can accept somebody gritting their teeth over Advanced Squad Leader or War in Europe or even a casual pastime like chess. That's why I avoid those games. The sound of gritting teeth makes me shiver. But back to the Cosmic Encounter Tournament. We played two 4-position games in Round One. The first matched Trader, Void, Zombie and Oracle (me). I had it all sewed up with a 30 card against Zombie. Trader knew it and played Emotion Control

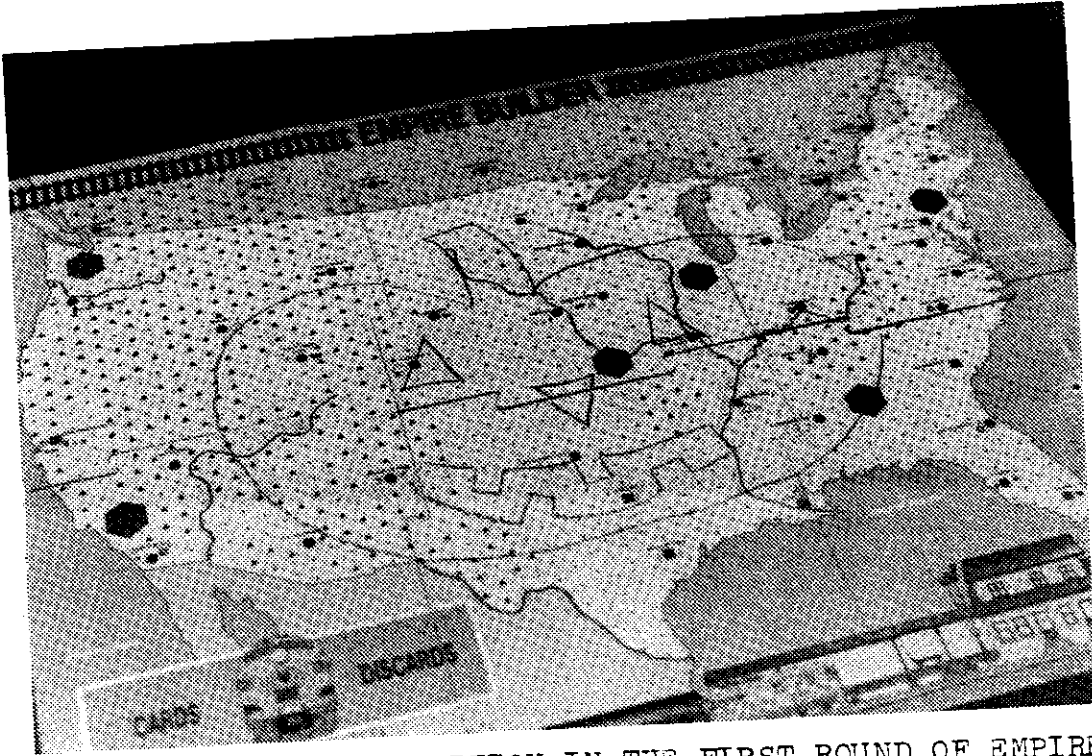
after securing agreement from Zombie "to allow the game to continue." Well, we continued the game for about 10 seconds, long enough to swap bases for a 2-way victory. For the second game, everybody rotated so we had different opponents. This one had Calculator, Skeptic, Worm and Empath (appropriate for a nonwargamer such as myself, eh? Peace, baby.) Calculator won the last battle, 19 to 18. I was on the other side, but miscounted and shouted "we won!" Calculator believed me and capitulated. But since I was Empath, I couldn't stand to see such an injustice go unrectified and I pointed out the error. If only I had been Prevaricator or a Lt. Col. on the NSC staff! I didn't check to see if I made Round 2, although the 2-way probably got me there, since I had other things to do and I'm not a serious CE enthusiast. Besides, I had Titan to think about for that evening. Now there's a real game.

The first Titan round was scheduled to last 2 hours beginning at 9 pm. How would they modify it to meet the time limit?! It turned out that the book was wrong. Titan started at 7 pm and could go to 11 pm. (This was a real bummer for those who arrived at 9 pm.) The GM had worked up some interesting variations, beginning with a tactical exercise (similar to Phil Rennert's rules published in *Politesse*) for Round I, eventually progressing to "real" Titan in a duel to the death in Round III. The GAMesters didn't like it, though; they wanted to play on the Masterboard. So the GM caved in and we played Titanplus with 4 players, 2 advancing from each board to Round II. Unfortunately, Tom Swider, later revealed to me as the East Coast's one true Titan yoda, sat down at my board and wiped me out with his hydrae. So I was out of the Titan tourney (and me a serious Titan enthusiast!) while Mr. Swider didn't bother to participate in Round II. It must have been paybacks for what I did to the serious people in CE. At least I was able to get into a pick-up game Saturday night with pushovers Steve Nicewarner and Bruce Goldstein. After we took a time-out to watch the Inner Harbor fireworks, Bruce remembered he had a term paper to write and left. We found a replacement right away, though, a competent player known to me only as Steve One. (Nicewarner became Steve Too.) Steve Too fell on his sword just before I could pounce on his Titan, so his legion markers went to the box instead of into my larder. Steve One fought on valiantly, eventually conceding at about 2:30 am. I had good mustering in this game but I don't remember what it was.

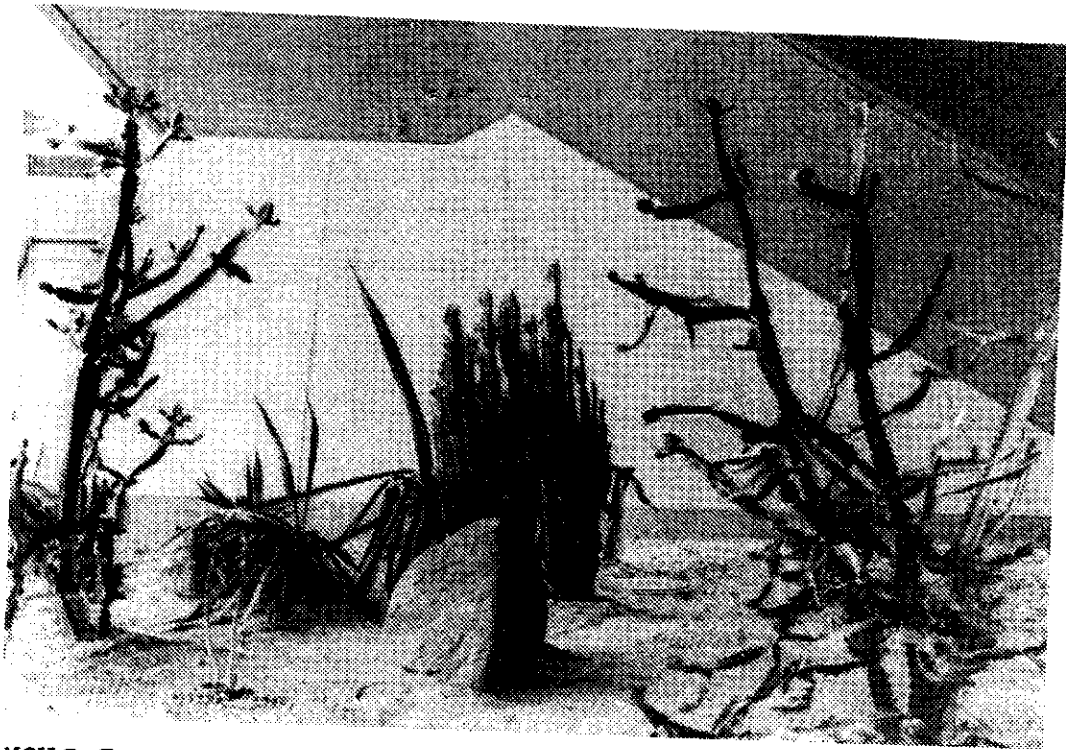
I do remember playing in 3 choo-choo tourneys-- Rail Baron, British Rails and Empire Builder. I enjoyed all of these immensely, even though my luck in RB was abysmal (beginning the game with snake eyes and continuing with 4s and 5s) and I failed to comprehend the significance of the north-south routes in BR. I did win the first round EB game in a photo finish at the time limit (236 to 232). In the final on Sunday morning, I came on strong at the end and finished just out of second place money (195 to 201). Dick Martin was my Metastrategic Vice President in charge of brainstorming for this game. He admonished me to stop building track and frivolously suggested selling off some track in Virginia and the Carolinas. The latter turned out to be a good idea and was widely hailed by my opponents. Dick confessed that he made the suggestion in jest, not realizing that the rules permitted such a sale. (Dick's intuitive metastrategic brilliance sometimes operates on a higher astral plane.) Selling track was just one of the interesting optional rules in play. We also used fast start (not good because it makes the game too easy) and open contract, which leaves thrown-in cards in play for anyone to fill on a first-come basis. The latter adds an intriguing element to the game as players rush to fill the profitable runs or "kill" the contract by taking a short run and forcing the card out of play.



