

"Yaaaaahooooo!!! Rosco will never catch us, Luke."
"Yess sir. General Lee is packing Issue 6 of--"

The Schemer

Steven Duke



RFD #3 Fairfield Pike



Shelbyville, Tenn. 37160

Issue #6

1981HE 1981HH

Sept. 1981

Hello, Dip fan. It's that time of the month again. Time for The Schemer to liven up your life. It's been a long month, and there is some real good material in this one. Before I get to it, though, I've got to try and fill the rest of this page.

Oh, don't worry folks. No more talk of neutron bombs and Russians and things. I realize that these things don't have their place in TS and you won't see them again, aside from an occasional remark of mine. I had planned to say that I'd leave such talk to the experts like John Michalski and his Brutus Bulletin. John will be closing down shop soon, though, so I can't say where to go to find comments of worldly things. John will still be active in the hobby, so you can look for a letter from him here every issue.

As you probably already know, the results of this year's Leeder Poll (THE zine poll, for you new guys) are in. Black Frog by Jack Masters took first place. For the GM poll, our own John Daly took first. Congrats to Jack and John for these awards.

Since we're on the Leeder Poll, I should like to make a few comments about it. Now, I don't mean to take anything away from the winners and high-placers, but the poll is troubled by several things. First, negative votes can play a crucial part. If you get into a fight with a publisher, you just vote him a '0' and see how he likes it! His zine comes out ranked 48th and the publisher is crushed. I much rather prefer a system where you list only your favorite zines. Second, ah what's the use? I was going to say something about how well new zines rank, but that's not limited to this poll. I got down to the bottom of the page, which was my main concern!!!

Well, lined up for this issue, we've got some interesting letters, a good article or two, and the start of our new subzine. I think you'll like it, and Greg thinks so too. He's put a lot of work into it so if it comes out looking bad, blame me. We can't have a subzine be better than the zine itself, now, can we?

I want to continually urge words outta ya. If you can string words together into an interesting article about Diplomacy or history or why birds fly, I'll print it. In return, you get 3 issue free for each printed page of material.

As of this writing, I'm not sure how this month will be printed. The place that had the good copier and the good deal sold the copier and expects to get another one in a month or two. This leaves me with two choices. I can either go to an expensive place and put out this one with the same quality (at 4 times the normal cost) or I can get to use a cheap Xerox and print this issue and not count it as an issue off your sub. Well, my co-publisher has come thru for me, so this one will look just as good as 4 and 5. I'm really very relieved, because this month I've been swamped with people from the General ad who are interested in playing here and I'd hate to have to send out a crummy-looking issue to them and say 'Well, TS really looks better than this.' So, it looks like things will work out again. You new people; I hope you like TS. Fear not, even though there may only be 3 openings left. I will open 1 more Dip game and also, Greg's Damn the Torpedoes subzine (which will debut next issue) may also carry a game, if need be. So far, I've gotten enough interested inquiries to fill 2 games, so hurry!

Take care, Steve

The Schemer is a monthly zine of play-by-mail Diplomacy, Origins of WW 2, and Machiavelli. It is published by Steven Duke (address on page 1) and its phone number is 615-684-8265. There currently are game openings, no game fees are charged, and subs are \$4.75 for 12.

The Guest Game Master for the publisher's game is Steve McBee, Rt.1 Box 214, Normandy, TN 37360. Phone 615-857-3131.

Co-publisher and editor of the soon-coming subzine to TS, Damn the Torpedoes, is Greg Fritz. Greg lives at 6777 Duriana St. Apt. #34, San Diego, CA 92139, phone 714-479-1573.

Deadline for all TS games is Oct. 29, 1981.

Games Pending...###\$\$\$&&@@@***+++

Dip Two (Tiger); Steve Ruddock, Greg Haskew, Greg Murray. 4 openings.

Origins One; Phil Fry. 4 Openings.

Machiavelli One; Greg Fritz. 5 more needed.

