

Questions, questions...

Greetings Welcome back to another fun-packed issue of *Politesse*. By the way, does anyone know why this magazine is called *Politesse*? I sure don't, and it is getting embarrassing when people ask. Any thoughts on the subject are welcome.

From when I was very little, I remember some big name politician saying on TV that "someday, space travel would become as safe and routine as air travel." Well, between Challenger and the near air collisions, and with all the schedule delays in both areas, I think we can say that day has come.

It is a question, I suppose, of how much safety do you want. There is risk associated with any endeavor. Crossing the street is risky, but most people do it anyway. They consider living out their lives in their rooms a little too restrictive. Although, with a good supply of wargames and a nearby pizza delivery... Risks are a part of life. You can minimize them. You know, look both ways before crossing the street. But you never eliminate them.

So take a chance today, and hope you don't roll boxcars. Enjoy. —Budd



HavaGame

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. Bob Masso, Phil Rennert, Phil Dancause, Carl Russell, Tom Swider, and Mark Larzelere have already expressed interest. For more information, see elsewhere this issue, or contact Brian Bouton, Historical Simulation Society, P.O. Box 485, Ivy, VA 22945.

Halloween Games October 30 through November 1, had become an annual tradition at the Wrobel household, but with to space limitations due to a localized baby boom, Marc Hurwitz has managed to usurp this honor for himself. So, the Owings Mills, MD. version of the Halloween Games will begin Friday evening, October 30 through Sunday, November 1. Special featured games will be Civilization and Pax Britannica, but there will be lots of time for other things. Remember that Halloween this year falls on Saturday. Marc's address is in the lower header (below). Call Marc for directions if you are interested at: (301) 363-6303. Also call Marc if you're looking for transportation, to see if anyone's coming from your area. If you plan to sleep, a sleeping bag might not be a bad idea.

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* *HavaGame cont., back page...*)

Politesse, the mystery 'zine, is edited by Budd "Lemming-no-more" Haemer, 1758 Dogwood Dr., Alexandria, VA 22302, and is co-edited by Marc "Me-too" Hurwitz, Warthog Labs, P.O. Box 191, Owings Mills, MD 21117. Send all submissions for print to Budd, or Marc if you're reall adventurous. Send cash to the publisher, Ken "Mainic" Peel at 8708 First Ave. #T-2, Silver Spring, MD 20910, at the rate of 57¢ per month/issue (i.e. 11 for \$6.27).

Warthog Play-by-Mail

by Budd Haemer

One of the requests received in our recent survey was for Play-by-Mail games in *Politesse*. I'm willing to do a little game mastering. Of course, in keeping with our image it should be something slightly different. The following are two possible games:

1. "Blind Diplomacy:" this idea was suggested by Ken Peel. The game is just like ordinary Diplomacy, except the players are processed through the game master (me). This is not to be confused with Gunboat Diplomacy. The various countries still negotiate, but the person behind the country remains unknown. The game becomes pure DIPLOMACY with no personality overtones or fear of perpetual grudges. Maybe we can even get Ed Wrobel to play again. There would be a nominal fee to help defray what would otherwise be a substantial postal bill. The turn results and any press would be published in *Politesse* monthly. Drop me a line with a country preference list if interested in joining DA (Diplomats Anonymous). Remember, it would be like normal PBM Diplomacy, except the names would be screened to protect the innocent (or guilty).

2. PBM Godsfire. Godsfire is Metagaming's game of space conquest. There are 15 planets in a tightly-packed cluster. Each player is trying to conquer the cluster. The planets are divided into four regions; each region has an economic level and has one of three ruling parties in charge. Each ruling party has its won characteristic. *Moderates* will produce economic development and Assault Groups (AGs). AGs have limited deep space fighting capability, but are very effective in planetary assault. *Extremists* will only produce Squadrons, which are effective deep space fighters with no ability to land on a planet. *Reactionaries* will only produce Planetary Defense Forces (PDFs). PDFs are effective at longer ranges, but only have attack value on a planet. PDFs cannot be effected by a purely space-based attack. In addition, PDFs can crush revolts. Why would a region

go into revolt? well, suppose someone tried to change the ruling party and the region didn't like that...

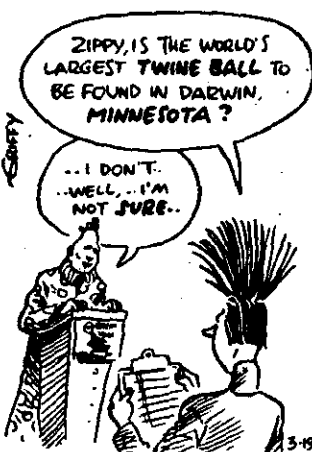
Anyway, PBM Godsfire is just like Godsfire, except for movement. Godsfire uses a phased movement system, where each player gets three movements and his opponents get a response to each movement. This can become quite cumbersome. For example, in a 15-player game, there would be 45 moves and 630 responses per turn. In addition, since a unit can move only one a turn, any face down between more than three players becomes a Mexican stand-off. The first player to move gets jumped by a player he didn't attack. In PBM Godsfire, movement is simultaneous, which improves the game by orders of magnitude. A player can launch a sneak attack and catch his neighbor sleeping. All units must keep moving when within combat range to avoid ambush. Any attempts by two different units to move to the same spot is treated as a transit attack with the

unit moving the shorter distance becoming the stationary unit and "no effects" treated as defender retreats. If both units move the same distance, the spot goes to the larger. If neither is larger, mutual simultaneous transit attacks are conducted until the situation is resolved.

The heart of a good PBM Godsfire is an imaginative press, as players generate imaginary political intrigues to explain the developments within their empires, republics, etc. This is optional, of course, but does add color.

Anyway, there are 15 openings available, so drop me a line to reserve a planet. The number of planets per player will be determined based on response. For example, in a three player game, each player would start with three planets. The first to reach eight planets wins.

These are my thoughts. I am open to suggestions and will consider mastering other game if I am familiar with them and there is sufficient response



Fortress America: A Conservative Strategy

by Budd Haemer

While at Origins, I picked up Fortress America by Milton Bradley. I've had quite a few opportunities to play it subsequently and have fallen quite deeply for the American (U.S.) player.

