

Well, I put Marge on a plane for England last night, so now I'm ready to settle down to some Diplomacy. (The music scene is quiet, and I no longer need to chase women, so I might as well do something...) Of course, I have to finish moving, buy a new car, get ready to go to Winnipeg... but these should leave me lots of time over for important things.

In case the non-playing subscribers are wondering: by the time I got things sorted out it was mid-month, so I decided to wait and do a double mailing. So you're getting your May and June issues in one batch. Saves you a bit of money, if you don't mind the weight, er, wait. (I even pun in my subconscious....)

The games are already typed up, and I've one - maybe two - page(s) over. Let's see if I can find unanswered letters....

From Tom Butcher: Sorry to hear you've gotten so busy ((I don't... I'm enjoying myself thoroughly!)) but there was one thing you mentioned that I couldn't resist commenting on. You said nothing could stop you from watching the election results one evening. I never watch anything on the idiot box. If you listen to the radio you can do something else at the same time. TV is the biggest "thief of time" that was ever invented.

((As a matter of fact, the election was the one show I've watched this year. Literally. I haven't owned a TV for three years. Marge has one which is never turned on. Even when I owned a TV, I rarely watched it without reading a book at the same time. Looks like we think alike.))

From Robert Cheek: You have a good zine, with no space wasted on rock music or recipes or political philosophy. So keep up the good work. ((Actually, I used to "waste" space on folk music, outdoors stuff, politics and many other topics; I still would, if I had the time. Glad you like the zine in its current, de facto, incarnation, though. Pray that I keep busy....))

From Fred Winter: Concerning your article in #245, "A Radical but Simple Proposal for Cleaning Up the Miller Numbers Problem":

As for abandoning the Miller Numbers, why not? But to mix them in with the Boardman Numbers would be, in my humble opinion, wrong.

Abandonment would hurt no one, except perhaps a few variant fanatics. The players do not really benefit from having a "Miller Number". This is clear, because during all those months when nothing was done variant games went on without, to my knowledge, any player losing much sleep. Not only that, but just think of all the useless work saved!

Useless?! Well, what else? It is probably impossible to devise a system for rating all variants together fairly. 90 per cent of variants are played only once or a few times, then never again, so a record of them doesn't need to be maintained for any real reason.

Now, Boardman Numbers serve a purpose, in that they facilitate information gathering for statistical purposes. Even here, though, I do not think it necessary to number every game. We need to eliminate unusual games, not clutter up the lists. I feel that listing local telephone games or other irregular games hurts the Boardman Numbers. In fact, thought should be given to assigning Boardman Numbers only after a game is finished and it was regular. The transcript would be submitted by the GM, and after ruling the game regular it would be assigned a number based on the order in which it was finishes.

Gamesmasters or players who didn't want to submit their games wouldn't have to. These are likely to be more irregular (less formal) anyway.

What would result would be a chronological list of homogeneous games, perfect for statistical purposes.

Why clutter up the list with games which are not ratable and/or which no one cares about, as evidenced by not submitting an application for a Number?

(continued on page 6)

1978 L

GM: Blair Cusack, 1620-42nd St., SW, Calgary, Alberta T3C 1Z5

Winter 1902+Spring 1903 GROSS INCOMPETENCE ABOUNDS!!!

AUSTRIA (Melucci) F Tri. retreats to Adr., Removes A Rum.

F Adr.-Tri., A Tyl. S F Adr.-Tri., A Bud. S F Adr.-Tri.

ENGLAND (Acheson) Builds Fleet London.

F Helgo.-Den., F Lon.-Nth., F Belg. S F Lon.-Nth.,

F Eng. S F Belg., A Nvy. Holds.

FRANCE (Brown) NMR! A's Pic., Burg., Pied. Hold, F's Tyrr., Spa(sc) Hold.

GERMANY (Grabar) NMR! A Burg. retreats OTB. A's Holl., Ruhr and F Den. Hold.

ITALY (Workman) Builds F Naples.

F Nap.-Rome, A Ven.-Rome, F Ion.-Tyrr., F Tun. S F Ion.-Tyrr.,

A Tri.-Vie.

RUSSIA (Lipscomb) Builds Army Warsaw.

F Sev.-Arm., A Ukr.-Sev., A Ga.-Rum., A War.-Sil.,

F Swe. S ENGLISH F Helgo.-Den.

TURKEY (Oaklyn ?) NMR! A's Serb., Sny., Fla Bla., Bulg(ec), Aeg. all Hold.

-German F Den. may retreat to Baltic, Kiel, or Skagg., or OTB.

-French F Tyrr. may retreat to Lyon, Med., Tusc., or OTB.

-Germany is operating one short, while Turkey is running one short as well.

-John? Standby requests for Turkey, France and Germany please.