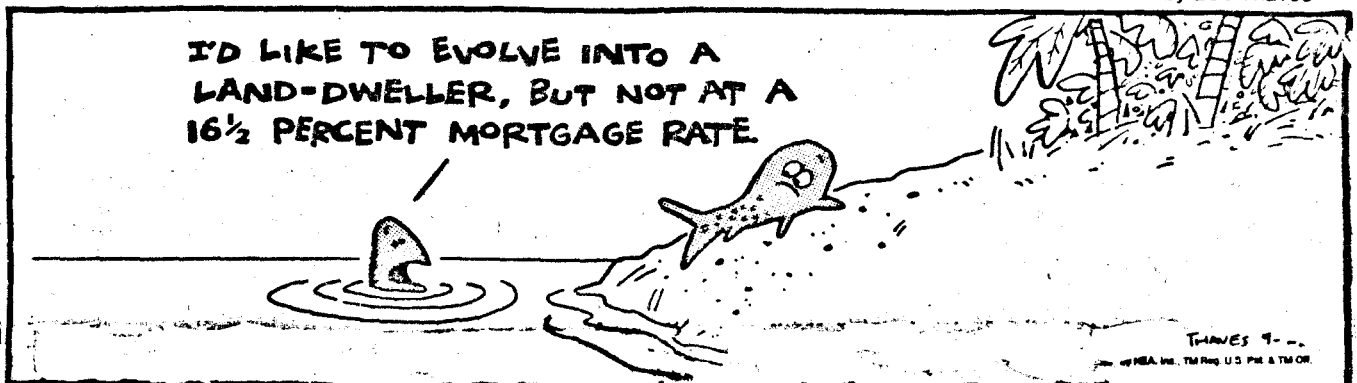
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Never fear. Southern Sass will return!

THE BORN LOSER by Art Sansom



FRANK AND ERNEST by Bob Thaves



The Schemer Houserules

- I. The rules that are to be used for games in this zine, in order of priority will be: a) any special variants, b) these houserules, and c) the 1976 rulebook.
- II. Although players are permitted to deceive each other, absolutely no deception of the GM will be tolerated. Punishment for this deception will be expulsion from the game, loss of any game fees, and cancellation of the deceiver(s)' sub with no refund.
- III. No player may play under an alias, without first letting the GM know the player's correct name. If the player does not inform the GM of his/her real name, and the GM discovers the fact, II above will take effect.
- IV. The GM will do his best to insure a good geographical spread of players. This will be done even at the cost of delaying a game-start.
- V. Preference lists will be accepted. Countries will be assigned using some form of random element, fair to all players. Partial preference lists will also be accepted.
- VI. The GM will answer questions concerning rules, order writing, etc. but will not give advice about what to do in a game.
- VII. Phone orders will be accepted, but are made at the player's own risk. When you give me your moves, I will write them down. I will then read back what I wrote to you. Under no circumstances will I accept appeals that what was printed by me was not what was said.
- VIII. When writing orders, include the following data: Boardman number, season, year, present date, country and your signature.
- IX. The GM will attempt to call any and all player(s) who's move I haven't received. I will call collect, and if I am mistaken, will pay for the call. Players please give me your phone numbers before game start.
- X. The deadline set by the GM is the absolute deadline.
- XI. It is up to the players to inform the GM of any COA. Your new address on the envelope along with a note from you saying 'Oh, by the way, take note of my new address' will be sufficient.
- XII. Moves which failed will be underlined and areas that dislodged units may retreat to will be listed.
- XIII. In the case of a No retreat or removal received, the GM will call a standby and will make the needed moves himself. In the case of missed builds, the player plays short.
- XIV. In all cases, the GM's decision is final. However, players are free to bring any possible mistake to the GM's attention.
- XV. These houserules take precedence over earlier houserules and go into effect immediately. Anything left out of these rules should be discarded and common sense will take over.

Michalski letter cont.

You said you put out "at least 3 issues every two months;" good. But then you say "about every 3½ weeks then." Hmmm, 3 issues each 8 weeks is one issue every 2.83 weeks or less than 3 weeks apart. I like 'em faster anyhow. ((I did it just to confuse you, John!))

Can't you be reached by phone during the day when some of us have free calls? ((Yes, I can be reached after 3:30 p.m. CST. Give me a call. I'd love to talk to you.)) Few people are willing to pay for BS calls, especially after they see the expense of the first few. The only calls I get are from Kathy Byrne asking me to still be her ally despite her taking Budapest from me last turn.