Side note—isn't it interesting the way those of us in the USA naturally assume we are the only Americans. For example, it is quite ironic to hear during the Pan-American Games about a fight between a Cuban and an American, or about the American team not winning the gold in basketball (what, did someone invite the Brits?). Anyway, when I refer to the American player in Fortress America, I mean the U.S. player not the Central American invader.

The game can be played with two to four players. The U.S. is being attacked by three invading communist hordes: Western (Yellow), Southern (Blue), and Eastern (Red). The three invader players normally cooperate. Although each can win individual victory by having more points (points are awarded for cities, resource territories and capturing U.S. lasers), no invader can win unless the American is defeated. The American loses when the invaders control at least 18 cities at the end of the American turn. The American wins when the invaders capitulate. The invaders could fight to the last unit, but a sane godless communist quits earlier. (Wait—"sane godless communist"...is that like "jumbo shrimp?" I shall have to consult with the Politburo.)

Winning with the Americans is quite a challenge. You are always on the ragged edge until the climatic final turn, when you either retake the 18th city or die. I've won the last five games as the Americans against many differing opponents. I am quite convinced that, properly run, the Americans are invincible—it's an emotionally-satisfying thought, anyway... Although, after Marc had a rather discouraging game as the invaders (due mostly to luck, his bad and mine good), Marc announced a theory that the game is horribly unbalanced in favor of the Americans. So we switched sides, and my invaders cleaned up...but that is a different story.

So here are my guidelines for winning as the Americans in Fortress America. It is everyone's patriotic duty to master this game to prevent a communist takeover (at least that's what Ollie tells me).

1. Conserve your strength. Remember the heart of the American strategy is flexibility. Take back what the invaders give you.
2. Conserve your strength. Although grabbing a city for another reinforcement card looks tempting, the units you lose doing that are probably where you want them and the reinforcements will show up in the Phoenix or some other hell hole.
3. Conserve your strength. The American should never try to make more than three attacks a turn; he is spreading his units too thin. Also, the American should not make more than one major assault a turn. If the invaders can force more battles out of the American than these, they have him on the run.
4. Conserve your strength. Don't defend territories that aren't important. To win, the American must hold or be able to retake Kansas City, St. Louis, Memphis and Washington, D.C. Write off the west, Texas and the south.
5. Conserve your strength. When placing units from reinforcement cards, avoid the temptation to grab a lightly-defended city. Those reinforcements will probably be more important on your

front line at KC, St.L, Memphis and DC.

6. Conserve your strength. Fire lasers into major battles to minimize American losses.

7. Conserve your strength. Don't fight Yellow unless you have to. Keep Yellow from getting a helicopter leapfrog advance. This can't be stopped on the first turn, so you have to attack yellow once, and only once, to compensate. If Yellow fails to take Los Angeles, and Cochino Highway on the first turn, he has taken himself out of the game and can be ignored until he gets near KC.

8. Conserve your strength. Maintaining a high unit density in the Northeast can discourage Red from even attacking DC. This leads Red to throw his efforts against Atlanta and Memphis. Although this will give Red easy tactical victories, it is a strategic victory to the U.S.

9. Conserve your strength. The key to the American strength lies in their bomber fleet. Don't make non-critical attacks with bombers where they could be lost. Avoid combats with enemy helicopters.

10. Conserve your strength. Pound either Red or Blue mercilessly depending on which is making better progress. Don't switch once you start pounding them. As soon as one of them is low on bombers, helicopters and armor, you can push him back into the ocean. This signals the beginning of the end.

Gee, one and ten are mutually exclusive and terribly contradictory to boot. Oh well, I did say playing the American is a challenge. Maybe I'll publish the invader counter-strategy, perhaps in TASS. Until later, one final suggestion: conserve your strength.



Britannia: Peoples, Peoples Everywhere

by Phil Rennert

Avalon Hill has come up with an interesting new game called Britannia, spanning a thousand years in the history of Britain, from the Romans to the Norman conquest. Seventeen different peoples compete for Britain; waves of conquest wash back and forth across the board. A turn is 75 years. An exceptional leader helps his people for one turn and then dies; a view of one man's impact on history. The sequence of play is simple: grow, move, fight, and every three turns, count victory points. There are also a number of major invasions (double moves). Different peoples have different objectives, based on history (e.g., the Welsh get points for holding Wales). It's a four-player game (they advertise it as 3-5, but it's best with four; what I say in this article is for four players). At the end, each player adds up the victory points for the 4-5 peoples he controls, and the highest score wins. A full 16-turn game takes less than four hours with experienced players. As in any multi-player game, there's some opportunity for leader-bashing, but in Britannia it's not easy to tell who's winning until it's over.

I would like to present some strategy suggestions for the various peoples and players, and give some indication of how to see who's ahead. Three general comments come to mind:

1. Read everyone's victory conditions and keep them in mind. Plan a turn ahead; when a major invasion's due, don't be standing in its path if you can avoid it.

2. Don't be seduced by the points you get for killing Romans in the first part of the game. Most peoples get more points by holding territories, and if you burn yourself up early, you won't be able to hold much of anything.

3. Have a strategic plan. Let the peoples you control work together. There are many situations where a people should give up victory points to help its friends get more.

Now, on to the peoples, one by one:

ROMANS:

Natural enemies (or natural foods): Belgae, Brigantes, Picts.

Watchword: Northward for Caesar!

Strategy: In addition to the Belgae, the Ro-

mans can go for either the Welsh or the Brigantes. I think the Brigantes are a much better target because 1) the Romans get big points in the north and little points in Wales, and 2) going north lets the purple player use the Romans and Romano-Brits to set up a Scottish takeover of Pictland.

I like what I call the Pennines-in-one strategy, which gets the Romans into the Pennines before the pesky Brigantes can use it for a redoubt. To do this, send two armies against Sussex, Essex, S. Mercia, Hwicce, Avalon (*esp. the Hills!* —Ken), and Wessex, and three against the Downlands, then send three of the armies from S Mercia/Hwicce to the Pennines with Downlands/Essex/Avalon armies running interference in N. Mercia/York or March/Cheshire. Also take Suffolk; you may have to leave Kent for later. Next turn, kill as many Brigantes as you can before they submit on you, and go Dunedin or farther north and start killing Picts. Leave Wales alone, but inform the Welsh that any Welsh army that comes out of the mountains dies. Crush any Belgae who aren't in Lindsey.