Press

Vienna-I hereby decree that I have never desired ((never ??!))
to annex Italy, Serbia or the Black Sea---((Unusual name for women...))
Taken out of context my words in the past night have been misunderstood
in this regard---this is in no way a change of position ((Gasp!!...))
in this regard or on these issues--((If I ever called girls an issue,
well...))--Clarification of new data has persuaded me that I should
not hesitate ((yes, yes...go one...pant, drool))...to change my opinions
to be more easily understood---

Helium-You lecherous beast you!

Rome-How can I answer the ((French)) cables? I don't even know
which Brown you are!

Helium-That's quite alright, he doesn't know either apparently...

-Fall 1903 orders due Friday, June 27.

Standbys: France: John Morgan; Germany: Bob Normand; Turkey: Gord Bartman.
All addresses in #252.

Dave Grabar's NMR is likely due to the fact that he once again sent his
orders to me, and this time I was unable to pass them on. Blair is the GM.
Bernie Oaklyn is travelling (to Canada, no less, land of gasoline...) be-

ginning June 29. Temporary replacement is Eric Ozog, 1526 N. Lawler Ave., Chicago, IL 60651, USA. Bernie will be away for five weeks. Also, Bernie's new phone numbers (unlisted) are: (301)-384-0262 (with answering device) and (301)-384-0263.

Game 1978Chb, Winter 870/Spring 871: HUGE STALEMATE ACROSS MIDLANDS! NORSE FLEETS ROUND KENT! WESSEX LEADERLESS!
(Gesta Danorum)

East Angles (Trevor Baillie): A Cantwara-Suthrige; A Herstingas-MiddleSaxons;
A Holland-NorthAngles; A Lindsey-Sarvudu; F AnglianShore-
NorthumbrianShore, s by F HumberMouth.

Norse (Blair Cusack): F SolwayFirth-Rheged; A Scireburnan-Somersaetan;
A Hamun-Suthrige; F SouthSaxons-Haestingas; F SouthSaxonShore-
NorthSaxonShore.

Northumbria (Robert Fisher): A Deira-Lindsey, s by A Elmet.

Picts (Ken Wilkie): F FirthOfClyde-NorthBritishShore; A Rheged-Westnoringaland;
A Westnoringaland-Steinnor; F Wash-HumberMouth; A Bernicia-Hexham;
F Hexham-Deira, s by F NorthumbrianShore; A Mameceaster-Elmet.

Welsh (Alan Laucke): (Built F Gwy, A Wrs, reserved 3rd); F Rhuddlan-
MeerseMouth; F Gwynedd-IrishSea; A Wrecoonsaetan-Westerne;
A NorthMercians-Peasaetan; A Cilternaetan-MiddleSaxons;
A MiddleAngles-Sarvudu; A Southmercians-MiddleAngles.

WestSaxons (Douglayward): OMR! F SSx disbands in lieu of retreat, GM removes
A UpT; A Wintanceaster & A Somersaetan hold unordered.

Standby for the West Saxons will be Raynald Provost; all addresses in #252.
Fall orders are due Mon., July 23.

Game 1977AR, Winter 1908/Spring 1909: NEW FRENCH REGIME FINDS ITSELF IN DANGER!
NEW ITALIAN REGIME FINDS ITSELF OUSTED!

Nothing heard from Head or Roberge, ergo Carroll and Karnes move in.

Austria (Blair Cusack): f con-aeg; a alb-tri; a tri-tyr; a vie-boh;
a boh-sil, s by a gal; f eas-ion; a ukr s a gal; a rum s a ukr.

England (Dan MacLellan): (Built a lon); a lon-por, c by f mid & f eng;
f nth s f eng; f hel-hol, s by a kie; a stp-lva, s by f bal;
a war h, s by a mos.

France (Mike Carroll): (Built f bre); f bre-mid; f bel-eng; a bur-ruh;
a pru-ber, s by a man & a sil; a pie-ven, s by a rom & f apu;
a mar h; f ion h, s by f tyr. (a sil retreat to pru or disband.)

Italy (Doug Karnes): a ven-rom. (Retreat to tus or disband)

Russia (Bob Normand): NuRI a sev h un.

Turkey (John Lipscomb): f gre s Aus f eas-ion.

COA: Mike Carroll, 172 Bruce St., London, Ont. N6C 1H1. Standby for Russia:
Bob Albrecht. All other addresses in #252. Fall orders due Mon., July 23.

London to Paris: Sorry, but due to your lack of communication this war has
gone to its limit. You leave me no choice!

Game 1978I, Fall 1904: RUS-TUR SITUATION ABSURD! ITALY STABS AUSTRIA, LIEN-
(7-Nations Game) ACES FRANCE AS LATTER THROWS WEIGHT LIMEYWARD!

