

The Simarilli

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Dedicated to promoting and humanizing the game of Diplomacy

There are many new items appearing in this issue, including three games. Yes folks, there are 21 people out there who decided to take a chance and sent me money. So assuming that I have recieved all the preference lists by next Saturday, all three games will be filled and ready to go. There are also some other items which will be appearing somewhat irregularly, depending upon how ambitious the staff is during the three weeks between deadlines. Some of the articles deal with Diplomacy, and some don't. If you don't like the articles which don't deal with Diplomacy, then don't just tell me, send me something to print. I have been playing postal Diplomacy for just about five months

I certainly don't know everything there is to know about the game, so I am soliciting help concerning articles about Diplomacy. I could write some articles about the games I'm in, but I don't want to give anything away before it's over. I personally think that some of the non-Diplomacy articles are interesting, I wouldn't include them if I didn't think they were. But I'm not paying for this zine you are. So let me know.

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Besides going out to all the people who have either paid money or who trade with me, there is another group of people who are receiving this. If you publish a zine, I would like to trade with you. I'm not a picky individual, any arrangement you wish to make is fine with me. But do take me up on the offer. Also I am sending this to anyone from which I already receive their zine. Whether I am in a game or have paid for a subscription. If I have paid for a subscription, I hope that perhaps when my subscription has run out, then you will trade with me. The same holds true if I am playing in a game in your zine. Also I would like to say Thank You Brenton.

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As a public service item, I will publish ads for my readers of up to 35 words, not including address. The 35 word limit should serve as a guide, not an absolute limit. If you have anything that you wish to sell or barter off, let me know, and I'll let everyone else know. I will not be responsible for any interactions which occur through ads in this zine.

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CALIFORNIA LEADS THE NATION
BUT THE MIDWEST LEADS THE WORLD

After reading in ID about the various groups of Diplomacy players around the nation, I became curious about which state had the most players. Using the mailing list for my first issue as a sample, a list of over 260 people, I totaled up the various states. It came as no surprise that California leads with 39. Then New York and Illinois are tied with 20. Canada and Michigan have 16 and 15 respectively. Then came the surprise, Indiana has a strong 13. Pennsylvania and Virginia close out the list of states having more than ten.

Grouping the nation into regions finds the Midwest having 64, the Middle East having 58, then comes the west with 48. This is not even taking into account such groups as MOW which would greatly increase the Midwest's number.

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MISCELLANEOUS MUTTERINGS

I had just finished writing a very long and excellent (there is a strong stretch of modesty in my family, it all went to my brother and sisters) article concerning Len Lakofka's article that was in HA#94 about the problem of poor gamemastering. Then I got my copy of ARMADILLO and read an article in it which said about everything I had planned on saying. But I'll go ahead and expound upon the subject for a while.

Len raises an important question concerning what to do about poor GMs. When I first thought about starting a zine, I asked myself what was I going to do if I had to drop it for some reason. My personal answer was to refund everyone's money and to try to find someone to take over the games. Now this is nice for me to say, but would I really take this action if the time came. I certainly couldn't expect all of you to take my word that I would manage to do all of this. Besides I'm only one of over 40 publishers in the business.

Len's suggestion raises a possible idea, that of a sanctioning body to judge and report on poor GMs. But there are some serious problems concerning this idea. Basically I don't think that our hobby is mature enough to overcome the problems raised by this idea. First, what is going to constitute poor gamemastering? I'm sure my ideas are different from Len's, whose are different from Fred Winter's (CARBON 13), whose are different from John Boardman's (GRAUSTARK). You are surely going to alienate someone trying to set up standards.

Second, who is going to comprise this body? If it is set up under the International Diplomacy Association, what are you going to do about the people who are in The Diplomacy Association? What about people like Fred Winter, who are anti-organization? If you try and set it without any association running it, however it turns out, someone is going to cry foul.

I basically don't feel that at this time we are capable of setting up a sanctioning body that wouldn't cause more feuds and fights than we already have. The whole concept is a loaded bomb, that could threaten to destroy more than it could help.