In general, don't try to hold a perimeter, just give most of your high-value turn 5 forts a guardian legion. Send as much as you can north. On turn 3, kill Picts; leave the Dunedin fort unguarded to tempt Picts out of the hills. Remember there's no point holding any fort north of York. By turn 3, you should have taken Alban or Dalriada, hopefully both. On turns 4 and 5, kill more Picts if you can mass 3 vs. 1, or 4 vs. 2: you want to depopulate the north to clear the way for the Scottish invasion. However, watch your casualties. You want to place Romano-Brits in the north. Don't lose York/Cheshire if possible; they're high-value, and they're good Romano-Brit starting places.

This strategy can make the Romans a high scorer. My record is 56. However, watch out for unsophisticated players who will think you're the leader just because you have more points. Try to convince them that purple actually is not one of the favored players (which is true), so they don't need to gang up on you.

Expected points: 40-55

ROMANO-BRITS:

Natural enemies: Angles, Saxons

Watchword: What can we do for our friends?

Strategy: The Romano-Brits combine very low scoring potential with significant military pow-

er, so I say forget about scoring. Use them to set up someone else, and the best choice is the Scots. Replace the eight northernmost Romans with Romano-Brits. The York/Cheshire armies and anyone else who can should go to the Pennines: no Romano-Brit can survive long farther south, with both Saxons and Angles gunning for them. The armies in Scotland should kill Picts and/or Caledonians, but make sure at least two survive turn 6, so Arthur (Camelot in kilts?) can make a killer 4-stack turn 7. It's a shame to use cavalry in the mountains where they give you no benefit. As a result, nobody will ride horses in battle for 500 years, until William realizes that horses belong in the plains! You won't get much of a Romano-Brit score this way, but if the Scots can take Scotland, they can be big scorers.

Expected points: 0-5

BELGAE:

Natural enemies: Romans

Watchword: Roll sixes as you die!

Strategy: Not much on one, since you will be mostly or totally wiped out before you move. The Belgae are the only people who should think mostly of killing Romans. Pull your remnants into Lindsey swamp and wait for shots at unguarded forts. If you're still there turn 4, consider holding an area or two for points. Send everyone into kamikaze attacks on turn 5; there's no point living longer.

Expected points: 0-10

WELSH:

Natural enemies: Irish, Norsemen

Watchword: Men or Harlech, stand ye steady!
Wales for the Welsh!

Strategy: The Welsh can be one of the largest scoring peoples, just by holding Wales for the whole game. This means you must go light on casualties caused by expeditions outside of Wales. Since you only get one point for killing Romans, let them be unless you're pretty sure of being able to get home alive or you're near maxed out anyway. Defend the line of the rough terrain Clwyd-Devon. If the Roman goes after you seriously (not his best strategy), submit and save yourself for later.

Your main problem is the Irish, whose purpose in life it to make Wales into Ireland East. Keep your territories covered to deny them landing spots. Concentrate and crush any Irish landing as soon as the odds are in your favor; you don't want them to grow! If you do this successfully, you should be in good shape to convince the Norsemen to go elsewhere.

Remember you get 6 points for doing a cameo in York. Think about slipping someone into the the

Pennines or Lindsey on turn 6 or 7 to wait for turn 8.

Expected points: 35-55 if you hold Wales.

BRIGANTES:

Natural enemies: Romans, Angles, Danes

Watchword: Hold Strathclyde and Galloway, and be flexible.

Strategy: This is possibly the most variable of all the peoples, because there are so many things that can happen. The basic strategy is to take to the mountains (Galloway, Pennines) when a big invader comes around, then come out after he leaves. Plan to stay alive the whole game; conserve numbers and go for territories. Submit to the Romans if you have to. Diplomacize: look for weakness and expand into it. Whenever possible (i.e., no one's going to kick you out of them), grab the open territories of the center to increase population. Look for opportunities to go into Pictish territory, but make an agreement with a strong Pict to get Strathclyde left alone. Defend Strathclyde at all costs; if you can't, go to Galloway redoubt and wait to take it back.

Expected points: 25-35 if you go the distance, less than 10 if the Romans/Angles really go after you.

PICTS:

Natural enemies: Scots

Watchword: Scotland? No, this is Pictland!

Strategy: You can get a lot of points for holding what you have; the biggest chunk comes on the last turn. Keep you casualties down unless you're near maxed out. Never challenge Romans in open terrain, or attack Roman legions (unguarded forts may be worth it).

Try to blow the Caledonians out of the northern part of your territory (as you see it). Since the terrain is to favorable for defense, the best time to kill Caledonians is before they're born; keep their increase low. Caithness is the key. I recommend hitting it with three armies on turn 1, before he has a chance to move a second defender in. If you can take it, you can hold the Caledonians in the outer islands, where the Norsemen will eventually come finish them off. Consider taking the Orkneys or the Herbrides to increase your growth and decrease his, but remember the Scots are coming: watch your casualties. Encourage the Scot to raid the waste his strength in the south. When Fergus comes, pull everyone into the hills in large groups. In the Scots have six or seven armies, give them Dabriada and Dunedin. Rarely try to hold Dunedin on a victory point urn. Somebody strong usually wants it. After

Fergus, come out and try to wipe out the Scots or drive them from your territory. If you can, try to expand into the open terrain to the south to increase population, but securing the hills comes first. Strathclyde is everything to the Brigantes; attack it to hurt them, or threaten it to get them to yield you southern territories.

Expected points: as high as 60 if you dominate Pictland the whole game, 10-15 if the Romans/Romano-Brits really go after you.

CALEDONIANS:

Natural enemies: Picts, Norsemen

Watchword: De-fense! We're a peaceful people!

Strategy: All you want is to hold your three starting territories; rarely go outside of them. Sit there quietly and grow slowly. If the Pict doesn't take Caithness on turn 1, move the Orkneys army in to hold it. Your objective is to build to your maximum with two armies in each territory. Usually you should attack only when overpopulation would otherwise kill a newly built army. Push "barbarian solidarity" (i.e., the Picts should leave you alone). Roll sixes when the Norsemen come.