Has Mark Berch written about using syndicated comics? Send him a sample and he probably will. Another letter to print, if nothing else. Tell him Darth Vader sent you.

I suggest you put in CAPS where a unit ends up; it makes it easier for the player and it helps you next season to be sure the player (a) ordered all units he has and all orders submitted refer to a unit that is really there where he says. Out of space, more later.--John Michalski

((Thanks to you too, John. I always look forward to getting stuff from you. Keep it coming. Perhaps if you called me, I could interview you and turn it into an article for TS. I'm sure everyone would be interested in hearing from a pillar of wisdom in the hobby.))

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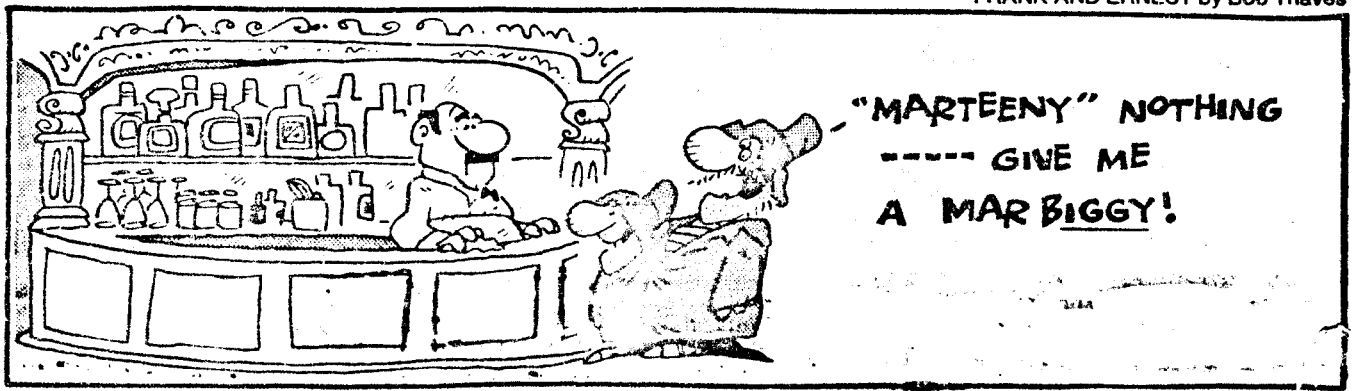
New Houserules, continued from page 3

Accepted abbreviations for ambiguous territories:

- Nth- North Sea
- Nwy- Norway
- Nwg- Norwegian Sea
- NAO- North Atlantic
- NAf- North Africa
- Liv- Livonia
- Lvp- Liverpool
- GOL- Gulf of Lyon
- GOB- Gulf of Bothnia

But, basically, any abbreviation that leaves no ambiguity will be accepted.

FRANK AND ERNEST by Bob Thaves



EUROPE IN TURMOIL!

- Austria (Phil Fry)- F trieste-ALB, A SER-S Turkish A Bulg-rum. A vien-GAL.
England (John Caruso)- F Nwg-NOR, F North-C A York-Bel, A York-BEL.
France (John Daly)- F Mao-SPAIN s.c., A BUR-Mun, A Mars-PIED.
Germany (Mike Maston)- F DEN-H, A RUHR-Mun, A Kiel-HOLLAND.
Italy (Steven Duke)- F TYRRH-C A Rome-Tunis, A Rome-TUN, A Pied-VEN.
Russia (Steve Shaddix)- F SEV-Rum, F gob-SWE, A War-MOS, A UKR-S F sev-rum.
Turkey (Dave Manuel)- F ANK-H, A BULG-Rum, A ARM-Sev.

Supply Center Chart--1901

Austria: Home, Serbia	(4) +1	
England: Home, Belgium, Norway	(5) +2	
France: Home, Spain	(4) +1	
Germany: Home, Denmark, Holland	(5) +2	A-hin F-kiel
Italy: Home, Tunis	(4) +1	
Russia: Home, Sweden	(4) +1	
Turkey: Home, Bulgaria	(4) +1	
Neutral: Greece, Portugal, Rumania	<u>3</u>	
	= 34	

A Proposal has been made that Black Press be used. Vote with builds. Any majority will pass the proposal. NVR is a yes vote.