I do think we can do something about publishers who go out of business. What we can do is to set up a means whereby if someone drops out, his games are taken over by other publishers in the group. To join the group, all you have to do is to promise to take over orphan games as they appear. In return you have a place for your games to go if you drop out. People could advertise the fact they are a member of this group. That way a person would know when he joins a game, it will always have a home. This would be the sole reason for this group's existence, and every publisher would be welcome to join. Games would be assigned on a random basis with everyone taking their turn in line.

Any comments or abusive criticism concerning this idea would be welcomed. I have heard there is possibly something like this existing today. If there is, someone is keeping it quiet.

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For those of you who are into Moody Blues, did you know that there six albums have sold over twenty million copies? And they have somehow managed to sell 54,000 albums in India. The Beatles have the record for number of records sold. Abbey Lane has sold over seven million copies, and Hey Jude is the record selling 45. Altogether they have sold close to 200 million records. The most recorded single song is Yesterday, with over one thousand different versions recorded.

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ZINES

What follows in this and future issues is a listing of zines which either have game openings, or they are worth your hard earned money, even if they don't have any openings.

HOOSIER ARCHIVES, c/o Walt Buchanan, RR#3, Lebanon, Ind, 46052. HA only features one game at a time, but what a game. The last one was the Grudge Game, which won an award at the Chicago convention for good play, along with two other awards for Walt for editing and gamemastering. It now features the Multiple Winners Invitational, featuring tremendous play and some good press releases. Also featured in HA are some excellent articles covering practically every aspect of Diplomacy. Subs are 13/\$2.00 or 6/\$1.00

Antares is a zine with just articles concerning Diplomacy, put out by Burt Labelle. I have just seen #4. In it Burt really takes off on John Beshara and The Diplomacy Association. It also featured the Peeripoll, some stalmate positions and other goodies. It costs 4/\$2.00 and comes out quarterly. Burt is also starting up a zine which features games for \$5.00. It is called PELLUCIDAR, both of these zines are from Burt Labelle, 146 Elm St.

ANTARES is a zine with just articles concerning Diplomacy, put out by Burt Labelle. I have just seen #4. In it Burt really takes off on John Beshara and The Diplomacy Association. It also features the Peeripoll, some stall-mate positions, and other goodies. It costs 4/\$2.00 and comes out 4 times per year. Burt is also starting up a zine which features games for \$5.00. It is called PELLUCIDAR, both of these zines are from Burt Labelle, Forest Park #23, Biddeford, Maine, 04005.

CARPETBAGGER is a new zine from Steve Bell. Among the more interesting ideas Steve has is his game fee. It is \$8.00 with \$4.00 being returned when you complete you game without dropping out. Steve's address is P.O. Box 1787, Davidson, North Carolina, 28036.

ARMADILLO is published by the House of Coop, know in real life as Steve Cooper. It features some interesting items like Coop's Corner, and Coop and his dog whimpy. ARMADILLO is presently trying to expand, so as Coop says, "Help an Armadillo grow, send it money." It's not a bad idea, you can also watch Italy take over the world in 1972CV, no matter what Coop says. The address is Steve Cooper, 3073 S Buchanan St., B-2, Arlington, Va., 22206. Game fees are \$4.00 and subs are 6/100¢.

IPCMMEA is another one of the newer zines coming out recently. It has one game started, and there is more for many more. Games are \$3.00 and one eight cent stamp, making it one of the lowest game fees in existence. It is published by John Lawry, Box 86, Salome, Ariz, 85348.

ARENA is a strange combination of English and Street which is under the EDITorial supervision of Edi Birsan. Edi is one of the top seven players active today, if not the best. Arena features some informative articles, and also some very amusing ones. Subscriptions are 7/\$1.00 from Edi Birsan, RD5, Bridge St., Hopewell Jt., NY, 12533.

These are the only openings which I know of for regular Diplomacy games. I am sure there are more, but I just don't know of them at this time. If anyone has openings I would be happy to print them. At this time I am not concerning myself with any variants, because I am still learning about them.