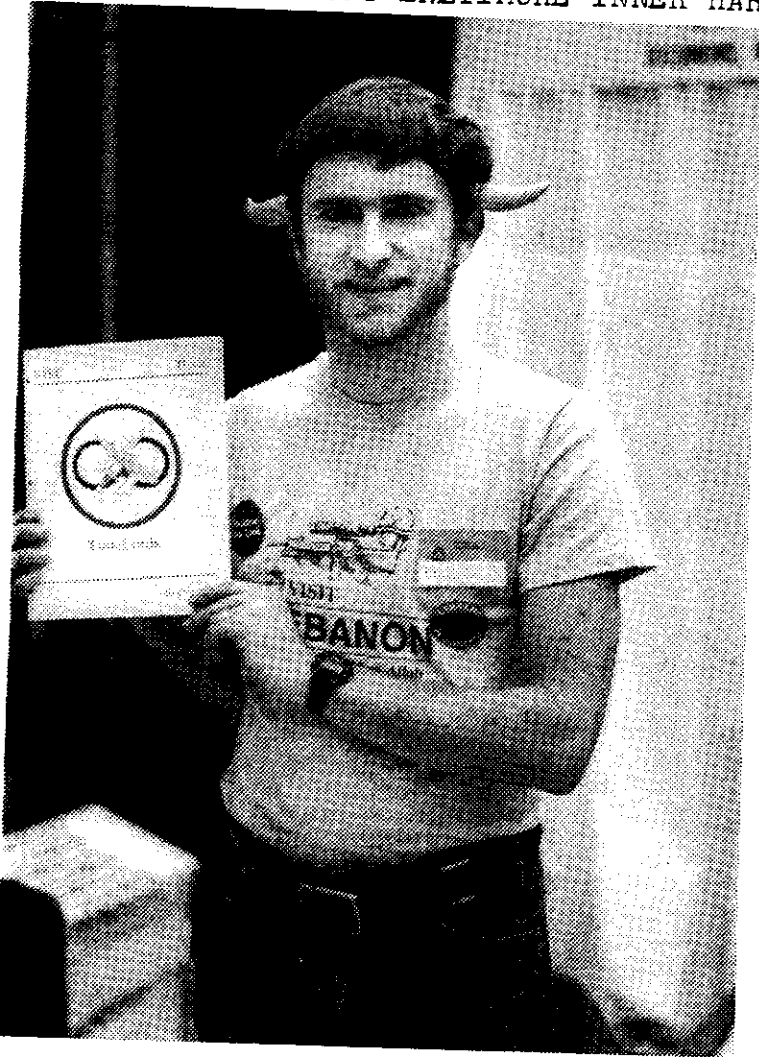
The Exhibit Hall was fine this year, not too crowded, with the usual array of games, dice, computers, tee-shirts and posters. I couldn't wait to get there. Shanghai Trader was sold out except for the demonstrator which they refused to sell before 5 pm Sunday. Now Warlords was another story, marked down to \$12 (eat your heart out, Sean). But I hung around and picked up the demo ST, guaranteed historically accurate with all the pieces for only 20 American dollars. I also learned the word "Gamist" from the people at Armadillo Games, makers of Toxins and Big Time Wrestling, a company with a sense of humor. Still, "Gamester" has a more pleasant ambience but Gamist is not bad, not bad at all.



MY INCREDIBLE WINNING POSITION IN THE FIRST ROUND OF EMPIRE BUILDER



THE FAMOUS BALTIMORE INNER HARBOR DESERT (photos by E. Wrobel)

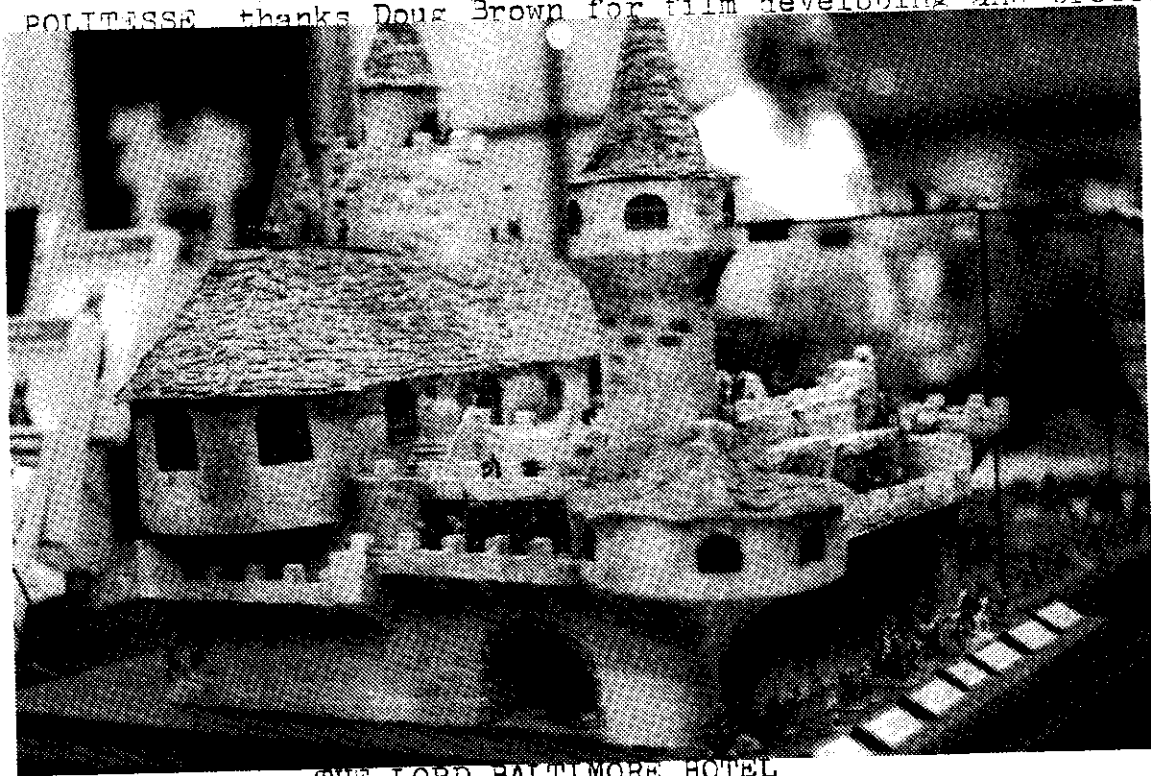


GREG PORTER, WITH HORNS, NEW GAME, AND DEMENTED GLEAM



ONE OF THOSE MONSTER GAMES (& I DON'T MEAN TITAN) (It's War In Europe- M.H.)