Expected points: 10-20

IRISH:

Natural enemies: Welsh

Watchword: Ireland East (misnamed Wales) for the Irish!

Strategy: Don't waste your limited strength raiding. You can make a lot of points by taking and holding Wales. Encourage the Romans to go after the Welsh, and the Welsh to burn themselves up against the Romans. Build up strength before you land. A good first spot is the rough terrain in Devon/Cornwall if it's not strongly guarded. Gain a toehold and expand it, but watch your casualties. Your growth will be slow at first. Don't be seduced by Avalon/Cheshire/Cumbria unless they're wide open; usually someone strong will kick you out. Your main chance lies in Wales.

Expected points: up to 30 if you can take Wales, otherwise 5-10.

SCOTS:

Natural enemies: Picts

Watchword: Fergus is our leader, we shall not be moved!

Strategy: Don't waste your limited strength raiding; unless some area is wide open on turn 4, wait at sea until Fergus comes. Then go after the Picts. Take Dalriada, Skye, and whatever else you can. Don't take Dunedin on turn 7 unless the Angle agrees to let you have it. After that, your goal is to liberate Scotland from the Picts. Ideally, you want to expand and take the whole north. You can be a big scorer if you can supplant the Picts totally. Don't waste either attack on turn 7: this is the only time you'll have a leader to negate the Picts' mountains. Watch your casualties—you'll want to grow slowly. If the Picts have two armies in the mountains, wait until you can mass four to go after them. Otherwise, see strategy suggestions for the Picts.

Expected points: 25-35 if the Picts are wiped out, otherwise 10-15.

JUTES:

Natural enemies: Saxons

Watchword: If we're still alive, it's a miracle!

Strategy: The Jutes are one of the lowest-scoring peoples, held down by their lack of numbers. Take a raid on an unguarded Roman fort if you can get one; it may be the only way to get points. Consider going after a legion and fort on turn 5. You have some potentially high-scoring areas, but the Saxons move after and will probably blow you out before the turn ends. Negotiate with the Saxon. He might let you alone on turn 4 (but not after that). If he does, grab any of your scoring areas which are open on turn 4.

Otherwise, hole up in the Downlands and wait for opportunity to knock, though you'll probably die before it does. Another possibility is to give up the idea of scoring points yourself and help your green buddies kick the Irish out of Wales.

Expected points: 0-5

SAXONS:

Natural enemies: Angles, Danes, Normans

Watchword: Grow and conquer!

Strategy: The Saxons are one of the largest-scoring peoples, and will win or lose the game for the red player. Don't waste strength on Romans without three armies against an unguarded fort in the open on turn 4, or six against a legion and fort on turn 5. When the Romans leave and Hengist comes, grab all of south and central England that you can (also Devon and Cornwall if they're open). Nego-



tiate or fight with the Angle over the south-central strip common to both of you. Your vast fertile farmlands will give you a growth rate of 3+ per turn, and your numbers plus the Brigantes' votes will make you Bretwalda/King every turn, if all goes well. If you can get the Welsh to accept that everything east of the mountains (and maybe Devon/Cornwall) is yours, try to get their help against the Angle. You can use your major invasion to give Devon/Cornwall to the Irish. However, it's not worth antagonizing a strong Welshman. When the Danes come, get out of their way (or hold in large groups)—remember they only need to pass through to score. When the Normans come, you'll probably be wiped out, but that's okay, as the points are in the bank. Hole up in rough terrain (Cornwall/Devon is the best place), and put Harold with four armies in the rough to try to keep him alive.

Expected points: including Bretwalda/King points, 60-75 points if you dominate England, 40-50 if the Angles do.

ANGLES:

Natural enemies: Saxons, Danes, Norwegians

Watchword: (like the Saxons) Grow and Conquer!

Strategy: Like the Saxons, the Angles are one of the largest scoring peoples and will win or lose the game for the blue player. The Saxon strategy suggestions apply just as well to the Angles. Watch your casualties in your main invasion. You need numbers for your main task of holding central England. If the red player is doing well, you must crush the Brigantes to win. Hold your leaders' birthplaces strongly the turn before. Since you move after the Saxons, you can count how many territories you need to be Bretwalda/King and go after them. When the Danes/Norwegians come, get out of their way (hole up in rough terrain). Don't be too dogmatic about holding York; many people want it. Try to get the Welsh to help against the Saxons. Point out that the red player is leading, if he is (or if he isn't). Consider sending some armies north if your Pict friends need help.

Expected points: 60-70 points if you dominate

England, around 40 if the Saxons do. Only 20 if you really blow your major invasion (very high casualties).

NORSEMEN:

Natural enemies: Caledonians or whoever's in their place, Welsh

Watchword: What do you mean, out boats cant reach there?

Strategy: You have a tourist list (areas to visit anytime during turns 12-16) and a list to hold on turn 13. Your problem is that once your boats land, they don't have the range to get from the north to Wales or vice versa. Cheshire is the only exception, and is a good resting place for keeping your options open. If you can, keep your men at sea on turn 12. Remember the overpopulation rule, which limits what you can bring ashore unless you can find open territories to support you. Most of your points come in the north (you should definitely hold Orkneys/Herbrides/Cumbria turn 13), but the north is apt to be strongly defended. Look for weakness, to decide which way to shift your reserves. Remember you get points for anywhere turn 16.

Expected points: 15-20

DUBLINERS:

Natural enemies: Angles, Danes

Watchword: How bad do you want York?

Strategy: Don't waste strength raiding; save it for the major invasion. Negotiate by informing all and sundry to expect seven armies in York on turn 13. In practice, 3 or 4 may be enough. Also grab Cumbria and one or two other places (seven armies need four areas or someone starves). Run away and hide after turn 13 (the Pennines and Galloway are good places). Try to come back to York or Cumbria on turn 16. Not a high-scoring people, but purple needs every point he can get.