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1972??

Yes folks, we get down to it at last. Here are the names, addresses, and country assignments for our first game. I might suggest that you all send in tentative moves, so that you have something on file. The players have already recieved letters with the assignments and other player's addresses in them. The deadline for Spring 01 moves is 1200 EST, 11/9/72. One additional note, I am usually never home Saturday mornings, so if you want to phone in your moves, better do it before then.

Turkey: Douglas Dick, 9468 Beecher, Flushing, Mich, 48433

Austria: Darrel Glidden, RR#3, Nashville, Ind, 47448

Italy: Art Schlemkoffer, 1826 Ruan St., Phil., Pa., 19124

France: Tim Kelly, 4001 Hanover, Dallas, Tex, 75225

Russia: Jim Carlson, 1306 W University, Stillwater, Okla, 74074

Germany: Patrick Walker, 3355 W 34th, Apt C, Indianapolis, Ind, 46222

England: Tim Kutta, 2 Chesnut St, Lock Haven, Pa, 17745

The preference list was as follows:	Kutta	<u>E</u> <u>F</u> <u>I</u> <u>R</u> <u>G</u> <u>T</u> <u>A</u>
	Dick	<u>F</u> <u>E</u> <u>R</u> <u>T</u> <u>G</u> <u>I</u> <u>A</u>
Things worked out pretty good,	Glidden	<u>I</u> <u>A</u> <u>T</u> <u>E</u> <u>F</u> <u>R</u> <u>G</u>
four out of seven getting their	Schlemkoffer	<u>I</u> <u>F</u> <u>T</u> <u>G</u> <u>R</u> <u>A</u> <u>E</u>
first choice, then two others	Kelly	<u>F</u> <u>G</u> <u>R</u> <u>I</u> <u>E</u> <u>A</u> <u>T</u>
getting their second choice.	Carlson	<u>R</u> <u>F</u> <u>E</u> <u>T</u> <u>G</u> <u>I</u> <u>A</u>
The worst being Doug who got	Walker	<u>F</u> <u>G</u> <u>R</u> <u>E</u> <u>T</u> <u>I</u> <u>A</u>
his fourth.		

An interesting point is that Austria was either last or second to last on six of the lists, maybe Italy was a better future than her past. Another interesting point is that Italy was first on two of the lists.

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A ELIM #0?&#...

This column is going to deal primarily with other games and game related items which are floating around in the outside world. Among other things I will present my opinions and reviews of other zines which are not especially related to Diplomacy, and other games which are in existence.

First I would like to bring to your attention a Canadian company which sells some excellent games. They are House of Games, Ltd., Box 316, Don Mills Ontario, Canada. They will be happy to send you a catalog if you just write them and ask. I happen to enjoy a game called 4000AD, a space wargame they sell.

Any column dealing with games which doesn't mention Strategy and Tactics, isn't doing its job. For those of you who aren't acquainted with S&T, they are a New York based company which is responsible for about fifty percent of the war games now available. They designed many of the best Avalon Hill games, Origins, Panzerblitz, France 1940, Jutland, and 1914. Most of the games come from the mind of Jim Dunnigan, resident guru. S&T magazine comes out every other month with a complete game, an historical article concerning the game, and other goodies. S&T will cost you \$15.00 if you are a new subscriber, but when you consider that you get a game with each issue, it's not a bad price.

Coming out the month that S&T doesn't is Moves. Moves is primarily for discussing the games which the S&T group puts out. If you don't get S&T, then you wouldn't be interested in Moves. It discusses such items as game design, variations, and corrections. It will cost you \$7.00. You can get them both from Simulations Publications, Inc., 44 E 23rd St., New York, NY, 10010.

Next on the list comes Panzerfaust. This is a multi-type zine, which covers about every phase of gaming possible, from miniatures to Diplomacy. The greatest emphasis is on board games, but it also reprints articles from HA. Panzerfaust is published by Lowry's Hobbies, which has just moved to Maine. Their new address is P.O. Box C, Belfast, Maine, 04915.