POLITASSE thanks Doug Brown for film developing and processing.



THE LORD BALTIMORE HOTEL



THE LEGENDARY BILL THOMPSON APPEARED INCOGNITO AT THE DIPLOMACY TOURNAMENT AND PLAYED ON THE SAME BOARD AS HIS ALTER-EGO\* (A TIME-HONORED DIPLOMATIC STRATEGEM).

\*See Ed Wrobel's letter for an explanation. Thanks for the pix, Ed!

# Silly Games

by Marc Hurwitz

This issue is the long-heralded "Silly Games" issue. Budd and I have been accumulating articles about silly games for a long time and now have more than enough to fill out an issue. David Welbourn allowed us to reprint an article he wrote about *Cosmic Encounters*. This is the game that grew too weird for even Marc Hurwitz, Swientific Advisor, to handle!

We follow this up with Ed Wrobel's review of *Commute!* Dr. Hurwitz, my creator, lives above the vasty halls of Warthog Labs and in general takes less than 10 minutes to get to work. Since he keeps me chained to this desk at all times, I never commute at all.

This is followed by *Nomic*, a game resembling our legal system invented by legislators who are mostly lawyers, used by lawyers, judged by lawyers, by the lawyers, of the lawyers, for the lawyers. To revive our redership from *that*, we have a set of tournament rules for *Cosmic Encounter*.

Things get even sillier with Budd Haemer's review of the *Creature That Ate Sheboygan!* In

our college years Budd and I spent many an evening city-destroying. When the St. Louis plice finally made us stop blowing up buildings in the neighborhood of Washington University, we retired to the dorms and played *Creature*.

(Dr. Marc Hurwitz here. the strain of editing like Wrobel and writing like me finally grew too much for Marc ~~too~~ too, so I shall take off my lab coat and pick up my white-out and finish the issue. As you can see, Marc ~~too~~ too's sense of identity was getting blurred towards the end, so I had to "put him down."

In any case (*Robot 318—remove these remains!*), I followed Haemer's reviews with my Swientific Notes, which concentrate on Silly Games this month. Then, possibly, Prof. Martin will round things out with a review of *Snit's Revenge* or *Awful Green Things from Outer Space*.

Now, Budd would end such an introduction with "Enjoy!" Now that a superior intellect is in charge, the final imperative for you brainless toads is: Learn!



Dr. Tszap, like Dr. Hurwitz a former grad student at Miskatonic U., is, again like Dr. Hurwitz, a success in the wonderful world of swience!

**WE INTERWUPT THITH THILLY GAMETH ITHTHUE FOR A THPETHIAL WEPORIT AND WEVIEW—WABBIT WAMPAGE! WOD CUWWIE HATH GRACIOUTHLY ALLOWED UTH TO WEPWINT HITH WEVIEW FWOM BUFFAWO STEAK TAWTAW—OOH! WHAT A WASCAL! EVEN DW. MAWC HUWWITTH THMILED A BIT!**

## Does Wabbit Wampage Weally Wot Minds?

by Rod Currie

Remember those great old Warner Brothers cartoons where Bugs Bunny always hot the best of Elmer Fudd, and Wile E. Coyote always attempted to get the best of the Road Runner (with Acme mail order devices). If you enjoyed them as much as I did, you'll probably enjoy Wabbit Wampage from Pacesetter.

The game does an excellent job of capturing the flavor and fun of the cartoons, Players take the role of either Farmer Brown (an Elmer Fudd-like character) or one of the three wabbits, Bad News Bunny, Thugs Bunny, and Dirty Hare. In addition, each player controls two other pieces—each wabbit controls his two kin, while the farmer controls his dog and the hired hand.

The idea of the game is for the players to collect points by completing various tasks depending on the season. In the spring, everybody is trying to plough the fields. (Yes, even the wabbits; after all, they want carrots to grow too.) In the summer, players try to collect the carrots and get them to their holes or the barn. Then comes the fall, wabbit-hunting season, when the farmer gets three additional pieces (hunters) and everybody simply tries to whomp everyone else. In truth, you can whomp another character at any time, but in the fall, there is nothing else you can do to earn points. Finally in the winter, things escalate to full scale warfare, as the wabbits try to destroy the farm buildings and Farmer Brown tries to save them. At the end, the player with the most points wins.

To make things even more interesting, there are several weapons scattered around the farm at the beginning, such as a shotgun, a rake, a blow torch, and of course, a chainsaw. The tractor is needed to plough the fields but also makes a dandy implement of destruction.

In addition, there is a deck of cards to add several other elements to the game. For example, a

card may allow you to gain one of the local critters (bear, duck, big chicken, and the chipmunks) as your ally, or it may let you persuade another player's ally to join your side. There are also cards that let you alter movement and combat by going double your usual distance, attacking your attacker first, taking an extra attack, or making a special attack on a certain character.

The cards that are the most fun are the mail order cards. When taken to the mailbox on the board, these cards bring in new items to the game: a stick of dynamite, a jet pack, a cannon, a crane complete with wrecking ball, a destroyer robot, an Acme H-bomb kit, and even a big horrible monster. Of course, other players can always blow up the mailbox when your package arrives, not only destroying it but whomping you and any other characters who happen to be gathered around.

Overall, the game is quite good. Combat and movement are quick and simple, allowing play to move rapidly. There are many nice touches such as wabbits being able to dig new holes to hide in and the possibility of getting whomped if you try to move through the duck or highway spaces. The rules are clearly written and explain the game well; however, questions like "is the mailbox destroyed if the H-bomb is detonated in the mailbox square?" still remain.

The game is well-balanced when there are four players, but there seems to be a problem when there are only two or three players. In these games, Farmer Brown seems to have an advantage. However, a different strategy for the wabbits might correct this situation.

In conclusion, I highly recommend Wabbit Wampage if you are looking for several hours of fun with a few friends. But be vewwy cawful: Wabbit Wampage can have an advewse effect on youw speech pattewns.

*Hurwitz here. Yes, a thplendid, err, splendid review, Mr. Currie! And—not to worry. In cooperation with the Department of Energy and the USPS, Warthog Labs is busy even now trying to ascertain the effects of the H-bomb blasts on mailboxes. And—thanks to FEMA for funding the research!*

*Hey! you there with the two long furry ears! Put that thing down! Don't you know that's an H-bomb? NO! DON'T PUSH THAT BUTTO.....*

# Preliminary Encounter with Cosmic Encounter

by David Welbourn

*(This article originally appeared in Buffalo Steak Tartare, and is reprinted here with the author's permission.)*

Those of you who only play family games like Monopoly, or only role-playing games like Dungeons and Dragons, or only traditional war-games may have ignored Cosmic Encounter because it doesn't fall easily into any one category; or you may have thought it to be too complicated or too weird; or you just never heard about it. Well, the game is a board game with a science fiction theme, so it sort of falls halfway between multi-player and RPG's. It is not hard to learn how to play, just difficult to learn how to play it well (not unlike Chess, Go, or Diplomacy). But it is weird (hoo-boy!).

Yes, Cosmic Encounter is indeed weird. Some people have been known to run away, scream, or form a cross at the very mention of its name. But it is a good game. More importantly, a unique game. I would wager that no other game in existence (including the oft-praised AD&D) has a greater scope of concepts and possible strategies put together in one game.

Oh, how does it play? What are the rules? Funny you should ask. You see, the rules are sort of hard to explain; that's what makes it so weird. But it is easy to play, because the game hinges on the "basic rules." Various game elements, such as Alien Powers, Edict cards, Flare cards, and the Moons permit special rule modifications that might be invoked at different times. Because the many expansion sets and potential rule modifications, there can be many disagreements on what might be permitted at some point in the game. But even ignoring this difficulty, CE provides a plethora of possible power permutations to periodically perplex the pondering of the most pernicious player. (You may applaud at the end of the article.)

