

SPRING OFFENSIVE No. 35



A postal Diplomacy zine, available every five weeks or so from:
Stephen Agar, 79 Florence Road, BRIGHTON, East Sussex, BN1 6DL.
Tel. 01273-562430, email CIS 100276,775 or spoff@demon.co.uk.
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SPRING OFFENSIVE



ISSUE 35 (July 1995)

The Spring Offensive Editorial Board

Stephen Agar (Editor): 79 Florence Road, Brighton, East Sussex, BN1 6DL. Tel. 01273-562430.

Paul Barker (GM Fin de Siecle and Latina America) 30 Kelston Road, Worle, Weston - super - Mare, BS22 0FD. 01934 512500

Haz Bond (GM Deluge and Diplomacy: The Gathering in his sub-zine Swanee Whistle.) Longfield, Watling Street, Gailey, Stafford, ST19 5PR

John Boocock (Tournament Director for the Intimate Diplomacy Tournament): 25 Melrose Drive, Old Fretton, Peterborough, PE2 9DN. Tel. 01733-340755

Shaun Derrick (Editor of sub-zine, Globe-trotter.) 313 Woodway Lane, Walsgrave, Coventry, CV2 2AP

Graham Staplehurst (GM War of the Ring): Graham can be contacted at c/o Yann Campbell Hoare Wheeler, 11 Princes Street, St. Kilda, Victoria 3182, Australia. Tel. +613 9537 2255 (home); (work fax). +613 9534 4373.

Steve Watts (no relation) (Railway Rivals GM): Lesh Lane Post Office, 124 Lesh Lane, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA13 9EQ. Tel. 01229-432797.

Editorial

I suppose some of you think this issue is late. Well, you're wrong. The deadline was early! Unfortunately, last issue had two deadlines on it - the one on the front cover said 24th June (which was the deadline I was aiming at), but when the zine got delayed I put it back to 1st July to preserve your diploming time, which was duly noted on the back page. Unfortunately I forgot to correct the cover (which was printed in advance) which meant that half of you submitted orders a week early. Well, at least that makes a change! With luck this issue should be back to normal turnaround of 5 days or so from deadline to post (not quite up to TIM or TCP standards, I know, but remember, I'm pushing middle age).

One clear indication of getting old is the fact that now that I am faced with three choices: (1) stay up for another hour and make do with 5 hours sleep; or (2) delay the zine by two days; or (3) leave the maps blank and get you lazy buggers to fill them in yourselves, I have decided to opt for No.3. When I was 19 I could cope with essay crises at college, now, at 34, I'm just too old for that sort of thing anymore...

John Miller has announced the results of the 1994 Gladys Awards and Spring Offensive has been duly honoured by being voted Best Zine, Best Zine for Diplomacy and Variants, Best Zine for Hobby News and Best Lettercolumn. WOW! I am of course thrilled - my only question is that now Spring Offensive has been voted Best Zine for three years in a row, do I get to keep it? Many thanks to all who voted and thanks to John for running it, despite having a host of other troubles to contend with.

Other winners were On The Game - Best Zine for Other Games, SNOT - Best new Zine; Cut & Thrust - Best looking Zine; Smodnoc - Most regretted Fold; Toby Harris - Best GM. Well done all.

I know this has nothing to do with postal games etc. but when I was driving to Swindon this morning I heard the news that this Government has released Lee Clegg. Am I the only person in the country who thinks this is an utter disgrace? What other convicted murderer is released after only 4 years? His supporters claim he is innocent - but so did the supporters of the Guildford Four or the Birmingham Six. There are many celebrated miscarriages of justice which have not been righted, and yet they release Clegg after a media campaign of a couple of months!

And what's all this about him being 100% innocent? The media has almost completely overlooked the fact that three of Clegg's comrades were found guilty of conspiracy to pervert the course of justice over the cover-up which was organised. For those of you who have forgot, as soon as the soldiers realised they'd gone over the top, they tried to concoct a defence of self-defence, even injuring one of their own number so they could allege the injury was caused by the joyriders. Unfortunately the members of the RUC who witnessed the event told the truth. Is this the action of innocents??