Conflict is a new magazine put out by a group of wargamers in San Diego. They seem to have run into a few problems on their way to press. I received my first copy back in May, which contained an interesting game based on small group action in France, 1940. Then I didn't receive anything until the end of October. It appears that they are working on their problems and will be able to get out their zine. It's available for \$7.98 from

Simulations Design Corporation, 3347 Industrial St., Suite E, San Diego, Ca, 92121.

Last of all we come to the zine with which probably most of us started into wargaming, The General. It is basically a house organ for the Avalon Hill Company. I remember when I first recieved the General. I was totally amazed there was a whole world of fellow game freaks out there. I was no longer alone in the world. The General has either decreased in quality or I am no longer interested in reading the ultimate plan for beating your opponent. They have recently hired Donald Greenwood, former publisher of Panzerfaust, to help boster The General. Maybe things will improve. The General is available for \$4.98 from the Avalon Hill Company, 4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, Maryland, 21214.

This list is by no means complete, George Phillies has 52 zines listed in his compendium of wargame publications, published in Moves #3. But these are the major ones I will be referring to. Future columns will discuss what is in new issues of these zines and others, and new developments in the gaming world, plus any new games which I have bought, stolen, or managed to rip off from someone. Like everything else in this zine, if you have anything you wish to contribute, please feel free to.

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DIPLOMACY IS THE NAME OF THE GAME

One sees many fine articles about the various strategies and tactics involved in winning a game of Diplomacy. But deciding that you're going to form an alliance with Turkey against Russia is not going to do you any good if you get no response from Turkey.

How does one go about getting another player interested enough to join him? You don't start by sending the other player a list of moves you want him to make and say this is it fellow, take it or leave it. But that was a rather obvious example. Most people would instead write and suggest that perhaps Turkey would like to join them in a campaign against Russia. Then you might suggest some of the possible moves, but stress that these are just possibilities which can be changes. But you can even go a step futher and try to get Turkey to suggest the alliance to you. Any business man or lawyer can tell you, it's always better to get the other guy to suggest the deal to you. If you can get Turkey to make an offer to you, then you have more leeway in shaping the deal. After all, it was him that suggested it. When it comes to that time of the game when you feel the desire to turn of you former ally, you can have the satisfaction of knowing that he was the one who offered the alliance, not you.

Another important point is that all alliances should start out equally if the partners start out equally. when you and the other guy are working out the alliance, don't try and make everything work out to your advantage. If you do, you're going to end up with either an ally who really doesn't trust you, or worse, an ally who you've scared into becoming an enemy, because of your demands. You both have to give a little to get along. Don't ask an ally to do something which may jeopardize his relations with another country.

The most important factor in developing an alliance is to just be cool and slowly develope a good working alliance. If you can do this, there is no reason why your alliance can't possibly last the whole game with either you or your partner coming in first and the other second.

Well folks, we're going to get it all together sometime soon. This page is being typed a week later than the first six and last two pages. Already I've learned a lot from my mistakes. Maybe in a couple of issues, I'll entertain you with the story of my trials and tribulations of getting this thing of ours together. For instance, I've learned from using a piece of typing correction paper just for the last four sentences, that I'm going to have to let my wife do the typing, otherwise I'll go broke buying correction paper. I now know what I can fit on a page without losing any at the top or bottom. The printing this issue is also a bit lighter than the last issue. In case you couldn't tell, this is printed on a Gestetner. The stencil is cut electronically by a machine from a typed page. I do not touch the stencil machine, because my life was threatened if I did. But I will talk to the secretary who does operate it, and see what I can do about the problem. I do the actual printing, but it has been five years since I last ran the machine, and I am still getting used to the monster. My typewriter is also having a nervous breakdown. It is not used to so much use, so it will have to be taken away.