Press...

Ankara to World: Weeelllll...

Paris to Rome: You had me convinced to leave you alone until that last letter. Geez, I hate to be threatened.

Moscow: The country's policies have been disrupted by the aggressive Turkish maneuvers in the south. All attempts have been made to secure peace. Sultan Manuel's true intentions will be evident in the upcoming months. If he is still hostile, Austria will be asked to take over the government while our forces begin a Turkish campaign. So let it be said, so let it be done...

Paris to Berlin: If you won't let me go thru Munich to reach Tyr, maybe we can set up an airlift.

Moscow to Ankara: What's it gonna be Dave? Life or death? You choose. I hope for your sake you choose right.

Paris to Vienna: Let's be frank and earnest.

Moscow to Berlin: Thank you for leaving me Sweden. I would now like to express my friendship and nonaggression.

Rome to Paris: Alright. You've made your bed. Now you're gonna have to sleep in it!

Italy to Austria: Hello, my ally.

Naples to Ankara: Don't try and enter the Med, sonny boy. I may have to kill Daly first, but I'm coming after your ass...

Venice to Warsaw: Let's jump the Turk!

BALKANS ERUPT!

Austria (Steve McBee)- F Trieste-ALB, A Bud-SER, A Vie-BUD.

England (Bert Schoose)- F Lon-NORTH, F Edin-NWG, A Lvp-EDIN.

France (Dave Manuel)- F Bre-MAO, A Par-BUR, A Mars S A Par-Bur.

Germany (Bill Clements)- F Kiel-DEN, A Mun-RUHR, A Ber-KIEL.

Italy (Dan Gorham)- F Nap-ION, A Ven-PIED, A Rome-APU.

Russia (Greg Fritz)- F Sev-BLACK, A Mos-UKR, A War-GAL, F St.P-GOB.

Turkey (Whit Bond)- F ANK-CON, A Smyrna-ARM, A Const-BUL.

The proposal for Black Press passed 5 to 2. This means that there will be B.P. in this game.

Press...

Vienna: The government of Austria-Hungary is suprised to learn that the government of Turkey has taken a war-like attitude towards our country. We have taken steps to insure that the Sultan's plans to take away our countryside will not be carried out. The governments of Italy and Russia have been alerted to the Turk's plans and we have been assured that appropriate steps from these two countries to assure the destruction of Turkey will be taken. Only a well-written apology to the Archduke himself will stem the advance of our armed forces into Constantinople. We hope the Turkish government will see the error of their ways before we show it to them...

Ankara: In response to the blatant aggression by the pestilent Austro-Hungarian forces, Turkey has committed itself to establishing a protective presence in the Balkans at the request of the Albanian government. Quoting from the Koran, Sultan Malomar II had the following words for the Hapsburg Emperor: "We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him, for we are nearer to him than his jugular vein."

GM to Players: Boy, if this game is half as good as this press, we'll have a winner!

Moscow to Vienna: What was that again?

Rome to World: The Italian government is utterly dismayed by the warlike posturing of its neighbor across the Adriatic, and calls upon all powers concerned to act in unison against the common foe.

Paris to Berlin: To make sure, ol' pal.

Paris-London: Hello, anyone home?

Vienna to Berlin: If you ever need help, remember I'm just a holler away.

Vienna to Paris: Look out for the Limey.

Vienna to London: Look out for the Frenchie.

Vienna to Rome: Whatsa matter wichu, huh?

Vienna to Moscow: Look out below!!!

GM Commentary

Nothing longwinded here. You all know what you're doing, don't you? It appears that A, I, R, and T will all scramble for the Balkans. Something big may soon happen here. Meanwhile, all's quiet on the western front. That's all. Please take note of the new HR's. Take care.

Letters...