Austria (Hugh Polley): a gal-vie; a tri-vie; a bud-rum, s by a ser;
a war-sil; f bulsc s tur f aeg-con.
England (Frej Wasastjerna): f bar-stpnc, s by f nwy; f swe-fin; f nth-lon;
f edi-nth.
France (Dave Hurd): f wes-mid; a pic-wal, c by f eng; a bur-pic; a mar-gas.
Germany (Horst John): NMR! f ska, f den, a kie, a bel, a sil & a tyr h un.
Italy (Tom Butcher): a ven-pie; f ion-gre; f tun-wes, s by f tyr.
Russia (Walter Compton): f fin-stpsc; a stp-mos; f con-smv, s by a ank.
Turkey (Fred Winter): f aeg-con; a smv-ank (ret. arm); a rum h (ret. sev).

Winter 1904: Austria: home, ser, ~~gts~~, bul, war, rum (7) Builds a vie.
England: home, nwy, swe, stp (6) Builds a lpl.
France: home, spa, por (5) No change.
Germany: home, bel, hol, den (6) No change.
Italy: home, tun, gre (5) Builds a ven,
Russia: ~~stp~~, mos, ~~ser~~, ank, smv (3) Removes f smv.
Turkey: con, ~~sty~~, ~~rum~~, sev (2) Removes a sev.

Hard to believe Horst will drop, but anyway, German standby will be Dave Pengelly. All addresses in #252. Spring orders are due Mon., Aug. 6.

Moscow: Will the English declare themselves? Austria is pressing....

London to St. Petersburg: The Pied Piper has a waiting list three years long, and I hope you'll be eliminated in less time than that. That should teach you to watch out whose toes you step on.

.

Game 1978J, Spring 1904: RUSSIA HARD-HIT ON ALL FRONTS! BAD SEASON FOR
(The Presber Game) CONVOYS! ITALY TO REGAIN RESPECTABILITY?

Austria (Mike Carroll): a bud-vie, s by a tri; f ven s a tri; a ukr-gal.
England (Heiki Walk): a spa-gas; f por-spase; a lon-bre, e by f eng;
f lpl-iri; f nwy-bar; f ska-nwy.
France (Trevor Baillie): a gas-mar; a par-bre.
Germany (Blair Cusack): a bur-mar; a mun-sil; a kie-lva, c by f bal;
a den-swe; f bel s Eng a lon-pig (nso).
Italy (Norm Dunbar): a tyr-ven, s by a apu; f ion-eas.
Russia (Doug Karnes): a gal-war, s by a mos; f swe-fin; a war-lva;
a vie-gal; f rum-sev (ann.).
Turkey (Randolph Smyth): f smv-eas, s by f aeg; a gre h; a bul-rum, s by
f bla & a sev.

Retreats: Austrian f ven to adr or disband; Russian a vie to tyr, boh or dis.

Fall orders are due Monday, July 23.

.

The Standby Situation: A couple of people responded to the call for more variant stndbys, but we could use lots more. Help keep "old faithfuls" like Trevor Baillie and Bob Fisher from getting overloaded.

Game 1977A11d, Spring 1907: FIREWORKS BRUPT AS NEW TSAR, GODFATHER CLASH!
ITALIAN LISWRITE BACKS UP TRAFFIC!

The vote on a 2-way draw (I-R) is renewed; please vote with Fall orders. Doug Hayward is unheard-from, so Bob Albrecht takes over Turkey.

France (Hugh Polley): f eng-nth; f gas-bre; a yor-edi; a bel-hol;
f tus-lyo; a bur-ruh.

Germany (Robert Fisher): a ruh-hol, s by f kie.

Italy (Dave Pengelly): f mid-nat; f por-mid; f wes-spaco; f lvo s a mar;
a mun-bur, s by a mar; a tyr-boh; "a ven watches a tus";

a rom-nap; f nap-ion; f ion-seg; "f are s f ion-gre"; a rum-gal.
Russia (Bob Albrecht): a fin-stp; a nwy-oly, s by f nrg; a pru-sil;
a sil-gal; a war-ukr; f den-nth; f swe-bal; f bla-rum; f seg-gre.

Fall orders are due Mon., July 23.

Aegean Sea (EP): The King turned from his latest victory. "Those Russians are my kind of people, and at this rate they will be! I think I'll give them Associate Status. The French, now, they talk big, but to get a draw they're going to have to show some brilliance at more than press releases."

Moscow to Paris: You included in the "draw"? Hah! Not until a certain place gets cold. ((Lethbridge?))

Moscow to Italy: Why?

Moscow to Moose Factory: I just don't know....

Moscow to Europe: Is Fall gonna be a doozy!

Moscow to Anyone Who Cares: I will shut up now... but just for now!