I am still working on the format of the zine. For instance, I didn't put anything close to the front about prices and games. So for those of you who have been searching through trying to find out about prices, I am sorry, it's right below. Another thing is that hopefully, you all wouldn't get this with an 8¢ due on it. I have been assured that six sheets of 20¢ paper will go through for one 8¢ stamp. If it doesn't, you can all come and work me over.

I would like to thank all the people who were thoughtful enough to write me letters of support and goodwill. I am getting a tremendous response, much more than I thought I would get. I hope that I can make this zine worth your while. I consider this thing to be partially yours. Therefore I urge you to tell me your reactions to what is in it. If there is something you don't like, tell me. If you do like something, for God's sake tell me, I need all the positive feedback I can get. Once again, if you have something you want to say, and you think that someone might want to hear it, send it to me. If you think of something that others might like to know about, tell me. If I don't know, I'll bother someone who does until they tell me, just to get me off of their back.

As a final note, to all you other publishers. Do us all a favor and write Conrad and tell him that you want to take an orphan game off of his hands. We can only make this thing work if we all pitch in and work together.

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Finally, until the next issue, due 12/11/72, I will continue to except subscriptions at the rate of 50¢ for issues 3-7. After that, the price will be 8/\$1.00. Games are available for \$4.00 with one dollar being returned if you do not drop out, and the winner being refunded his entire fee. The winner is defined as the person with the largest amount of supply centers, when the game is ended. As far as winner is concerned for rating or for any other reason, draws are perfectly alright. The house rules have been changed to correct the mistake.

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I have received some zines which have openings in them, since I wrote the earlier section.

WESTERN STAR-POST FREE PRESS, \$2.00 + sub, write Jim Benes, 164450
Honeysuckle #112, Hinsdale, Ill, 60521

VOICE OF THE NORTH, \$1.00 + sub, write Tom Tillison, 200 W 9th, Sault Ste
Miare, MI, 49783

ARRAKIS, \$4.00, John Leeder, Box 1606, Huntsville, Ontario, Canada

BIG BROTHER, \$7.00, Charles Reinsel, Box 8342, San Diego, CA, 92102

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Just out of curiosity, how does the Canadian postal code, I haven't figured it out yet?

THE SECOND GATHERING OF FOOLS

Once again I am happy to bring you a listing of adventuresous sould, who decided to take a chance on me. This is the first that these people know of their country assignments and opponents, so they will recieve a little longer to do the usual lying and backstabbing, know as Winter 00.

- England: James Facer, 2155 Carlson Drive, Willow Grove, Pa, 19090
- France: Ed Metcalf, 3026 Sheldon Jackson, Anchorage, Alaska, 99504
- Italy: Matthew Fultz, 629 Candlelite Court, Ft. Wayne, Ind, 46807
- Russia: Greg Novak, 819 W Lincoln, Apt#4, Charleston, Ill, 61920
- Austria: David Truman, 131 Dunn Ave, Apt 306, Toronto 150, Ontario, Canada
- Germany: Jack Moriarty, 120 White Oak Rd, North Wales, Pa, 19454
- Turkey: Bill Jarvis , 44 Dover Park, Rochester, NY, 14610

Preference List

There was a little more problem with this listing then with the last one. Only two people had unique first choices. There was a four way draw for England. After that was settled, then everything worked out ok.

Moriarty	<u>G</u> F T E I R A
Jarvis	E <u>F</u> T I R G A
Truman	no preference
Novak	E R <u>F</u> T A I G
Fultz	E <u>G</u> I A F R T
Metcalf	<u>F</u> E I A R T G
Facer	<u>E</u> F T R I A G

Winter 00 propaganda is due 12/8/72, if anyone cares to have any printed. Spring 01 moves are due 12/29/72 by 1200 hours EST.