The future of Cosmic Encounter is in doubt. Although its small but devoted group of enthusiasts supported Cosmic Encounter and its maker Eon through nine expansion sets, Eon has recently gone bankrupt, with the result that CE and Eon's other games are now under control of West End Games. (West End Games is perhaps best known for its RPG called Paranoia.) West End has announced that they will release a second edition of CE with "minor" modifications. Just what these will be remains to be seen. *(Since this article was first pub-*

*lished, West End Games has indeed put out its own version of Cosmic Encounter, bringing together many of the various extension sets into one single game box. Anyone interested in reviewing the differences, if any, between the two versions of the game? —Ken)*

Anyway, here's a brief description of the "basic rules." Every player begins with a large cardboard hexagram depicting the player's sun and its five planets. Each planet contains four tokens (for a total of 20); each token is the same color as the player's sun. A central hex tile contains the "Warp" (where dead tokens go). Each player is dealt seven cards from a special deck; most cards have a number on them, showing an "Attack Strength." Finally, there is the "Destiny Pile," a stack of cardboard disks whose colors correspond to the colors of player suns.

Play consists of challenges. On his turn, a player must turn over the top disk of the Destiny Pile, to get an opponent's color. The player must then attack the opponent's tokens on one of the opponent's planets. The offensive player chooses which planet to attack by pointing a cardboard "Attack Cone" at the planet and putting one to four tokens in the open end of the cone. Both the offensive and defensive player may ask other players to be allies, who may also send one to four tokens into the fray. Once tokens have been committed, the main offensive and defensive players choose cards from their hands and turn them up simultaneously. Both sides add up the Attack Strength of their cards plus the number of tokens involved, and the side with the highest total wins (ties go to the defender).

All losing tokens are sent to the Warp. If the offensive side wins, all the offensive players put their challenge tokens on the planet and share it as a base. If the defensive side wins, the main player keeps his planet; his allies get cards from the deck or tokens back from the warp. The objective of the game is to get five planetary bases outside your home system.

There is more to the basic game than that, let alone the real game where everybody gets to break at least some of the rules most of the time. *(In my opinion, the part left out, where everyone plays a different "race" or three with their own unique abilities, is the very core of the uniqueness and enjoyment of the game. Oh well...—Ken)*

(scoring system at Origins '87)

## WELCOME TO COSMIC ENCOUNTERS #2

The rules of this tournament are simple and adapted from the official tournament rules published by EON, Inc. The rules are designed to allow tournament play with one hour time limit per game. There will be a total of three rounds including the final. A victory point system will be used to determine who advances to the second and final rounds. Before coming to me with a question, try looking up the rule in "the complete book of Cosmic Encounters." This is the source I will be using. Also, any ruling I make on any game is final. Now, into the rules.

These rules are used in order to keep the conflict down to that which is needed to win the game. Note, there is no limit to the number of people who can enter the first round. All you need is four people and a copy of the game, and, of course, please tell me your names before you start.

Round #1: I will assign games of four people, and only four people per game. In this round, there will be two games played. For these games, use only the basic powers included in the original game (the ones without the numbers at the bottom.) NO EXPANSION SETS ARE USED IN THIS ROUND! In addition, use only the basic card deck which consists of the following attack, compromise, and edict cards:

1 x 30	2 x 20	1 x 18	2 x 15
2 x 14	4 x 12	6 x 10	8 x 8
8 x 6	2 x 4	10 x compromise	1 x plague
1 x stellar gas	1 x force field	1 x emotional control	
2 x mobius tubes	2 x cosmic zap		

The top 24 victory point totals from game one and two will advance to the second round. In case of ties for the last few positions, a pair of dice will be rolled and the highest totals will advance.

Round #2: In this round, there is only one game, again with a one hour time limit. Also, like last round, there will be only four people per game. You will, however, add expansions #1, #2, and #3. Do not add the following powers from expansion set #3: 1) Assessor, 2) Deamon, 3) Schizoid, 4) Warrior, 5) Wrack. For those of you who want to know, I will tell you why. I simply do not like those powers. Since everyone has the same choice of powers it really does not matter (i.e., it's anti-matter. heh! heh!)

Round #3: The top six players with the highest victory point totals advance to the final round. Remember that only the victory points from round two count toward advancement into the final round. All points from round one are ignored. In round #3, the time limit is extended to 1½ hours. Use round two setup plus any and all other expansions and powers ALL players agree on. No victory point system is used in this round. The winner is the one who wins the game. The winner or winners will split the prize any way they agree upon with the odd amount going to the winner who was THE ATTACKER OR MAIN PLAYER IN THE LAST CHALLENGE.

Victory Point System: At the end of each game, when the victory conditions have been met, each player receives the following victory points: 1 point for every home base (5 possible), 2 points for every foreign base (10 possible), and 6 points in a pot split among the winners (6 maximum). Therefore, the maximum possible for any single game is 21 points. Remember, in the first round, your total victory points are used to determine who advances (points from both games #1 and #2). Finally, in case of ties, roll the dice and weep.

GOOD LUCK AND HAVE FUN SPREADING, OOZING, SURFACING, ORDERING, EXPANDING, PONDERING, TAXING, AND HEALING THE UNIVERSE!



## COMMUTE!

(Baffling Ills' New Strategy Game of Suburban Life)

by Ed Wrobel

One might think the dreary grind of the daily commute to be an unsuitable subject for conflict simulation. However, Baffling Ills, a new company in Bismarck, North Dakota, has planned an entire series of games based on such intractable social problems. The range of subject matter is quite wide. Previous releases have included the relatively innocuous "Weed! (The Game of Weekend Lawn Care)" as well as the more serious "Punks and Thugs (The Game of Felonious Adolescents)" and "Race War: The Haig Administration and the Crisis in South Africa (A Future History Scenario)."

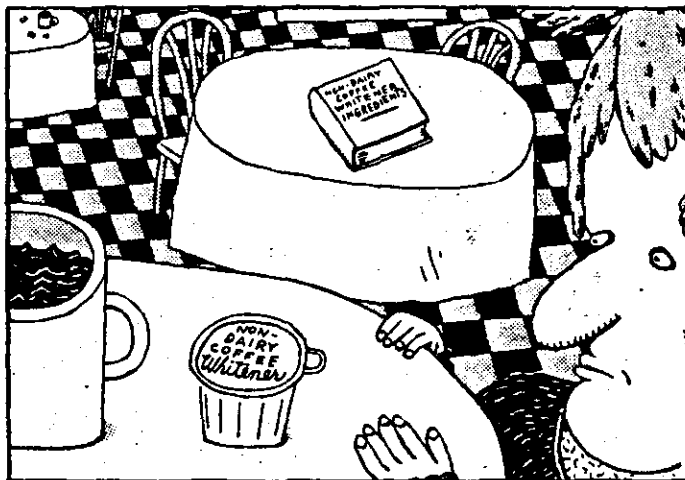
Needless to say, Baffling Ills is carving out new territory in the world of gaming. Only time will tell if an already saturated market can provide fertile ground for this unique approach. A number of difficulties become obvious upon cursory review of BI's line of games. "Commute!" for example, is seemingly endless. Players are required to perform the same actions over and over for years. The game provides few options other than changing residences. Perhaps the biggest barrier to popular acceptance of this game is the complete absence of victory conditions. Gamesters are likely to wonder just what the point is. The only paths out of the commute cycle are the "retirement," "unemployment" and "overpriced apartment" squares. These are either inaccessible to most players or too unpleasant to contemplate.

The other BI games are also impossible or nearly impossible to win. Even the most accomodating gamester likes to win on occasion. Still, the popularity of games like Diplomacy, which usually end in "draws," provides some hope for Baffling Ills. "Weed!" has a natural constituency in the suburbs. Many reactionaries will enjoy the opportunity to simulate the murder of blacks and adolescents in "Race War" and "Punks." Now in the planning stages is "Surrogate Mother," in which players purchase indigent woman to bear their progeny. The money and power crowd will relish it!