From John Caruso: "Every issue of TS seems to be better than the one before it. My compliments to the ~~chief~~ chief. It's amazing that any one person from the south, being slow, boring and naive, could put out such a good product. And talk of 1,000,000 to 1 shots, 2 pubbers from Tenn, 2 good ole country boys with mediocre zines. Hey, that reminds me, ESM, I have to nominate you for an honorary membership, even though you do eat grits and drink shine. The South wise rise again--long live Robert E. Lee and God save Jefferson Davis ((Hogg)). Read your second ((long)) set of HR's. Can't say I care too much for them. I liked the first ones better. But enough on HR's. They are boring and I hate to talk about boring things. Let's talk about 'fun things' like a square dance, a hay ride or a tumble in the hay. Do you know why they call it a square dance? The people that go to them are, shall we say, a bit weird. A hay ride is a cheap way to get from Pa Kettle's to Geary Coughlan's. And a tumble in the hay is what happens when a clumsy Duke boy runs thru a barnyard.

Hey, isn't this fun? Why sure it is! I haven't had this much fun since the last time I picked on the south. Do you ever think of the good old days? You know, when Jimmy Carter was Pres, Elvis was king, Dolly was queen, and Hazzard was a Duke (?). If it wasn't for a good ole southern boy like Jimmy Carter, we wouldn't be where we are today. ((And if it wasn't for 30 years of Yankee boys, we'd still be #1.))

Besides Elvis, what else is Tennessee famous for? ((Mostly being better than the north.)) It seems to me that Tenn is one of the most boring southern states I've never been to. ((Yeah, I'm trying to get out and commit a few murders to liven things up.)) It's sort of like a slower, drier Florida.

I really liked your little article about 'Yanks and Californians'. The only thing wrong with it is that you associate those Californian simpletons with us Yank((ee))s. Why, no red-blooded Yank((ee)) would be caught dead with a Californian. ((Just being caught dead is good enough for me!!!)) Don't you think your article was rather dumb and detrimental (D&D) to your position in the recently started Pubber's Dip game? ((Not as D&D as this letter, tee hee.)) I mean, it's not what you could call positive Diplomacy. Maybe you can write a book and title it "How to Win Friends and Influence People in Dippy, Southern Style." Take care; keep up the good work.

Bye Y'All

The Yankee

((Gee, there ain't a whole lot I can comment on. I think your letter is proof enough of the Yankee inferiority. Overseas, they shout 'Yankee go home!' This doesn't bother me, 'cause they ain't talkin' to me! I sure hope some 'California Simpletons' write, too. Oh, John, you left out one good factor that is obvious even to you. What about Cuzin Daisey Duke? Too much to miss, eh? Thanx, John. I'm looking forward to ~~putting on your shoes~~ meeting you at Dip Con XIV.))

Here are some excerpts from a letter I received from Steve Ruddock. Steve has given some good ideas to me and he makes some very important comments which I think you'll enjoy. Am I at the bottom of the page yet??? Letter begins next page.

Ruddock letter...

Thanks a lot for your note. It's obvious you take genuine interest in your subscribers-friends, and that you put a lot of energy into The Schemer.

I recently got into the postal side of Diplomacy when I moved from California to Oregon, leaving behind a small core of guys I had been playing face-to-face with since 1968! So my primary goal is to find postal games run by dependable GM's. I subbed to TS because of your emphasis on well-run, non-sloppy games.

I am most interested in games and articles on the play of Dip. I am somewhat less interested in what I call the 'culture' of the game. I'm curious about the 'different breed' you want to attract. A basic marketing strategy is to carve out your own niche, do a few things better than everyone else, so I think you're on target. But, to tell the truth, so far TS's content has not been radically different from most zines. I think the feature that sets you apart the most is your thoughtful style (see southern dip, novice publisher). I'll take this any day over the stream-of-consciousness style of most pubbers.

Now about TS's "identity". I would like to see you publish reader-involvement type things, such as polls ("which of these two alliances/openings do TS readers prefer and why?"), contests, etc. This would help you get a handle on your subbers and also provoke thought among your readers. Surely some discussions would result that would run for quite a few issues. More generally, I would urge you to home in on what you want TS to be, and forget about irrelevant stuff; don't feel you have to have a little of everything. Nobody subs to just one zine, so you have the opportunity of specializing and doing a few things better than anyone.