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I want to thank everyone who submitted an answer to the question of where the title of this zine comes from. I have received over thiry answers, most of which were correct, or at least fairly close. The correct answer comes from the appendix of JRR Tolkien's trilogy, The Lord of the Rings. The answer appears in appendix A, The Numenorean Kings, Numenor, pp 388, volume 3. "He wrought the Three Jewels, the Silmarilli, and filled them with the radiance of the Two Trees, Telperion and Laurelin, that gave light to the valley of the Valar." It was the theft of these Jewels by Morgoth the Enemy which led to the start of the whole conflict which eventually ends with the trilogy. There were two other answers which were partially correct. One was that the Silmarilli refered to the Phial given Frodo by the Lady Galadriel. The Phial was filled with the light of Earendil's star. The star was his ship which bore the Silmaril which Beren and Luthien Tinuviel had wrested from the Iron Crown of Morgoth. Another answer was that it refered to the Silmaril mentioned by Aragorn at the council at Rivendale. There were two winners to the contest, having received their answers on the same day. They are Bill Jarvis of Rochester, NY, and Tom Kellar of New Albany, Ind.

While on the subject of Tolkien, I have at present three different versions of a Middle Earth variant. It will probably be two more issues before I get things worked out to run a game. If you want in a game, could you please send me a note saying so? Please don't send any money at this time, as I imagine that I will get more responses then I have room for.

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Concerning Election 72: I just hope that John Boardman is happy with what he's got. It will be interesting to see what Nixon does with an increased Democratic majority in the Senate, and a very resentful Republican Congressional caucus. One might also note what will happen to Jean Westwood, at the meeting of the Democratic National Committee. Odds are 5:3 in favor of her retaining her position as National Chairwoman.

AND STILL ANOTHER GAME

And we have yet another list of brave warriors, ready to do battle. Once again I am pleased to present a game. Here are the country assignments.

Germany: Michael Lind, 1411 Ashley St, Richmond, Va, 23231

Italy: Rich Stuart, 1292 Hietman Lane, Batavia, Oh, 45103

France: Bruce Chin, 628 Melrose Dr, Salinas, Ca, 93901

England: John McKeon, 88-00 Shorefront Pkwy, Rockaway, NY, 11693

Austria: Patrick Lancaster, 3440 Carriage Hill Circle, Randallstown, Md, 21133

Turkey: John DePrisco, Box 502, Manor Branch, New Castle, Del, 19720

Preference List

All preference lists should be so easy to work out. Six out of the seven got their first choice, the seventh got his third. That's not to bad.

Lind	G T E F R A I
Stuart	I F R E G T A
Chin	F R T A G E I
Fleming	R F G I A E T
McKeon	E R F T A I G
Lancster	T G A I E R R
DePrisco	T F I E G R A

Winter proganda is due 12/8/72. Spring 01 moves are due 12/29/72 at 1200 EST.

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The next page and a half will be devoted to some biographies which I have available and can fit in the remaining space.

Doug Dick: I am 21 and a science fiction freak, have a collection of 300 books. I model AFV's and collect stamps with a passion. At present I'm employed as a carpenter trying to save enough money to continue my education next spring.

Art Schlemkoffer: I was first introduced to Diplomacy while stationed in Munich in the army, since then I've become an addict. Now I am a civilian again, attending La Salle College in Phil. and working as an adjudicator in the local Veterans Administration. Hobbies include geology, sex, and politics. I am 25 years old, and have so far remained single.

Tim Kelly: I am 15 years old, and besides Diplomacy, I enjoy playing Panzerfaust. I also play the Tuba, the best, most important instrument in the band. I read a lot, and am desperately trying to form a strategy and wargames club at high school, but have not been able to find any sponsors. I also receive S&T.

Jim Carlson: I am 21, currently attempting to graduate from Oklahoma State U with a BS in business. I started Diplomacy about three years ago. I am a member of USCF and am trying to better my chess game. I have few other loves in life except chess and Diplomacy, they connect the study of history, drinking, gambling, and women(not necessary in that order).

Patrick Walker: I am 23 years old, married, and a graduate in zoology from I.U. At present I am a junior at Indiana University Medical School in Indianapolis. I have been interested in war games for several years, but Diplomacy certainly ranks near the top as far as competition and pure gamemanship are concerned. Presently I am working about 80 hours/week on the Medical Service at University Hospital. Supposedly it is the hardest part of Medical School, and I believe it. The only saving grace is that it is also the most fun.