BI games are competitively priced and nicely packaged. The green of the lawns in "Weed!" is brilliant (suburbanites will envy it). The scratch'n'sniff tear gas cards in "Race War" are an inspired touch. Rumor has it that "Surrogate Mother" will feature anatomically correct players' aids.

In summary, these games are real, if nothing else. If you like life, you'll love Baffling Ills. But if you'd rather pretend to be a tank commander or an elf, look elsewhere.

To the right is an advance look at the cover art for another BI game in development: "Consume!"



RON HAUGE



*(The following rules for Nomic are provided for your enjoyment by Peery Thompson, a frequent sampler who keeps threatening to actually subscribe some day...)*

## INITIAL SET OF RULES FOR NOMIC

### I. Immutable Rules

101. All players must always abide by all the rules then in effect, in the form in which they are then in effect. The rules in the Initial Set are in effect whenever a game begins. The Initial Set consists of Rules 101-116 (immutable) and 201-213 (mutable).

102. Initially rules in the 100's are immutable and rules in the 200's are mutable. Rules subsequently enacted or transmuted (that is, changed from immutable to mutable or vice versa) may be immutable or mutable regardless of their numbers, and rules in the Initial Set may be transmuted regardless of their numbers.

103. A rule change is any of the following: (1) the enactment, repeal or amendment of a mutable rule, (2) the enactment, repeal or amendment of an amendment, or (3) the transmutation of an immutable rule into a mutable rule or vice versa (note: this definition implies that, at least initially, all new rules are mutable; immutable rules, as long as they are immutable, may not be amendment or repealed; mutable rules, as long as they are mutable, may be amendment or repealed; no rule is absolutely immune to change.)

104. All rule changes proposed in the proper way must be voted on. They will be adopted if and only if the required number of votes are received.

105. Every player is an eligible voter. Every voter must participate in every vote on rule changes.

106. All proposed rule changes must be written down before they are voted on. If they are adopted, they must guide play in the form in which they were voted on.

107. No rule change may take effect earlier than the moment of the completion of the vote that adopted it, even if its wording explicitly states otherwise. No rule change may have retroactive application.

108. Each proposed rule change must be given a rank-order number (ordinal number) and must be referred to by that number. The numbers must begin with 301, and each rule change proposed in the proper way must receive the next successive integer, whether or not the proposal is adopted. If a rule is repealed and reenacted, it receives the ordinal number of the proposal to reenact it. If a rule is amended or transmuted, it receives the ordinal number of the proposal to amend or transmute it. If an amendment is amended or repealed, the entire rule of which it is a part receives the ordinal number of the proposal to amend or repeal the amendment.

109. Rule changes that transmute immutable rules into mutable rules may be adopted if and only if the vote is unanimous among the eligible voters.

110. Mutable rules that are inconsistent in any way with some immutable rule (and that can be made consistent with it only by transmuting it into a mutable rule) are wholly void and without effect. They do not implicitly transmute immutable rules into mutable rules and at the same time amend them. Rule changes that transmute immutable rules into mutable rules will be effective if and only if they explicitly state their transmuting effect.

111. If a rule change as proposed is unclear, ambiguous, paradoxical or destructive of play, is held by a player to consist of two or more rule changes compounded or to be an amendment that makes no difference, or is otherwise held to be of questionable value, then the other players can suggest amendment or argue against the rule change before the vote. The proponent, however, decides the final form in which the proposal is to be voted on and chooses the time to end debate and vote.

112. The state of affairs that constitutes winning may not be altered from achieving N points to any other state of affairs. The magnitude of N and the means of earning points may, however, be altered, and the rules that establish a winner when play cannot continue may be enacted and (when they are mutable) may be amended or repealed.

113. A player always has the option of forfeiting the game rather than continuing to play or incurring a game penalty. (No penalty worse than losing, in the judgement of the player incurring the penalty, may be imposed.)

114. There must always be at least one mutable rule. The adoption of rule changes must never become completely impermissible.

115. Rule changes that in any way affect rules needed to allow or apply rule changes are fully as permissible as other rule changes. Even rule changes that repeal part or all of their own authority are permissible. No rule change or type of move is or is or is to be impermissible solely because of the self-reference or self-application of a rule.

116. The adoption of rule changes is permissible only when a rule or a set of rules makes it permissible. Otherwise, whatever is not explicitly prohibited or regulated by a rule is allowed and unregulated (as opposed to the maxim, "All is forbidden except what is explicitly allowed").

## II. Mutable Rules

201. Players must alternate in clockwise order, taking one whole turn apiece. Turns may not be skipped or passed, and parts of turns may not be omitted. All players begin with zero points.

202. One turn consists of two parts, in this order: (1) proposing one rule change and having it voted on, and (2) throwing one die once and adding the number of points on its face to one's score.

203. A rule change is adopted if and only if the vote is unanimous among the eligible voters.

204. If Initial Rule 203 is amended or repealed, then whenever rule changes are adopted without unanimity, the players who voted against such rule changes receive 10 points apiece.

205. An adopted rule change takes full effect at the moment of the completion of the vote that adopted it.

206. If any player's proposed rule change is voted down, that player loses 10 points.

207. Each player always has exactly one vote.

208. The winner is the first player to achieve 100 (positive Points).

209. At no time are there to be more than 25 mutable rules.

210. Players may not conspire on the making of future rule changes unless they are teammates.

211. If two or more mutable rules conflict with one another, or if two or more immutable rules conflict with one another, the rule with the lowest ordinal number takes precedence. If at least one of the rules in conflict explicitly says of itself that it defers to another rule (or type of rule) or takes precedence over another rule (or type of rule), such provisions must supersede the numerical method of determining precedence. If two or more rules claim to take precedence over one another or to defer to one another, the numerical method must again govern.

212. If players disagree about the legality of a move or the interpretation or application of a rule, the player to the right of the one moving is to be the Judge and decide the question. (Such a process is called invoking Judgment.) The Judge's Judgment may be overruled only by a unanimous vote of the other players, taken before the next turn is begun. When Judgment has been invoked, the next player may not begin his or her turn without the consent of a majority of the other players. If a Judge's Judgment is overruled, the player to the right of the Judge becomes the new Judge for the question, and so on, except that no player is to be Judge during his or her own turn, or during the turn of a teammate. Unless a Judge is overruled, one Judge settles all questions arising from the game until the next turn is begun, including questions as to his or her own legitimacy and jurisdiction as a Judge. New Judges are not bound by the decisions of old Judges. New Judges may, however, settle only those questions on which the players currently disagree and that affect the completion of the turn in which Judgment is invoked. Disagreement, for the purpose of this rule, may be created by the insistence of any player.

213. If the rules are changes to that further play is impossible, or if the legality of a move is impossible to determine with finality, or if by the Judge's best reasoning, not overruled, a move appears equally legal and illegal, then the first player who is unable to complete a turn is the winner. This rule takes precedence over every other rule determining the winner.



Private Eye / London

"It's the audience — they refuse to come back for the second act."

## THE CREATURE THAT ATE SHEBOYGAN

(a game review from The Thing That Destroyed Clayton)

(aka Budd Haemer)

Perhaps the first thing that caught my eye about this game was the name. Having spent my formative years (2 through 9) growing up in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, the idea of destroying my old home town had a certain black appeal.

(Hurwitz here. The Navy trusts this man with nuclear materials!)

I was a little disappointed that the map was a generic city, not Sheboygan. Eighth Street, not Main Street, was the main drag in town, and it didn't run like that. The power plant was at the wrong end of town (or the map was upside down. The Sheboygan river didn't run North-South but East-West. Oh, well, since only about 50,000 lived in Sheboygan and they were mostly very stodgy German farmers, I'm probably the only person to spot the map flaws. It certainly doesn't distract from the game.