Game 1978G1d, Spring 1905: DRASTIC ACTION CALLED FOR!

This game is pretty crazy already, so it's time for another bit of craziness. Let's transform it from an Alberta-Ontario Challenge to a Northern Alberta-Southern Alberta Challenge! I'm calling on Blair Cusack to take on France and Bob Albrecht to assume play of Turkey. Why not? (Hayward is NERing again.)

Also, if everyone agrees, we can convert to 2-week deadlines. (However, unless it's unanimous, we stay on three. As well, I don't want players to depend on the phone to send in orders. It's all right occasionally, but don't get into the habit. If two weeks is too short for regular postal submission of orders, stick to 3-week deadlines.)

Thirdly, a slight misprint last season necessitates, I think, a delay. Russia retreated "f den-hel", not "hol" (which is impossible; this is obvious - it's the next bit that creates the confusion) and disbanded a hol.

The new deadline is Mon., July 9; however, if anyone votes for 3 weeks, it'll be July 16. (Make it July 10 if I get to go to Winnipeg.)

More Standby Situation News: Would you believe that there are now no US standbys on the list for worldwide games? How about remedying that condition?

Game Openings News: As a matter of fact, I may have one spot still open - in a French-language game in BATOCHÉ. If you've got a bit of reading-writing fluency in French, why not rush to get into the last spot currently available in the once-vast RUNESTONE games empire?

Fred Winter Letter (continued from p. 1): Perhaps somewhat off the subject, this comment nevertheless strikes at the question: why? Why list variants at all?

((This letter deserves a complete answer, and I don't know if I've got the space... or the time - it's getting late. But I'll make a start, and maybe finish off next issue.

((Last things first? Why list variants? For the same reason we list regular games: it's interesting! It's interesting for some people to see their own names in print and get a bit of an ego boost (or puncture, as the case may be). On a less childish level, it gives people a chance to see how friends, enemies and acquaintances are doing. In this way, it provides a badly-needed binder, a unifying influence in this sadly-centrifugal hobby. It also gives raw material for ratings systems (and even if you personally aren't interested in ratings, surely you'll admit that it's a valid concern and area of pleasure for those who are).

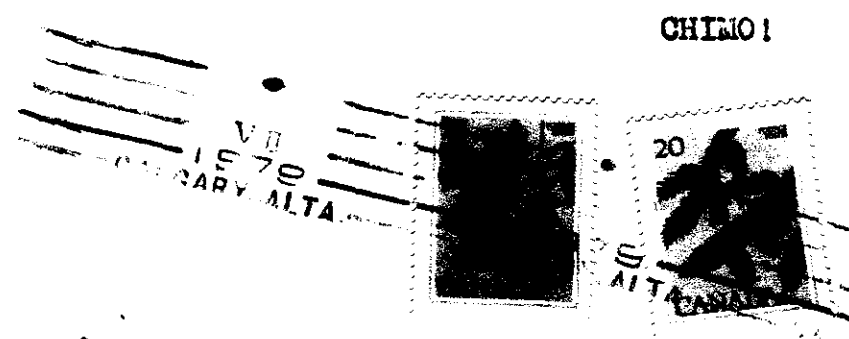
((These are some reasons for listing information on games, and no doubt some readers unaffected by Tuborg (we've got a brewers' strike on our hands here in Alberta) will be able to think of others. A somewhat separate function is the assigning of numbers, whether Boardman or Miller. I think there is a valid reason for doing this, if only that it's easier to say "1977Alid" than "the 4-player Madman game in RUMESTONE". The Miller Number system, cumbersome as it is, is better than nothing. But more than that, it provides another unifying function. In applying for a Miller Number, a GM plugs himself into something bigger than himself and, for one brief shining moment, participates in The Variant Hobby. Perhaps his participation ends there; perhaps he goes on to make a greater input in other ways. In any event, a door is opened, if the GM chooses to enter. Without Miller Numbers (or some equivalent) that door just never exists. As we see now; I feel that a lot of the insularity in the variant hobby at present can be directly attributed to the failure of the Miller Number Custodian and Acting Miller Number Custodian to perform their fundamental duties.

((Sure, it's perfectly possible for players to play in an isolated variant game, have a good time, and walk away. But why restrict ourselves to that? Why ignore the overtones? Why not plug into the greater possibilities as well, work on the higher levels, have a richer experience? It's possible....

((I'll continue my response in a future issue - next issue, I hope...))

CHIMO!

John Leeder,
121 19th Ave. NE,
Calgary, Alta.,
Canada T2E 1W9



Air Mail Par avion

45
28
73

Your sub
credit: 269
Please renew
if checked:

~~Patricia~~
Patricia Jones,
1854 Wagner St.,
Pasadena,
CA 91107,
USA