The final straw was the revelation from the Secretary of State for Defence that he may be allowed to go back to his old Regiment, as he wants. This on the same day as another of the news stories is the continuance of the ban on gays in the armed forces! That means that a closet gay can't serve in the army, but a convicted murderer can! This is a crazy society indeed.

I should be at ManorCon, though at the time of writing this I haven't booked! Can I make a late plea for players to make up a Spring Offensive team for the Diplomacy contest - at least 4 needed, so far there's just me, Stewart Cross and Steve Cox. Telephone me if you're going to be there and you're interested.

Chris Palm mentioned the idea of some zines getting together and agreeing to guarantee each others games - a kind of a ABTA Scheme for postal Diplomacy. I think there is much merit in the idea, as it would not only lead to more efficient ways of dealing with zines that go AWOL (anyone seen Nothing to Declare?), but it may also give us a handle to use in promoting the hobby. I really don't; think that there is anything to lose by considering the idea seriously. Any comments?

Well, I'm just finishing off the zine now, filling in the odd space here and there, cutting out the odd letter or article to make the zine take up an exact even number of pages, and on the radio all there're talking about is John Major. You've got to admit that the Tory Party was in an impossible situation - John Major can probably hold the party together by being wimpish and conceding things

to the Right, but his government since the last election has been a complete disaster, especially given the bunch of incompetents in the cabinet. A charismatic leader such as Michael Heseltine would probably do better at the Polls, but would split the Party as the Portillo freaks would go bananas. the same in reverse also applies, save that I refuse to concede that Michael Portillo could ever be described as charismatic. In the end they've opted for the least worst choice, and Tony Blair will be laughing all the way to No.10 Downing Street.

Even as a Labour Party member of 18 years standing, I have to be a little alarmed by the rush of New Labour to embrace the values of "Middle England" (whatever that is). I feel torn. My head tells me that that is the right thing to do, that some Tory policies have worked after a fashion (e.g. privatising BT, TU ballots - though the later was actually stolen from In Place of Strife) and it is better for the country for Labour to come in and make a better job of running the country. However, my heart is still wedded to The Red Flag, Clause IV and the re-distribution of wealth. The problem is the Working Classes seem to prefer buying Council Houses and the smack of a handbag round their ears. No doubt Tony will only be too glad to oblige. Oh well, I do firmly believe he will make a better Social Democrat PM than any member of the Gang of Four (remember them?).

One advantage of a multi-media PC is that you can use the CD Rom drive to play CD's while you work. One disadvantage with having all the CD's downstairs is that you can never be bothered to change what you're listening to. I shudder to think how many times I've listened to Elvis Costello's Kojak Variety (which I don't rate that highly), Tom Robinson's Living in a Boom Time or (dare I admit it) Don McLean's American Pie. It must be 10 times each. Here it goes again... *A long, long time ago, I can still remember how that music used to make me smile. And I knew if I had my chance, that I could make those people dance, and maybe they'd be happy for a while...*

Forthcoming Cons

MANORCON XIII

21 - 24 July 1995 at Lake Hall, Birmingham University. £12 convention fee, £20 per single room per night, . details from Peter Sullivan, 55 Brunton Street, Darlington, Co. Durham, DL1 4EN.

MidCon 95

10 - 12 November 1995 at the Royal Angus Thistle Hotel, Birmingham. Details to be announced. Contact Brian Williams, 30 Rydding Lane, Millfields Estate, West Bromwich, West Midlands, B71 2HA.

MASTERCON III

Shaun Derrick writes...