In the game, one player is a monster and the other controls the humans. The monster player selects a "chassis"- ground crawling, flying, ape-like, etc., and then adds options, like fire breathing, ranged strike, etc. All offensive and defensive capabilities cost points. The more points the monster spends, the more nervous the Governor of Wisconsin gets and the larger the National Guard force the human can call up. Since the number of actions a monster can do in a round is limited, a monster that tries to do it all finds himself swamped by military units.

(Hurwitz again. I think Budd means that a monster with a lot of abilities wouldn't have the time to bring them all into play each round.)

This balancing factor gives the monster some hard choices. There is a certain amount of fun being a quick-moving, then-skinned Giant Ape; hopping from building to building, gobbling up the odd TV camera crew or housewife.

(Gosh Budd, I wouldn't know.)

This limits the human to only being able to select units from standard police units. But the real fun doesn't start until a heavy-weight fire-breather is selected. Now, although the human reinforcements include tanks and howitzers, the monster can do some real city-killing.

In truth, the human wouldn't stand a chance if it wasn't for the monster having to constantly stop for a quick snack to replenish its strength. More than once I've been Godzilla standing on a street corner trying to decide whether I should eat the people in my mitts to have the strength to kill the tank up the street, try to grab those other people before they duck into

that building (risking dropping the people I already have) or just burn down another city block. Decisions, decisions...

(Hurwitz again. This is the man the Navy entrusts with nuclear reactors?!?)

Of course, if the situation looks very bleak for Sheboygan, the human can call up the air power. Not only are helicopters very effective (and virtually the only easy way to hunt down a flying monster), one helicopter contains the Mad Scientist.

(Hmmm. This is starting to look interesting.)

Although the Mad Scientist usually only causes double damage to the monster, he can have any effect ranging from instant death to doubling the monster's strength (a very discouraging development for the humans).

The Creature That Ate Sheboygan is also available as a micro-computer game called Crush, Crumble and Chomp. (Pretty appropriate, huh). The humans are controlled by the computer. This is quite convenient, since virtually everyone wants to be the monster. In fact, usually the only way to get someone to be the human in Creature is to promise to be the human in the second game. This works out pretty well as a complete game can be played in about an hour or two.

Anyway, the computer version captures the flavor of the board game. The computer does seem to get more and better reinforcements and its Mad Scientist never seems to have positive effects on the monster. This has a balancing effect on the game; after all, the computer doesn't play very imaginatively.

Unfortunately, I haven't played Creature That Ate Sheboygan in years. The board disappeared in a move some time in the past and the pirated Crush, Crumble and Chomp disc went to disc heaven. Oh, well, maybe I'll find someone who doesn't think I'm making all of this up and I'll get to play again.

(Thanks for the great review, Haemer! It brought back memories of many pleasant hours at Wash. U. In fact, it brings to mind certain trifling experiments I made a few months ago with Destruction Oriented Lifeforms (DOLs). Hmmm. I guess I'll amble down to Level 17 and see how my dols are getting on. I love to play with my dols.

Let's see. Large Snake- check. 20' high Spider- check. Fast-growing man-eating Plant- check. 80 ton Ameoba- ... 80 ton Ameoba... Quick! Computer- show me the view from Observation Camera 43! (Sigh). Yep- there it goes. Well, the city's Italian Festival needed something to liven it up anyway.)

## SWINENTIFIC NOTES

Geetings, toads! Marc Hurwitz here, Chief Swinentist for WARTHOG, with another futile attempt to raise the swinentific consciousness of the imbecilic mass of shoatdom out there. As soon as you all have at least 2 of your 3 braincells per brain functioning, I shall begin.

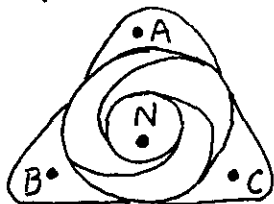
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OK- one will have to do.

Swinence looks for simplification, to understand the heart of the matter. Meditating upon Skinny Dip, I have devised a Diplomacy variant that cuts to the heart of the rock/paper/scissors and stab/trust uncertainties of the game. There are three players, A, B, and C. There is but one neutral supply center, N. Each Great Power has one army in their one province, a supply center province. All other diplomacy rules are the same, but as there are no seas or coasts, no fleets are used. See the map below:



Clearly, the game can easily end after Fall '01, as control of two supply centers is necessary, and all that is necessary, for a victory under my rules of Existential Dip. If A and B bounce each other in the Spring, C will win. If all three move their armies clockwise (or counter-clockwise) in the spring, the situation in game theory becomes quite interesting.

Budd Haemer has come up with an even more compressed variant, called Perpetual Diplomacy. See the map below. Rules are the same as for Existential Diplomacy:



As the game is set up, the only way to lose is if you attack a neighbor while he attacks you (mutual stalemate) while the 3rd player grabs N. The only way to win is to grab the neutral while your neighbors squabble. Therefore all players will move to the neutral every turn. This insures a long game and a guaranteed three-way draw!

We invite your comments, which we will ridicule for the pathetic pseudo-intellectual blather they are.

## THE AVENGING SNITS

by Dick Martin

I don't know why our humble editors (*you call them humble? -Ken*) asked me to write an article on Snits Revenge for the "Silly Games" issue. After all, SR is one of the cleverest games I've ever seen -- it's just hiding inside a silly shell, you see...behind all those snits 'n' snorgs is a fast, balanced, fun game.

Snits Revenge is roughly analogous to an infection, with the snit player trying to kill the bolotomus player either by knocking out enough snorgs or by snuffing the Spark of Life. The bolotomus must choose between rebuilding dead snorgs or making runnungitums to combat the snits. Build too many snorgs, and you don't have the strength to knock off the pesky snits; build too few and you might not live long enough to turn the tide in your favor. The game ends when the bolotomus or last snit dies, but don't let that mislead you: Snits Revenge is a fully Warthog-certified generative (or regenerative) game.

Right now, I'd say the bolotomus has a slight advantage if he uses his splops aggressively. Dare the snits to fight their way to the spark, but make them pay to get close. (Splots look just like the Spark, but kill one of the attacking snits, not the bolotomus. Putting splops in snorgs that are likely to be attacked may discourage the snit player from attacking those snorgs so he'll have more troops for later. Meanwhile, you get to make runungitums...)

So give Snits Revenge a try next chance you get. It should take less than a half hour (including five minutes to learn the rules and read the accompanying comic book), and I guarantee you'll enjoy it. Well-balanced strategy games that you can knock off in fifteen minutes are few and far between. And it's fun, too! (*and silly*) Can you say "Proloboscinator" 10 times fast?

Too bad it's out of print...

*(Yeah, what a great game, left over from the time that TSR was a fun game company, before it got too serious with AD&D and all... What a cryin' shame letting classic stuff like Snits Revenge and Awful Green Things from Outer Space lapse out of print. Write a letter today to TSR! Demand your snits! But in the meantime, keep a sharp eye out for SR and AGTfOS at game auctions. I have a standing offer of up to \$20 each for either or both. Warthog deserves the very best. -Ken)*

# PLAYING POLITESSE

or,  
*Is it a Game, or is it a Zine?*

by Ken Peel

In the beginning, there was *Politesse*: an occasional flyer reporting on local face-to-face Diplomacy gatherings. It was put out by Ed Wrobel; therefore, it was well written. But it was pretty much strictly business, thank you, ma'am.

Then it got weird. Ed hit his rib-tickling, incomprehensible stride, and others began to respond in kind. The 'zine developed an increasingly split personality as its distribution blossomed, expanding its orientation beyond a local gaming core to the point of outright participation in the postal Diplomacy hobby. Neither the locals nor the postals quite understood each other, but they both appreciated silliness.