I hope the game fills up soon. I'm so eager to play I signed up for a Flexible Build game in DH! Anyway, thanks again for your reply. I enjoyed writing to you, as it helped me prioritize my thoughts. If you want to stimulate discussion of what zines should be, feel free to print part of this. Keep in touch, and keep up the good work. --Steve Ruddock

((What a terrific idea!!! Your idea for reader-involvement things is just great! Two free issues to you for that one. Everyone can look for something next issue. Your game should fill up soon, if I don't scare away the interested people with this bad repro'd issue. I got a bunch of sample requests this month and am forced to send out this one to them. Hope they realize that TS does usually look much better than this. Thanx Steve and keep your ideas coming!))

And finally, the old rock of the hobby contributes a letter. (These are excerpts.)

I don't know where I got "Stephen"--must have been somewhere though, for I think Stephen is as dumb as you do. Only when I came to OK did I find people who were Stevens using Stephen.

Nice that you mentioned the neutron bomb. That jerk Mark Lew has a letter in BB 102 whining about how it alienates our allies. I would say an ally would either hail our actions or keep quiet. If Europe wants to have a Soviet pal instead, let them go cuddle up there and see if they like it.

I've heard of porch monkeys but not porch bunnies. Are they the same? ((Yes)) Would you have to chug a lot of chocolate milk to become one? (Cont. ~~page~~ page. H-

This article, finishing up #6, is a tongue-in-cheek thing, says the author. Enjoy...

Playing Dip With Novices
by Al Pearson

One might ask why have an article about playing Diplomacy with Novices. Well, novices are an integral part of the hobby. Every time you turn around, there is a new novice popping up. So, playing Dip with novices takes on a major importance if you, as a player, are interested in doing well. If you only play games with experience Dip players, you might have better overall games, but you are much more likely to get your plow cleaned regularly that way too.

And what makes me worthy of writing this article? I am, to those who are uninformed, Uncle Al, the Novice's Pal. Interesting articles have appeared in several major Dip zines discussing the assistance I have been to novices in games in which I have played. In the most recent Dot Happy some poor novice who played Austria to my Italy in the first round of the Dip Tourney at Gencon East wrote that he learned a lot, especially from me. I showed him how A-I can work together and I showed him that when the game comes down to the wire, not to trust anyone, even your game-long ally.

What's the best way to play with novices? Tell them the truth. All the time. Make the lie a tool of last resort; that way when the lie comes he will believe it, and the massive stab will be all the more effective. But what truth should you tell the novice? Tell him that all the other players are slimy cheating backstabbers who probably shoplifted their Dip sets unless they robbed their mother's purse for the money; just don't mention that you too are in that group. Tell him that all his other neighbors covet his home centers; just don't mention that you too are planning on what to build after you take his home centers.

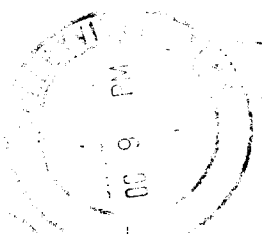
Explain to him that those other "big name" hobby players are in the game and tell him how dangerous they are. Just don't mention that you will be dangerous to his continued existence. Explain to the novice how the "well-known player" has always stabbed his ally and always opens to the worst possible locations in relation to the novice's country.

It is your duty to help the novice get as many of his units as possible attacking your enemies; and leave the novice alone while he does this. Novices make good puppets in this regard. And when the novice has lost this effectiveness or is about to become too big to handle, take two or three of his centers. Explain how the time has come for the "endgame," and his position is not good, so you felt he would prefer that you have his supply centers rather than someone else, and why should you wait till the last minute. You decided to take his centers, which he should have offered to you anyway in a season or two, while it can still do some good and you don't have to worry about fighting an enemy to get them. Explained properly, the novice will thank you for allowing him to give you his centers.

Never attack a novice and let an experienced player live. The experienced player will be much more trouble in the long run. He knows how you play, how you lie, and how to guard his centers. Stick with the novice against the experienced player, then take out the novice for the win.

Jolly good show, Al. Excellent article. I hope y'all enjoyed it. I guess that wraps it up for this month. Keep your letters coming in. We couldn't make it without you! Take care of yourself. Until next month.
--Scum Doctor

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Your Sub Ends With Issue #

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