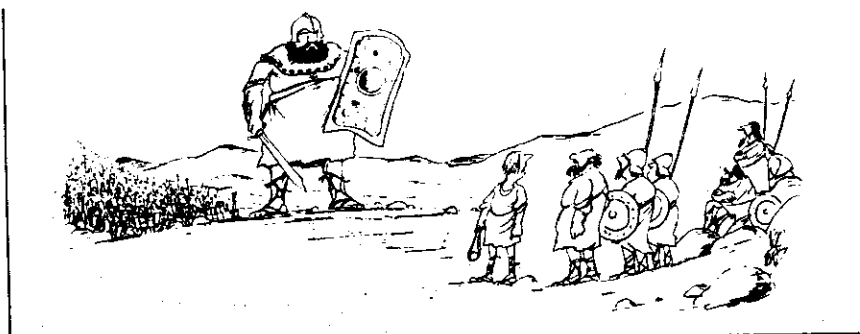
Expected points: 0-10

NORWEGIANS:

Natural enemies: Angles, Saxons, Normans

Watchword: What's ours is ours!

Strategy: Announce your determination to take all five of your areas on turn 15, then to it. Try to pass through Cumbria, but not end your turn there. The Dubliners will need it on turn 16. Spread out if you can to get reinforcements. Unfortunately, all the rough territories will be taken by people hiding



Ford/The Bulletin/Sydney

"If God is on our side why did he give them anabolic steroids?"

from you. See what's left turn 16. A medium-scoring people.

Expected points: 15-20

NORMANS:

Natural enemies: Saxons, Danes, Norwegians

Watchword: Kill them all; let God sort them out!

Strategy: You have the best army in the later game, but only two turns to use it. Try for everything on your list plus Harold's (or Harald's) head turn 15. Spread out or kill Harold to call reinforcements. If Harold is too well defended, let him go to conserve numbers. You want to be maxed out for your kingship turn 16. Don't lose William. Remember you move last, so count what you need and go for it. A reliable medium-high scorer.

Expected points: 25-35

For reference, adding up the expected points for each people, using the middle of each range, I get:

Purple	102.5 pts.
Red	112.5/90 pts.
Blue	87.5/112.5 pts.
Green	100 pts.

The two numbers for red and blue differentiate between what happens if the Saxons dominate England or the Angles do.

With this in mind, let me summarize the player positions.

Red — Most favored, if you can keep the Brigantes in the game. With unsophisticated players, or if each people were to go for its own victory conditions (ignoring teamwork), red has a big edge. If the Brigantes are viable and the Saxons dominate south England as usual, you'll be Bretwalda/King every turn. Possible sandwich attack on the Angles. If the Irish are still around, the Norsemen can combine with them against Wales. The Saxon invasion turn 6 can be used to give the Irish Devon/Cornwall. However, red is vulnerable in that the Brigantes' Strathclyde is the most valuable single territory around. Keeping the Brigs out on turn 13 and at the end costs red 10 points.

Blue — Next best chance. It all rides on the Angles; keep casualties low and dominate central England. If the Picts stay strong, you'll get many

points on the last turn. Use the Angle major invasion against the Brigantes. Possible sandwich attack on the Scots; help the Picts with the Angles. Help the Angles (if they're still there) with the Normans turn 16.

Green — It's possible. If the Caledonians hold and the Welsh hold and the Danes romp, and neither red nor blue is doing very well, it could happen. Attack sparingly in the early game with the Welsh and Caledonians—keep those numbers up. Since Jutes are worthless, attack Romans if opportunity knocks or go help the Welsh. Green is the balance player in the middle game. After the Welsh beat the Irish, they have some excess military potential; use it against the Angles or the Saxons, whoever's doing better.

Purple — A purple victory is an accomplishment. Impossible without a very strong Scotland. Use Romans, Romano-Brits to set up Scotland. Possible Scot-Dubliner sandwich attack on Brigantes. Coordinate Dubliners/Norwegians very carefully; it's easy to screw up and have to attack yourself. Purple is the balance player in the late game. Use the Norwegians to go after red or blue, whoever's ahead.

I now give some "reasonable" point ranges, as a guide to who's doing how well. If you're above these ranges, you're probably on your way to a win; if you're below, you're probably out of it.

	Purple	Red	Blue	Green
turn 5	40-55	5-20	15-30	15-30
turn 7	50-65	20-45	30-45	25-40
turn 10	60-75	35-70	45-70	45-75
turn 13	75-85	60-95	55-80	65-90
End	105-115	70-120	95-120	75-110

And as a quick summary of the major determinants in the midgame, the person doing best is:

Red — Saxons doing well or Brigantes doing well or Irish taking Wales.

Blue — Picts strong or Angles doing well.

Green — Welsh holding and Caledonians holding and neither red nor blue in great shape.

Purple — 50+ Roman points and Scots taking Pictland.

I hope what I've said here will increase your enjoyment of this fine game, and I welcome your comments.

Dear PoliEditor,

8/15/87

It has been long and long since I last ruminated in the pages of Politesse, but certain alarming tendencies have recently become apparent and these force me once again to emerge from the slop and engage in a brief flurry of mudslinging and other quasi-generative activities.