23-25 February 1996. MasterCon will return to the Kings Head in Cirencester for one more year. Rooms will be £26.00 per single and £23.80 per person in a shared room. This will include VAT & breakfast. Registration fee is only £8.00. More information will follow, but there will be a 3 round Diplomacy tournament, an Intimate Diplomacy tournament and Skittles tournament.

ZINES /// ZINES /// ZINES /// ZINES /// ZINES

One Man's Rubbish is a spanking brand new zine from Mark Stretch of 2 Over Mill Drive, Selly Park, Birmingham, B29 7JL. Issue 1 is free and future issues will be £1 per issue. A4 photocopied. With the recent appearance of **TIM** and now the emergence of **OMR** (both zines being produced by ex-**Springboarders**) things are indeed looking up on the Diplomacy scene. After a dearth of new zines for some considerable time, we now have two zines launched within 3 months of each other which have all the hallmarks of future success stamped upon them. Mark is not a newcomer to this hobby, he's been around for several years, playing games, attending cons, and notably running the Oxford University Diplomacy and Board Games Society. So he knows what he's letting himself in for. Issue 1 has many of the things you'd expect - House Rules etc., but points of note include a review of **Ausgebremst** (Formula One racing game), Railway rivals tactics article, some Diplomacy analysis, a reprint of a hobby scam and (would you believe) a history of Motorsport 1894-1906 (!). Still all good zines need one eccentricity or another. Mark has put together a Diplomacy gamestart for his first issue (always a good idea if you are starting a zine) and he has lists open for Diplomacy, United, Railway Rivals, Breaking Away and is open minded on the question of Dip variants. Get in at the beginning and ask Mark for a free copy of issue one today.

Well, **The Mag With No Name** isn't exactly new, given that the issue I have in front of me has "No.11" on it, but it's newish with regard to the mainstream Diplomacy hobby and as Ian Willey has been kind enough to send me a sample it deserves a mention. This issue is A5 booklet photocopy, cost 25p + postage (which is very cheap), frequency 6-weekly. The zine describes itself as "wargaming + role-playing + play by mail" so it may not be everyone's cup of tea, but it does at least provide a welcome alternative to the other zines around which carry Diplomacy games. That said, it does appear that Ian is being sucked into the Diplomacy scene as this issue has reviews of **TIM** and **Megalomania**, and even a mini-article on Diplomacy opening theory from Martin Burroughs (which appears to be in response to an article in the previous issue). Role-playing is represented by *How to win at Cthulhu*, some live role-playing rules and games such as *Day of the Triffids* and *RVDIS* (a gladiatorial combat game). Not much mention of wargaming this issue, but apparently issue 10 was mainly wargaming and no fantasy. The Diplomacy games were being GM'd by James Brown, but they've now been taken over by Ian - at present there is 1 regular games in progress and almost a list full for the second, together with a couple of minor map change variants. If you're interested in the mix of topics that Ian seeks to cover, write to him at 15 Metro Avenue, Newton, Alfreton, Derbyshire, DE55 5UF and enclose two 25p stamps for a sample.

Although a little late and by Mick Haytack's own admission a little disjointed, there were a couple of entertaining pieces in **Bloodstock** No.87. I enjoyed Mick's profile of Maxwell Woosnam (Olympic Gold & Silver, Wimbledon

Champion, captain of the England football team, captain of the British Davis Cup team). If only his career had been in the 1980's instead of the early 1920's he would have been a very rich man indeed. The other piece to strike a chord was Mick's description of his recent gardening exploits which just made me break out in a cold sweat. I can imagine little worse than gardening (save perhaps for vigorous and prolonged physical exercise) but I can just about live with experiencing it vicariously. Mick Haytack, 43 Swanmore Road, Littleover, Derby, DE23 7SD

Issue IV of **The Ides of March** came out dead on time - how does Chris manage to get it copied and posted by the Monday after the deadline. I suspect it has to be a **Smodnoc** solution, i.e. photocopying at work at weekends, but maybe I'm wrong. Anyway, this issue is pretty much up to the standards of the last - lots of letters, a bit more from Richard Sharp's book, some history articles (Bannockburn, Roman Diplomacy) and a debate on smoking. The numbers of games are creeping up (9 already). Difficult to criticise this zine - it's very readable (especially if you like the history article and the Debating Club device) and deservedly popular. The hobby needs people like Chris, whatever Danny Collman may say. Chris Palm, 45 Cecil Avenue, Ardleigh green, Hornchurch, Essex, RM11 2NA.