Before I continue with the biographies, I'd like to stick in a personal note. Many of you, along with sending in your money, wrote some interesting letters. I'm sorry that up till now I have not had time to write many of you back. But I have been receiving up to 20 letters a day, plus getting this thing going, plus being in six Diplomacy games, plus eleven other PEM games, plus working, plus school(boo). Now that my mail has slowed down, I am starting to catch up. So don't feel that I'm ignoring you if I haven't responded to something you said in a letter. There might be a little longer delay, if I take this monster of a typewriter in and have it fixed. For those of you who have seen my real typing and think it's bad, you should see my handwriting.

Tim Kutta: I am 20 years old. Am currently attending Lock Haven State College in Pa. Where I am majoring in Liberal Arts-History. I am currently a junior and upon graduation I shall go on active duty with the Marine Corps as a second Lieutenant. I have been playing Diplomacy for about two years. My interests include wargames and airplanes.

Mike Lind: For the last two and a half years I have attended Virginia Commonwealth University. I was a Physics major, but a major in business seems to be overtaking my former Physics major, but the old spark for science remains. Games, books, and model aircraft occupy my spare moments away from my job as an accounting clerk. I am twenty years old, and for now, single. I guess I'm obsessed with games.

Rick Stuart: Age nineteen years, and presently a student of structural drafting. Interests range from Gaelic heraldry and Napoleonic to such things as chess, Russian history and being a part time fan of the Green Bay Packers. And I am usually 90% of the time totally bananas over tennis.

Bruce Chin: I am seventeen and was born in Salinas, CA, and have been here since. I am a senior at Salinas High. Presently my only other hobby besides Diplomacy is wargames, which I've been fooling around with for two years.

John DePrisco: I'm 27 years old. I'm a vet who did over 2 years in swingin' England, along with 3 months in both France and Germany. I'm a community college graduate majoring in data processing. I am currently employed by Atlantic Aviation Corporation of Wilmington, Del. I create confusion in the data center of AAC. My hobbies, other than Diplomacy, are reading, bowling, sex, chess, amateur photography, stereo systems, and sports.

John McKeon: I'm 21 years old, and am presently going to Brooklyn College, majoring in History. I've been playing Diplomacy for three years, but have only recently found out about the PEM community. I also enjoy playing chess, wargaming, and golf.

John Facer: I am 24, and am currently working for a financial advisory co. as an account executive. After completing a BS in Finance at Penn State U(minor in drinking), I spent two years in the army as a lieutenant, and was executive officer for an infantry combat support company. I have been wargaming for 2 years, mainly with A-H games.

Ed Metcalf: I am 15, a student at East Anchorage High School, and am an avid chess player. I also enjoyed the Tolkien Trilogy.

Matthew Fultz: I am 22, tall, dark, and handsome, urbane, sophisticated, and generally known as a man about town. I attended 2 years at I.U. including a semester at Bloomington. I work as a masonry contractor and hope to start general contracting soon.

A GUIDE TO RATING SYSTEMS
PART I

To start off the series of articles concerning rating systems, we'll begin with serializing Arn Vagts' article on ratings. This article will help provide us with an analitical framework with which to examine the various systems. I believe that Arn's article has previously appeared in ANTARES. So if you have seen it before, bear with those of us who haven't.

A rating is any system used to evaluate players; they can be based on almost anything from personal popularity (Beyerlein Poll, Hoosier Archives Publishers' Poll, and Gamers Guide Poll) to simply the total number of games played. If the purpose of a rating is to rank players on "skills" or proficiency of play, then it will become clear that most of the rating systems used today are worthless. The criterion for evaluating rating systems discussed here will be simply this: does the system realistically and consistently rank players according to their skill? Of course, the problem of determining a standard for differentiating player's relative skill without using a rating system was what the rating system was created to measure. This problem can be solved in two ways: (1) show how hypothetically "poor" players can place high on bad ratings and (2) show that players, who "experiences" players agree are poor, do place high on such ratings.