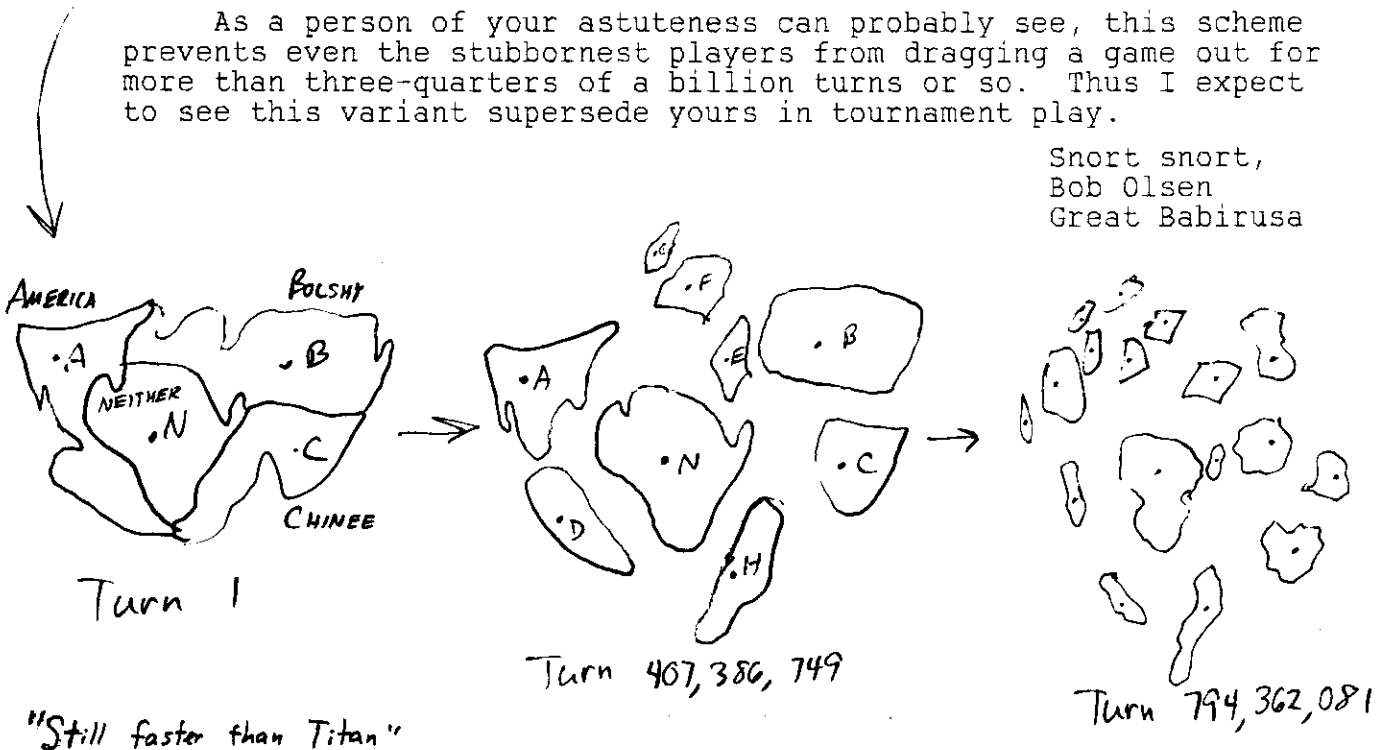
I was appalled by former Premier Peel's incomplete and prejudiced history of the Warthog movement. Not only did he gloss over the embarrassing and disgraceful issue of the ever-delayed free elections of our great organization, but also his one-sided account completely neglected the vast importance of the post of Great Babirusa (a post I have been honored to fill for lo these many years) in the development and maintenance of ideological correctness and mindless conformity among the shoats. Someday the truth will come out, and (as you folks in the Washington area like to say) *Heads will roll!!!*

Your review of The Creature That Ate Sheboygan was incisive and ideologically correct, though somewhat dated; the game is no longer in print although Epyx has a newer one called The Movie Monster Game which (one can only hope) corrects the extreme slowness of CTAS (it was written in BASIC you know...). MMG is available for... consult my Epyx catalog which is always ready to hand...Apple II, IBM, C64--none of these being machines of much consequence. No Atari version? How doltish.

If it's permissible I would like to subject your Perpetual Diplomacy variant to a session of revisionist pathetic pseudo-intellectual blather. It has inspired me to invent yet another variant called Pangaeian Diplomacy based on the resemblance of your map to the ancient continent of Pangaea, which existed some hundreds of millions of years ago--a mere blink of an eye in the cosmic scheme of things or in the publication history of Graustark. I am sure you share my concern with the problem of stalemated Diplomacy games, and it is this difficulty which Pangaeian Diplomacy attempts to overcome. The board starts out as you have it, and is as you so astutely note, immediately stalemated. However, using my system, after some hundreds of millions of game-years, the supercontinent would begin to rift apart, creating new land masses, new sea spaces, and most important, new supply centers. Thus:

As a person of your astuteness can probably see, this scheme prevents even the stubbornest players from dragging a game out for more than three-quarters of a billion turns or so. Thus I expect to see this variant supersede yours in tournament play.

Snort snort,
Bob Olsen
Great Babirusa



De-Evolving Titan

M. Larzelere

This is a Titan variant where the object of the game is still to have the last remaining Titan, but in doing this you try to lose battles and muster weaker creatures.

- 1) Similarly to regular Titan, everyone starts in a Tower with a Titan and Angel, but you also have 2 Hydras, 2 Serpents and 2 Colossi.
- 2) When mustering, the creatures needed are in reverse order: i.e., 2 Hydras muster a Griffon in the Desert or a Wyvern in the Swamp, 2 Colossi take a Dragon in the mountains or a Giant in the Tundra. 3 Wyverns take a Troll, 2 Trolls take an Ogre, etc. Or in the Marsh an Ogre can muster a Troll or a Ranger by itself, etc.
- 3) When Battles occur, the "winning" legion (the legion that kills off all the opposing creatures or the Titan) is eliminated from play and the losing legion has the creatures it started the Battle with (plus any reinforcements it took during the Battle) restored and is returned to the Masterboard. The "losing" legion gains points equal to the value of the creatures in the eliminated "winning" legion.
- 4) The rules of Battle are basically the same, only the strategy is different (you try to lose the Battle). All creatures are forced to strike when next to each other. However, Rangestrikes are done only in the Counterstrike phase, and if a player has a possible range-strike, he must take it (though if a creature has more than one possible rangestrike, he may choose either). The Attacker must summon an Angel if possible during the Turn's engagement phase, and the Defender must muster the strongest possible reinforcement at the start of his Turn 4.
- 5) When a player's point total passes a multiple of 100, he adds an Angel to any remaining legion of his choice of the player he "lost" a Battle to when he passed the multiple of 100. He adds an Archangel for a multiple of 500. If he eliminated the player, no Angels are added. For every 200 points a player has, his Titan loses a power-factor until he gets down to a power-factor of 1 (thus having a 1-4 Titan when he has 1000 points). Thereafter he loses a skill-factor for every 200 points gained, though the Titan may not become any weaker than 1-2.
- 6) If a Titan legion enters a Tower, he may add a Warlock to any legion on the Masterboard, exposing the Titan. He may muster a Guardian showing any 3 like creatures and add the Guardian to any legion on the Masterboard. (Of course, no legion may go above 7 creatures). Centaurs, Ogres and Gargoyles are not Tower creatures; Colossi, Hydras and Serpents are.
- 7) Since there are so few Serpents, Hydras and Colossi in the game set, when there are no more of either of them left to be mustered, it only requires one of them to muster the next available creature. That is, one Serpent can take a Behemoth in the Jungle when no more Serpents are left to be mustered; one Hydra may muster a Griffon or Wyvern when no more Hydras are left to be mustered, etc. For a six-player game, players might start with 1 Colossus, 1 Hydra, 1 Serpent, 1 Behemoth, 1 Dragon/Giant, and 1 Griffon/Wyvern.