A Little Original Sin continues to impress, and issue 32 was no exception. Any zine which says that people who don't subscribe to **Spring Offensive** would be "missing out" has to be OK in my book. Like the last **Spring Offensive** this issue of **ALOS** was a little late (due to accountancy things called revenue reports, statutory accounts and nominal ledgers, not to mention wild partying), but what the hell, we all have to live a little. In the letter column the resident John Redwood clone in the **ALOS** subscriber list (a.k.a. Alan Frost) speaks his mind as usual ("*Intelligent women are now so busy with their careers that they are delaying their families or not even bothering. meanwhile, their less capable sisters are living at home with the unemployed thickos they marries (who've been put out of work by clever women) and breeding like rabbits. Result: the average intelligence of the population drops through the floor...*") and even Vick himself confesses to visiting a women's loo for a "small multicultural / sexual congregation of six in a cubicle for a speedy snogging session." Why do I never get invited to parties like that? Honourable mention must also be made of Peter Haslehurst's **The Dissecting Room** sub-zine which is already up to issue 16 and as yet there is no sign of it becoming a zine in its own right. Pity. Vick Hall, 115a Offord Road, Islington, London, N1 1PQ (and Vick hates it if you forget the postcode).

Realpolitik is not a zine which has been mentioned much in these pages, as Guy Thomas has been winding it down for some time. Indeed, with the recent arrival of issue 100 Guy has announced a fold. However, **Realpolitik** cannot be allowed to pass away without a mention for an excellent final issue, or without recording the thanks of the entire postal Di-

plomacy community for Guy's efforts and support over the past ten and a bit years. **Realpolitik** won the Zine Poll in 1988 (the first year it had achieved sufficient votes to qualify) and so is a member of a very small select club indeed. Issue 100 is some 50 pages long and mainly consists of photocopied extracts of Guy's editorials throughout the history of the zine - together they tell an absorbing story of the varied experiences of life, the highs and the lows. Congratulations Guy, may you enjoy your much-earned retirement. And come back soon.

Another hobby leading light who's retiring this month is Fred C Davis Jr., the renowned US variant designer and zine publisher. Fred joined the postal Diplomacy hobby back in 1968, starting publication of his variant-only zine **Bushwacker** in 1972 which continued regular production up to 1991 and issue 234. Fred founded **Diplomag** (the newsletter for the US Mensa Diplomacy SIG) in 1974, passing it on to others from 1981-85, and publishing it himself again for the past ten years. Issue 124 of **Diplomag** is Fred's last, and so ends 23 years of continuous Diplomacy zine production. Fred's contribution to postal Diplomacy on the variants side has been massive - far too much to detail here (maybe I could persuade Fred into writing an article on the variants scene over the years) - and we can't let this opportunity slip by without saying a big Thank You for all that Fred has achieved. Thanks, Fred.

The fact that Pete Birks includes a news clipping on the front of **Greatest Hits** No.193 on the subject of "road rage" brings to mind the TV programme on the same subject that I watched last night. Most of the film consisted of interviews with drivers who have been the "victims" of such incidents, but as the BBC cleverly conducted all the interviews while the interviewees were in the process of driving, we were able to see first hand how these people reacted to others on the road themselves. The protestations of some drivers about how badly they had been treated looked a little hollow when they were effing and Blinding at other road users themselves. It made you wonder if there wasn't two sides to some of the stories. That is not to say that some of the incidents weren't truly horrifying - indeed, in Portsmouth recently one driver was almost killed when another driver attacked him with an axe. What is it about driving which brings out mindless violence in some people, and why has it got worse recently? I bet it's all Margaret Thatcher's fault.