So on this rock, the new team of Wrobel and Peel created the Washington Area Retinue of (Tacitly) Highly Organized Gamesters. At first WARTHOG was but a parody of useless organizations and organizers in postal Dip that take themselves ever-so-seriously, and in the process become ever-so-unintentionally hilarious. But soon, it developed (gasp!) a life of its own.

Hmm...clearly something had to be done about the schizophrenic nature of the 'zine. So, sometime in late 1985, it was out with the bath water for postal dipdomhood, and the PolitBuro and regional Tusks (and let's not forget the Northern and Southern Swineherds) came into their own. This democratic dictatorship, this vanguard of loyal shoats everywhere, enforced strict ideological correctness on behalf of the gaming masses.

Elections were, of course, ever imminent, pending the elimination of all counter-revolutionary cliques, an operation conducted by the numberless Vesseyesque clan. Head Vessey Sean was ultimately expelled from the PolitBuro, however, due to his continued hexoid tendencies, and was forcibly "promoted" to the honorific post of TacticsTusk-at-Large; Peel barely avoided a similar fate after excessively close encounters with postal megadiplomatic superstars at MaryCon '85. Still, he came through the ordeal thanks to a year's internment for self-critical re-educational activities at Gulag Silver Spring.

During this time, Wrobel was once again on the ascendancy as Vice Premier of WARTHOG. After Peel's reemergence, however, the PolitBuro was deemed insufficiently ideologically pure, was dismissed by the supposed figurehead, Premier Peel. Thus was the growing cult of personality turned back.

Internal memoranda continued to circulate at a furious pace, facilitated by the good offices of the Party's monthly organ, *Politesse*. Some disgruntled parties spoke disparagingly of the "silliness" of the revolutionary fervor, but of course all such non-constructive behavior was suppressed and ruthlessly crushed.

Meanwhile, back at the Greater Rockville Institute for the Study of Titan for Less Experienced Players and other Indomitable Games, Dean Dick Dale Martin and Head Mistress Julie, who had long served as personal Titan consultants to the PolitBuro (during those periods when the PolitBuro existed), garnered increasing international renown for their young institute. GRISTLEPIG U. continued to expand, and soon established centers specializing in Civilization and Magic Realm as well. At last report, "Pig U." was working on splicing a matching Federal and Avalon Hill grant.

And speaking of "splicing"...in the midst of the chaos of revolutionary turmoil, there arose a new force in WARTHOG: head Swinentist Dr. Marc Hurwitz, recently percolated from Miskatonic U., (majoring in pan-HBorian studies, with a minor in amateur railroading) and Admiral Budd "Wiser" Haemer, his powerful patron and mentor. Dr. Hurwitz and Adm. Haemer took advantage of the dissolution of the PolitBuro and began an insidious campaign to seduce WARTHOG deep into the dark study of experimental biocyberneticgeneticism. Their efforts proved successful beyond their wildest dreams (even now the cackling at Warthog Labs in Owings Sty reverberates through the lower vaults from that time). They managed to reduce *Politesse*' founder and chief ideologist, Ed Wrobel, to the status of common shoat, and WARTHOG's chief acronymicist, Ken Peel, to typist and go-fer. Today, Haemer and Hurwitz reign supreme in Shoatdom...but already rumors grow of new conspiracies amidst the ranks...

Whew! Good thing us serious generative multiparticipational gamester types stick to the real stuff and avoid all contact with silly role playing games, eh?



# Forum

*(This week, you lackwits, we received more than enough letters to make up for the lack in the three preceding weeks. The arrogance and overconfidence of the writers is astounding. Did you really think that I would lower myself by printing your silly mindless letters, let alone answering them? Well, I will, but in an effort to raise the quality of this section—it can hardly be lowered—will include a letter from me to Budd, and will end with a letter from Budd to me. My comments in italics—Marc)*

Dear Sapient Life-Form:

Thank you for your loan of dirty socks and Crest toothpaste. I am returning these items to you today. They proved most useful here at Warthog Labs. First, we tested the claims of Crest to eliminate tartar attacks. Flying to Ulan Bator, we proceeded to enrage several tribes of Mongols and Turks. When they attacked us, we applied Crest toothpaste to our teeth in the exact manner depicted on television by the manufacturers. The sight of our foaming mouths caused the primitive tribesmen to flee in fear, thereby validating the manufacturer's claims. *Your* claim for your socks' ability to destroy all sane forms of intelligent life did not hold up to scientific analysis, Lt. Haemer. The socks had no effect on anyone here at Warthog Labs. On the off chance that the effect you claim is sporadically effective, and therefore a danger to the public, I am returning them to you via the USPS, in which there is no intelligent life, sane or otherwise, to put at risk. Yours truly,

Dr. Marc Hurwitz, Director  
WARTHOG LABS

Dear Ken (HI MARC!),

Please sign me up for your newsletter, *Politesse*. I, along with others here in Charlottesville, am an avid gamer (Titan, 1830, etc.). Hopefully, you got our announcement of the Titan National Tournament here in C'ville Oct. 16-18. I will send you further details to put in your newsletter (right now I'm at work). Please let me know if any weekend gaming events you will have. Have Titan, will travel. Thanks,

Brian Bouton

*Thanks for the letter. Your requests are granted. You are hereby invested with the title of Shoat and are a full member of the Sounder. Please be aware, though, that Politesse is not a mere "newsletter," but rather, as reported in the Alumni News of Washington University in St. Louis, "the Washington, D.C. monthly journal of military/diplomatic simulation. Sponsored in part by the Congress, the journal's restricted circulation includes the House Foreign Affairs Committee, various executive branch officials, defense contractors and private sector journalists and analysts."*

*The following letter from Doug Brown of Penngrove, California, Warthog's #1 photojournalistic genius:*

Hi Marc:

These photos are from Ed—taken at Origins in Baltimore. Could you pass his negs back to him please? They are cacti, monster game, Empire Builder Jack-O-Lantern, Castle, and Greg Porter with horns—you figure out which is which. Mistaken IDs welcome. Good work on *Politesse*.

Doug

*Thanks for the kind words. Budd and I welcome praise, and treat criticism by annihilating the critical life form. Your pictures are (obviously) included in this issue, and the negs have been mailed back to Wrobel.*

*The following was probably not particularly intended for print, but whatever hits your editorial funny bone...*

Dear Marc,

I sent five photos to Doug Brown for screening on July 10, asking him to send the results to you by July 25. Above are my captions. I seem to have six of them. Now that I think about it, I probably did not send him the Legendary Bill Thompson (aka Dick Warner) but it's a nice caption anyway. Doug limits us to five per month. In fact, he may not do any at all if he (CENSORED BY WARTHOG). I should send you the prints just in case Doug can't.

Ed

P.S. Great 1830 issue! (Even for a non1830 gamester like me.)

Thanks for all the material you sent us. We're going to try to run the color print of Dick Warner along with the half-tones Doug sent us.

Our noteworthy Bill Salvatore writes:

"PIGS IN BLANKETS" (A SHAGGY PIG STORY)

Dear Budd:

Here is a possible racial type for the "Sty Wars" game: Thogs. Thoggian social organization is somewhat bee-like: there is a female leader—the Queen Thog, or Mama Mia (her offspring are all called "Mia Farrow"); there are productive citizens—the Worker Thogs, who all live in the capital, Owings Sty; and there are the unproductive citizens, who fall into two classes—the useless, or the unemployed, euphemistically known as "the Queen's Foster Children," who are exiled to the undesirable precincts downstream from the capital ("way down upon the Swinee River"), and the worse than useless, the military, known as War Thogs! Best regards,  
bill s.

P.S. I enclose a story about everyone's favorite near-beer from the 22 July *USA Today*.