It seems to me that the following are necessary, and sufficient, conditions with which to determine a players' skill:

- (1) Total point count of individual game.
- (2) Number of games played.
- (3) Number of players and game outcome (placing).
- (4) Rating of country played (country strength).
- (5) Rating of opponents.
- (6) Limited memory (later games have more effect on your rating).
- (7) Restrictions on standbys.

Perhaps some comments are required to justify inclusion of some of these variables into a rating. The "placing" of a player: this is a philosophical question in the main, however, if a game is considered to be an n-player tournament, then being the second country eliminated is better than the first eliminated; one wished to equeeze as much information as possible out of a game (since relatively few games are played-it could take perhaps two years to finish a postal game) and it clearly is a waste to say a game has one winner and everyone else loses equally. Players perhaps would not be quite so anxious to resign or quit with the additional incentive of placing.

Some countries are inherently stronger than others, and as game statistics are compiled, less credit should be given for a win with a strong one. The same holds regarding players: less credit should be given for beating a "weak" (much lower rated) player. In the long run this is averaged out, but it requires many, many games to do so. The problem is equivalent to asking how many times it is necessary to flip a coin before half of them show "heads" except our "coin" has seven sides rather than two and it takes a long time to flip it.

The sequence to games played and limited memory concepts are important: a player who loses his first five games then wins the next five should be rated much higher than a player who wins his first five and loses his next five, everything else being equal. This is comparable to the 10-moving average in the stock market, the average growth of a stock over its entire history is usally not as useful as its current growth.

It is currently the practice to award points to replacement players if they win but not to penalize them should they lose; this is justified on the basis that the vast majority of replacement positions are lost ones and it is difficult enough to get standbys without causing them to score a probable loss. Fine, but this can artificially increase a plauers score, e.g. a player gets into 100 standby positions and wins 10 (which is about par). If he plays no other games than he has a straight 10 game winning streak! This is true regardless of the rating used. Something like this has actually happened, the player is in the top ten in most ratings yet he has little capability and may never be able to win a game on his own. This loophole can be reduc:d by restricting the total points recieved from standby games to not exceed those recieved from games in which the player has started.

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Part II will have an examination of two different types of rating systems. Total Point Count (TPC) and Averaged TPC. Part three will hopefully begin our examination of actual rating systems using the framework provided by Arn.

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To close out this issue, I would like to include one question from a quiz which first appeared in Stan Wrobel's JASTRAE. This question broke me up when I read it.

When asked if you knew you were playing Austria to Edi Birsan's Russia and John Smythe's Turkey, you reply:

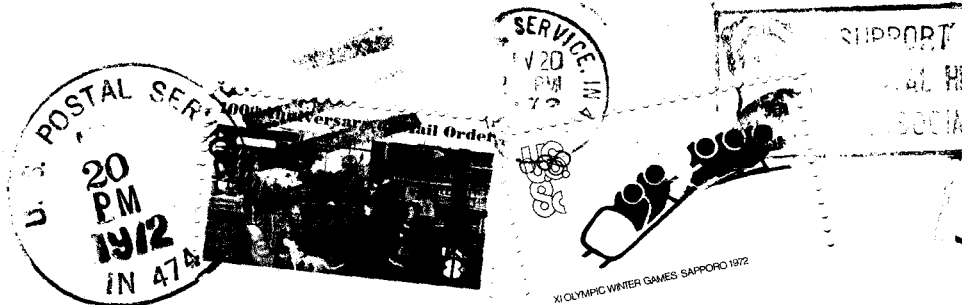
- a) "For this I paid \$5.00?"
- b) "Are there any new games opening up?"
- c) "Who are Birsan and Smythe?"
- d) "They seem like very trustworthy novices."

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Well, that's about all there is, so I'll close with those immortal words of the schnozz himself, "Goodnight Mrs Calabash, where ever you are!"

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