Anyway, back to **GH**. Lots of letters this issue, including interesting contributions from Neil Rowlands, Jonathan Palfrey and even Peter Northcott (editor of the long defunct **Last Stand**). The letter from Geoff Challenger was most revealing in that he confesses that he contemplated starting to run another Diplomacy zine. Go for it Geoff! Don't let the Diplomacy put you off - I can adjudicate 17 games in an evening thanks to Stewart Cross's program - and the new one which will be available at ManorCon (plug) is written for windows and automatically produces maps in BMP format.

ZINES /// ZINES /// ZINES /// ZINES /// ZINES

Stewart will only be taking a few copies, so ring him to reserve one (0171-359-0107). Don't know the price yet - probably £10-£15 to allow Stewart to recover his costs. The disc will also include the most up to date version for DOS as well. Pete Birks, 181 Friern Road, East Dulwich, London, SE22 0BD.

Per Wrestling sent me a copy of issue 36 of Lepanto 4-Ever, a Swedish zine written predominantly in English. A while ago L4E was the premier Swedish zine, with a strong international following, but standards have slipped of late, Per only managing 3 issue in the past year. However, in a spark of enthusiasm Per has decided to get out of the doldrums and put the zine back on its feet. I'm now trading with Per so I'll let you know how things develop. Per Wrestling, Ostanvagen 10, S-61135, Nyköping, Sweden. Email pow@lysator.liu.se.

As TCP No.30 only arrived this morning, it would be a shame not to mention it. Neil expresses amazement that Ian Harris can allow Borealis to take so long to turn around, saying that he'd go up the wall if TCP wasn't done by the Wednesday after the deadline. Well, I used to feel that way - guilt would drive me to keep typing away until 3.30am, despite having to get up and go to work, just to get the zine to the printers by Tuesday. But after 3 years of publishing and with a baby daughter who gets more and more fun to play with every day, well it just doesn't seem THAT urgent anymore and the guilt is all a little less. The 5 week deadlines for the moment are probably a good thing because it means if the zine takes a week to get out, then the games don't suffer. Chris Palm seems to be similarly affected to Neil - so far TIM has been in the post on the Monday following the deadline (though that doesn't beat Smodnoc's deadline Friday, in the post on Saturday). It's fine being a guilt-tripping speed freak, but I reckon that sooner or later you have to learn to pace yourself or you run out of puff. That said, if Spoff was ever 3 weeks late (as some zines seem to be practically every issue), then I think I'd consider it folded.

Mopsy No.111 was a little thin and I only mention it to say that Bryan needs a bit of cheering up on the zine front. Recent issues have been a bit empty of content and enthusiasm - so why not write to Bryan and ask for a sample and let's get Mopsy re-invigorated. I fear that unless Bryan gets some new blood and new energy then Mopsy may be in a terminal decline. Bryan Betts, 5 St. Francis Road, Denham Green, Middlesex, UB9 5JS.

I for one approve of the change in the format of U-Bend to A5. Haz's been using photo-reduction for 4 or 5 issues now and it manages to make his sense of layout look almost coherent. Certainly one of the more light-hearted and fun zines around, the absence of Joy Hibbert takes some of the over-seriousness and pretentiousness out of it. Haz spends less time posing and more time being himself, which is good. I particularly enjoyed Haz's review of the jackets he has in his wardrobe - the PVC jacket sounds particularly interesting... Haz Bond, Longfield, Watling Street, Gailey, Stafford, ST19 5PR.

For the record, Edoardo Mattei has sent me Turn Around No.2, which is the zine of the Italian Variants Bank, written in English. There are only 60 or so variants in the Italian Bank, but I may do some swapping with Eduardo to get the ones I don't recognise. Eddy also publishes Compendio Ars Diplomatica in both Italian and English. Edoardo Mattei, Viale Sartorio 95, I-00147, Roma, Italy.