P.P.S. Did you notice that in the Warhog Directory Ken listed a game I had recently played as "Kriegs Piel?" Subconsciously, no doubt, he is jealous of your ability to be so near to a beer, and wants people to start thinking of him as "K.Piel." Even my 6-year-old daughter (who was my Kriegspiel opponent—yes, I'll do anything to get a victory) knows that its pronounced KREEG-SHPEEL.

## Healthier Budd ready to blossom at Olympics

By Dick Patrick  
USA TODAY

Zola Budd, who set records as a barefoot teenager, says she has overcome injuries that threatened her running career.

The South African native and British citizen told the *Times of London*: "I am very confident that I will be able to run as well as I used to, or even better."

Budd, 21, set a world record in the 5,000 meters and won the World Cross Country Championships in 1985.

But she has not competed for nearly a year due to leg and hip injuries, which she said have been cured by a Johannesburg physician.

She wants to run the 3,000 or 10,000 in next year's Seoul Olympics.

The 5-3, 95-pound Budd has competed amid controversy. She circumvented an international ban against South African athletes by obtaining British citizenship in 1984. Finishing seventh in the 1984 Olympics 3,000, she was involved in the collision that caused Mary Decker to fall. Budd was banned from last year's Commonwealth Games, failing residency requirements.

She said the experiences changed her: "I am more self-confident. I have a thicker skin. I don't worry ... what the newspapers and politicians say."

*Thanks for the letter. In Budd's absence, I'll respond. First, calling the military worse than useless offends your Editor. Second, implying that productive citizens live in Owings Sty pleases your Chief Swinentist. Since Budd isn't here your letter gets printed! Third, thanks for the article on Budd, printed to the left. Fourth and finally—even I can't make sense of your post-postscript. I've fried two Crays just trying to analyze it. Incidentally, speaking of cheap wins, I almost wrote up a game of Axis and Allies I was in last week. I played four Boy Scouts. The game really is the most fun when played with 12 year olds. I won, of course. But—I'll spare you the details.*

Dear Budd,

I am enclosing a copy of a test which should be given to all applicants to Warhog. Of course, all current members come under a grandfather clause and can ignore it. You're doing a great job on *Politesse*, keep it up. Sincerely,

Jeff Hoffman

*Thanks, Jeff. If we have space, we'll include the test. Otherwise, we'll follow your advice and ignore it (and of course blame Peel once again).*

And finally, Budd replied to my package:

Marc:

With regards to your last letter, I'm not real sure how to explain this, but... Those weren't my socks. you can tell my socks, because if you throw them on the ceiling, they stick. And the toothpaste was just mint flavored Crest, not Tartar Control Formula. Something else must have caused the Mongols to flee. Enclosed is some stuff for *Politesse's* next issue and a Greetings. Have fun.

Budd.

*Budd—my best swientific opinion is that Crest puts their tartar control formula in all toothpaste, but just labels some "Tartar Control" to sell it for a higher price. Also, the fact that the socks weren't yours proves that Warhog Laboratories' methods are swientifically sound.*



# Politesse Certification Examination

**Instructions:** Read each question carefully before you select the two questions you wish to answer. Of the possible 16 questions, answer only two. When the instructor tells you to begin, turn your test paper over and begin. You will have one-half hour to complete your test.

## **Questions:**

- 1. HISTORY:** Describe the history of the papacy from its original form to the present day, concentrating especially, but not exclusively on its social, political, economic, religious and philosophical impact on Europe, Asia, America and Africa. Be brief, concise and specific.
  - 2. MEDICINE:** You have been provided with a razor blade, a piece of gauze, and a bottle of Scotch. Remove your appendix. Do not suture until your work has been inspected. You have fifteen minutes.
  - 3. PUBLIC SPEAKING:** 2,500 riot-crazed aborigines are storming the classroom. Calm them. You may use any ancient language except Latin or Greek.
  - 4. BIOLOGY:** Create life. Estimate the difference in subsequent human culture if this form of life had developed 500 million years earlier, with special attention to its probable effect on the English parliamentary system. prove your thesis.
  - 5. MUSIC:** Write a piano concerto. Orchestrate and perform it with flute and drum. You will find a piano under your seat.
  - 6. PSYCHOLOGY:** Based on your knowledge of their works, evaluate the emotional stability, degree of adjustment, and repressed frustrations of each of the following: Alexander of Aphrodisias, Ramses II, Gregory of Nicea, Hammurabi. Support your evaluation with quotations from each man's work, making appropriate references. It is not necessary to translate.
  - 7. SOCIOLOGY:** Estimate the sociological problems which might accompany the end of the world. Construct an experiment to test your theory.
  - 8. MANAGEMENT SCIENCE:** Define management. Define science. How do they relate? Why? Create a generalized algorithm to optimize all managerial decisions. Assuming an 1130 CPU supporting 50 terminals, each terminal to activate your algorithm, design the communications interface and all necessary control programs.
  - 9. ENGINEERING:** The disassembled parts of a high-powered rifle have been placed in a box on your desk. You will also find an instruction manual, printed in Swahili. In ten minutes, a hungry Bengal tiger will be admitted to the room. Take whatever action you feel appropriate. Be prepared to justify your decision.
  - 10. ECONOMICS:** Develop a realistic plan for refinancing the national debt. Trace the possible effects of your plan in the following areas: Cubism, the Donatist controversy, and the wave theory of light. Outline a method for preventing these effects. Criticize this method from all possible points of view.
  - 11. POLITICAL SCIENCE:** There is a red telephone on the desk beside you. Start World War III. Report at length on its socio-political effects, if any.
  - 12. EPISTEMOLOGY:** Take a position for or against truth. Prove the validity of your position.
  - 13. PHYSICS:** Explain the nature of matter. Include in your answer an evaluation of the impact of the development of mathematics on science.
  - 14. PHILOSOPHY:** Sketch the development of human thought; estimate its significance. Compare with the development of any other human thought.
  - 15. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE:** Describe in detail. Be specific and objective.
- EXTRA CREDIT:** Define the Universe; give three examples.

# *in memorandum*

Now it's time to wrap up this silly games issue. I'm afraid I have a serious announcement. On July 19, 1987, Ellsworth "Chuck" Masica passed away from a long struggle with Stamenkovic's Syndrome.

Chuck, a founding Warthog, was a large, gentle man who always was quick with a joke. He wrote a lot of items for *Politesse*, but always under a pseudonym, for Chuck was a modest man. We all remember him from his sparkling wit and genial affability at many a Warthog gaming event.

We were all surprised when we learned that Chuck had named Ed Wrobel executor of his estate. For our purposes, let it be known that Ed has a number of wargames to sell, proceeds going to a good cause. All are in good mint condition:

Africa Corps/The Russian Campaign/Midway/War & Peace/Diplomacy (3 copies)/Twixt/Upwords/  
Stratomatic Baseball - all \$10 each.

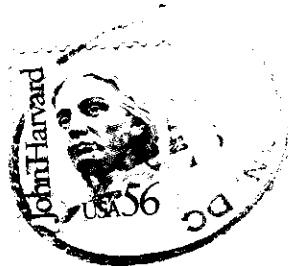
*Plus*, anyone interested in a free massive collection of postal Dip 'zines should also contact Ed. His address is 3932 N. Forestdale Ave., Dale City, VA 22193.

And speaking of addresses, remember that next issue will again be edited by Budd Haemer, 1758 Dogwood Dr., Alexandria, VA 22302. Both Budd and I invite all shoats to send in their favorite memories of Chuck, as we'd like to make the next issue one dedicated to his memory. They needn't just be HadaGames, although HadaGames are fine.

—Marc

## *Politesse*

c/o Ken Peel  
8708 First Ave., #T-2  
Silver Spring, MD 20910



**In This Issue:**

*You don't want to know...*

*...it's silly!*

**Next Issue:**

*Hmm...*

*...we'll just have to see, eh?*

Larry Peery  
P.O. Box 8416  
San Diego, CA 92102

T

***first class mail!***