This game has not been playtested, so any people trying it may have to change the rules as they see fit.

Comments?

July 16, 1987

Budd,

Once again I take my scuzzy dot-matrix in hand to send in a letter to this most esteemed of publications (this means I want something). I'm still recovering from Origins, having had a booth of my own and getting gaming in on the side.

Con going tip #1 - Dry ice is the best refrigerant known to man. Five or six kilos will keep a good-sized cooler going for a full weekend, and there is no mess, or soggy food. (see tip #1a)

Con going tip #1a - Keep an insulating blanket between the dry ice and your foodstuffs. Otherwise they all go to 35 below, and your canned Cokes will explode like sugar-filled grenades (one of them snuck past the styrofoam retaining wall).

I'll gladly do an Origins report if you like, but I imagine there are other shoats out there who had more time to take it all in. Besides, most of the report would be about that great new RPG, TimeLords (shameless plug). This, of course, is why I am writing in the first place. Far be it from me to ever use Politesse to further my own aims of dominating the gaming industry, and from there, the world, but, I would like to make all of shoatdom aware that there is a new RPG in town, by yours truly. As you may have guessed, it is called TimeLords, and I was hoping for maybe something along the lines of a product announcement, or review perhaps by someone who doesn't know me. Of course, I can give you several opinions.

"Utterly fantastic! The best game in the history of mankind!"
The designer (me)

"Probably the one game that the 20th century will be remembered for."
His wife

"It's an incredible game! And we got it for nothing. Wow!"
The playtesters

But, then again, you might want one from someone else. An explanation.

TimeLords is the role-playing game of time and dimension travel. Not just another everything system, ho hum. There is a difference. Several, in fact. First, TL has a dual character generation system. First, there is a system that lets you accurately design yourself, using a series of simple tests and questions. The premise of the game is that of you, thrust into infinite time and space by an artifact called the Matrix, which (ha ha ha) you have no control over at first. By the time you figure out how to get back home, you may not even want to. Dr Marc Hurwitz could use the character generation system to massage his already substantial ego.

There is also a point-based character system, where attributes and skills are bought from a point base. This could be used for Time Patrol characters, or characters from any period. Or, the two systems can be merged. Say you wanted a post-collapse character based on yourself, but with several years survival experience, or a character that would be you, but as if you were raised in a fantasy setting.

Second, TimeLords is realistic. If D&D satisfies all your gaming needs, and you desire nothing more from life, far be it from me to disturb your addlepatated meanderings. As a game with the premise of time travel, all forms of combat must work equally well. TL utterly destroys a lot of the "classic" problems, like:

"I'm out of HP, so I'm instantly dead"
"I took all my HP in the foot in one big hit, I'm dead."
"I have such a great skill that I can stand on my head and shoot over my shoulder and still hit you in the left eyeball."
"I have 20 HP and I took twenty 1HP hits, so I must be dead or dying."
"I have lots of experience, so I'm more difficult to kill than a horse."

These will not happen in TimeLords.

Due to extensive records kept in WWII, Korea and Vietnam, we have a rather large database of what various weapons do to the human animal. TL was designed to be the most realistic game on the planet. And...to back this up at Origins, we offered to let passersby pick any weapon, and we would show its effects on any part of the body they chose. No one was turned away by unrealistic effects or complexity of the rules.

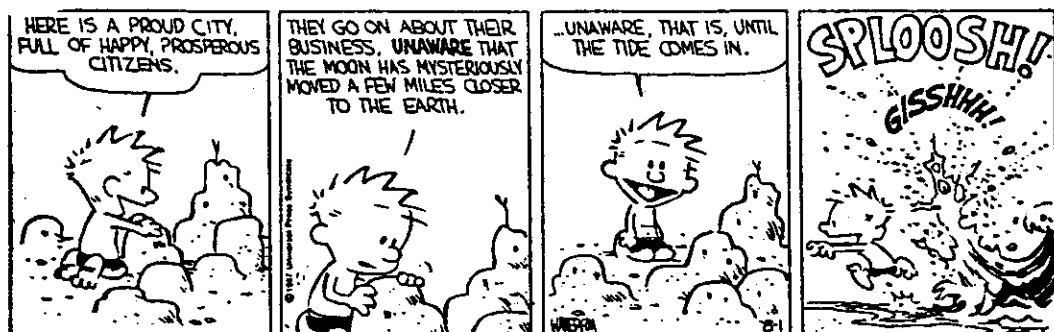
Third, it is complete. The rules cover character generation, melee combat, gun combat, vehicles, creatures, random world generation, mechanics of time travel, drugs, diseases, over 175 different skills, and literally hundreds of weapons and items of equipment. This is all crammed into 124 pages by means of a secret extradimensional process, and sold for \$12.00. Compare this to unnamed games X,Y, and Z, where you have to buy volumes 1 through n (where n is a large number), just to run a decent campaign.

If you know of anyone interested in this sort of game, they can get it through The Armory, or more particularly a game store that orders from them. Perhaps even you, with your similar leanings (Death & Dismemberment to D&D), would take the task. I wish, but unfortunately can't, give away any review copies at this point.

Until next time,

Greg Porter
BTRC
4415-C Sprenkle Lane
Richmond, VA 23228

P.S. The first 24 page adventure pack for TimeLords is now out, and hopefully in the hands of eager distributors within a few weeks.



Project Rail Baron

by Matt Ellis

*(The following article is reprinted from Avalon Hill's **The General** with the permission of the author and the editor. It was a companion article to Matt's excellent article "A Few of My Favorite Lines," which in turn was reprinted from **Politesse**. Hmm... I guess uncle Rex forgot to mention the latter, but no biggie. This month's **General** (Vol. 23, #6) has a number of excellent articles on Warthog-friendly games, several others of which were also reprinted from **Politesse**. Check it out!)*

Rail Baron is a game that lends itself to analysis. Anyone who writes on the subject will be sorely tempted to suggest some sort of theoretically derived rating system that assigns precise values to each of the 28 railroads in order to allow direct comparisons to be made between them. Although I have presented tables from which readers may draw their own conclusions, I have resisted the temptation to offer such a rating system—not because I do not consider it a worthwhile goal, but because I believe it is a goal that cannot be attained through theoretical analysis. Any analysis straightforward enough to be easily understood would necessarily ignore too many important factors to be more than an approximation of reality, while any analysis that took every factor into account would be far too complicated to inspire confidence. No theoretical analysis that took every factor into account would be far too complicated to inspire confidence. No theoretical analysis of a game as complex as Rail Baron can be both comprehensive and comprehensible, an ugly fact that deprives any theoretically derived rating system of its credibility.