Continuing this international theme, Making Love In A Canoe is the only zine I see from Canada. The density of the words on the pages with absolutely minimal margins would make Alan Parr proud. Brent McKee's article on terrorism in the USA in the wake of the Oklahoma bombing was thought provoking. I have never understood why the USA gets away so lightly when it comes to urban terrorism - that society seems to breed lone nutters who take their AK-47 to McDonalds, but not (until now) violent and organised political extremists. Maybe such atrocities will enable the US to better understand the attitude that the British Government has towards the IRA. There's always a lot to read in MALOC so if you want to see a Canadian perspective on life contact Brent McKee at 901 Avenue T North, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, S7L 3B9.

Some months it seems I see more foreign zines than UK ones. Perelandra is probably the most successful zine in the US hobby. Not for the first time, issue No.129 has one of those so ridiculously right-wing Letter column contributors that you would only get in the US. Christ, they can make Alan Frost look like a woolly liberal. Pete is far more even-tempered with these Newt Gringich clones than I would be. Pete Gaughan, 1236 Detroit Avenue #7, Concord, CA 94520-3651, USA.

Another substantial US zine is Doug Kent's Maniac's Paradise. Doug is a bit of a Superman, he does far too much for the US postal Diplomacy hobby for his own good, especially as he is now editor of Diplomacy World, but MP is as reliable as ever. I've lost track of all the subzines in MP so I won't try and list them all, but they are an eclectic bunch held together with Doug's wit and wisdom. Doug does a Zine Recap every issue which does at least give the reader a (very brief) oversight into the US hobby and that, coupled with the free comix with most issues, make MP a must have for international Diplomacy freaks. Doug Kent, 6151 Roylton Drive, Dallas, TX 75230, USA.

Another US zine is The Abyssinian Prince from Jim Burgess. In issue 160 Jim reviews Spring Offensive which is the first review of SpOff I think I've ever seen in a US zine. All in all a very favourable review - Jim is obviously a big Steve Cox fan - Steve take a bow! The only misunderstanding worth correcting is that Jim thinks I'm having a feud with Andy bate over the Walkerdine Zine Archive. That's not true. How is it possible to have a feud with someone who hasn't produced an issue of his zine for over two years and isn't really a member of the hobby anymore anyway. I just wish he'd passed the Zine Archive on to someone else before he went back into hibernation. Jim Burgess, 664 Smith Street, Providence, RI 02908-4327, USA.

Time for some UK zines for a change. Out-break of Heresy NO. 9 was entertaining and informative as usual. Nick's appreciation of Dinosaurs of the Lost World was certainly a labour of love. Steve Jones gets a letter printed in which he claims that Steve Thomas labelled him last issue. All good stuff. Nick Kinzett, 11 Daleway Road, Green Lane, Coventry, CV3 6JF.

Although it is not becoming a by-word for efficiency and fast-turnaround, Where Is My Mind? is certainly establishing a reputation for being a good all-round chattering classes loo read. And issue 6 is no exception. This is THE place in the Hobby to discuss Pulp Fiction (a brilliant film - Esme and I laughed a lot), Mini Coopers, the Bible, Lesbianism, Cannabis, World War II and fox hunting. Sounds a bit like the Grauniad doesn't it (apart from the Mini Coopers that is). An amusing zine which reads like Haz Bond on one of his mellow days. David Oya, 24 Kingsway, Banbury, Oxon, OX16 9NY.

Dave Tant sent me issue 27 of Sopwith Stats as he has kindly volunteered to take over the Sopwith games that Kris Morris was running. Players see the attached sheet for details. I've now sent all the orders I have on file to Dave and I will pass on the next adjudication direct to the players. As I have a copy of Sopwith I feel quite enthusiastic about running games in Spring Offensive - hence, I have reprinted the postal rules inside. Tom Tweedy has offered to GM games for us, and I certainly want to play. Let me know and I'll email Tom when we get six players. Dave Tant, 32 Nursery Avenue, Bexleyheath, Kent, DA7 4JZ.