An empirically derived rating system would be another matter altogether. The real value of any railroad lies exclusively in the contribution it makes toward the victory of its owner, and one of the best indications of the worth of any railroad must consequently be the frequency with which it is part of winning players' rail systems. If a large enough sampling of winning systems were available for study, it would be a simple matter to derive from it just such frequency values for each of these 28 railroads. The resulting empirically derived rankings would offer as accurate a representation of the actual worths of the railroads as it is possible to obtain. While it could easily take an individual a lifetime to record a large enough sampling to make

analysis worthwhile, a cooperative effort among many Rail Baron enthusiasts could produce significant results in a short time. I am proposing here just such an effort, which I will call, for lack of inspiration, Project Rail Baron.

For the sake of simplicity, the project is limited to face-to-face gamers that are played to completion in a single session, with the winner determined according to the standard victory conditions, no optional or house rules in use, and the same players remaining in the game from beginning to end (except, of course, for any eliminated during play). Players who wish to contribute their results are urged to record the following information upon the completion of every game that meets these criteria:

- Date of Game
- Location of Game
- Number of players at Beginning
- Number of Players Eliminated During Play
- Home city of Winning Player
- Railroads Owned by Winning Player at End of Game
- Other Holdings of Winning Player (Express or Superchief)

Please forward this information to me:

Matt Ellis
Project Rail Baron
5403 Biddison Ave.
Baltimore, MD 21206

Although the information will fit on a postcard, any contributor who includes a self-addressed, stamped envelope will receive by return mail a summary of my findings to date. Project Rail Baron is an unprecedented opportunity for those interested in the game to make a significant contribution to the body of knowledge surrounding it, and I hope that other players will be as enthusiastic towards it as I am!



Up With Chuck!

-Ed Wrobel

Those of you who never had the pleasure of meeting Chuck Masica probably feel as great a sense of loss as those of us who knew him well. Chuck was the consummate shoat. By that, I don't mean he won every game he played, although he won a few. And I don't mean he consumed the most beer and pretzels, although, like most WARTHOGs, and many Americans, he accounted for more than his fair share of the world's resources. No, what made Chuck a Loyal Shoat among Loyal Shoats was his sense of caring. His commitment to his fellow piglets, to the hobby of boardgaming and to the organization was unsurpassed.

But now, Chuck is gone, another statistic in the gruesome war against Stamenkovic's Syndrome, an affliction that seems to strike down gamers in mid-simulation. There is hope, though. Shortly after the services, Chuck's remains mysteriously disappeared and, just as mysteriously, turned up in a WARTHOG sub-basement in Owings Sty, Maryland. (Legal considerations preclude us from confirming any details regarding the transference.) At this very moment, WARTHOG technicians, swientists and New Age Channelers are hard at work on "Operation Up With Chuck," one of our most ambitious undertakings to date. With any luck, on July 19, 1988, Chuck will be hosting his own Memorial Anniversary Gamefest!

As with any great and noble cause, funds are desperately needed (those channelers don't live on air!). And that's where you and I come in. We may not know one of Dr. Hurwitz' notorious vats from the cauldron in the opening scene of MacBeth, but we have hearts and wallets. Let's open both of those vital organs wide! I am donating selected games from my attic (to supplement those from Chuck's estate) to be sold to benefit Operation Up With Chuck. I am pleased to announce that Greg Ellis has already agreed to purchase 2 Diplomacy sets and a Twixt game. That leaves the following available, at \$10 each:

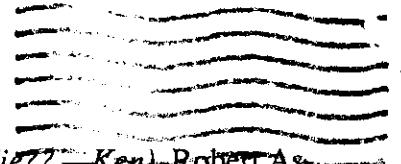
Afrika Korps, The Russian Campaign, Midway,
War & Peace, 1 Diplomacy, Upwords, Strat-O-Matic
Baseball (lotsa cards: oldtimers, 1970, 1974, 1983),
Strat-O-Matic Basketball

And, available for any donation whatsoever, an intriguing collection of amateur postal Diplomacy publications.

To participate in this novel marketing initiative, write to Ed Wrobel, 3932 Forestdale Avenue, Dale City, VA 22193.



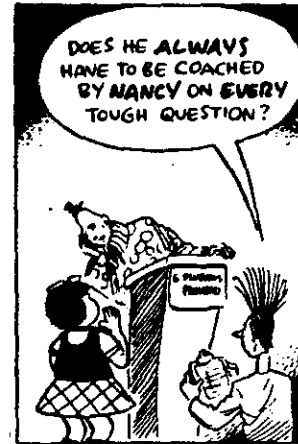
(...HavaGame, cont.)



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.

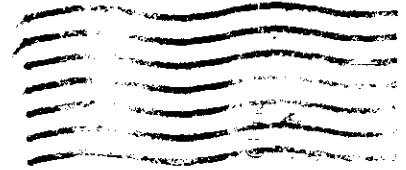
Yeah, but don't you think that checking with Nancy will do you any good in figuring out the way Politesse got it's name. Ed knows, and I think that I have figured it out, but if anyone out there thinks they can enlighten our editor, drop Budd a line and fill him in. Hey, we'll have a contest and everything! Two prizes: one for the "best" correct answer (figure that one out), and another for the most "interesting" response (ditto). Let's hear from you!

—Ken



Politesse

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In This Issue:

- Britannia by Rennert
- Fortress America by Haemer
- in memorandum by Wrobel
- ??? by Olsen
- Timelords by Porter
- Play-by-Mail offer by Haemer
- Titan Devolution by Larzelere

Larry Peery
P.O. Box 8416
San Diego, CA 92186

first class mail!