Obsidian No.71 was a surprisingly chunky issue, after a spell of leanness. Flicking through my copy (avoiding the baby vomit on the cover) Alex's predict the Zine Poll results contest was won by Kim Head (which must bode well for Mission from God's future). Interestingly, two non-Spring Offensive subscribers predicted that Spring Offensive would win - thanks lads, if I knew where you lived I'd send you a sample. Obsidian came top among subscribers-only in the Zine Poll, write to Alex Richardson, 8 Kershaws Hill, Hitchin, Herts, SG4 9AQ to see if you would agree.

Another chunky issue arrived in the shape of Borealis No.25. Another editor who attended the Alan Parr School of Layout, but I enjoy it despite the eyestrain. The game of postal Sorcerer's Cave is a hoot, and if I had more time I'd run a game here. If you want to play Jon Lovibond's 1000 AD at a relaxed pace then contact Ian Harris, 3 Abbotside Close, Urpeth Grange, Chester-le-Street, Co. Durham, DH2 1TQ.

No space left. On The Game, Dipsomania, Back to the dark Ages, Megalomania, Springboard, Odarodle, LiES, Box frenzy and others will have to wait. Damn, not enough room left to mention Dolchstoß No.198. Life can be so unfair...

But February made me shiver, with every paper I'd deliver. Bad news on the doorstep, I couldn't take one more step...

THE UK ZINE POLL RESULTS (1973 - 1994)

Year	Pollster	Winner	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eight	Ninth	Tenth	Voiers
1973 ¹	RJW	Ethil the Frog	Mad Policy	Dolchstoß	1901 a.a.i.	War Bulletin	Gratei	Frigate	Our Enry	Son of Baileicus	Hannibal	14
1974	RJW	Dolchstoß	Mad Policy	Orion	1901 a.a.i.	Frigate	Fifth Column	= Comet & Hannibal		War Bulletin	Court Circular	34
1975	RJW	Dolchstoß	Mad Policy	1901 a.a.i.	Fifth Column	Hyperion	=Greatest Hits & War Bulletin		Relief	Lemming Express	Frigate	54
1976	RJW	Chimaera	1901 a.a.i.	Mad Policy	Jigsaw	Trojan Horse	Ad Nauseam	Bumm	He's Dead Jim	Rochante	Dolchstoß	69
1977	RJW	Chimaera	1901 a.a.i.	Jigsaw	Dolchstoß	Rats live on no evil star	Mad Policy	Greatest Hits	Ad Nauseam	Trojan Horse	Puppet Theatre News	111
1978 ²	MB	Dolchstoß	Ethil the Frog	Chimaera	Lemming Express	New Statsman	Tinamou	Jigsaw	1901 a.a.i.	Puppet Theatre News	Greatest Hits	151
1979 ³	MB	Greatest Hits	Puppet Theatre News	Chimaera	Mr Gladgrind	Pigmy	Fall of Eagles	Megalomania	Filbuster	Tinamou	Gallimaufry	133
1980	MB	Greatest Hits	Fall of Eagles	Puppet Theatre News	NMR!	Puity Rifo	Chimaera	Pyrrhic Victory	Megalomania	Tinamou	Filbuster	69
1981	RJW	Greatest Hits	Puppet Theatre News	NMR!	= Chimaera & Fall of Eagles			Pyrrhic Victory	Puity Rifo	Ode	Pyrrhic Victory	101
1982	RJW	Ode	Greatest Hits	Fall of Eagles	The Acolyte	NMR!	Watch Your Back	Ripping Yarns	Home of the Brave	Chantecler	Chimaera	101
1983	RJW	Greatest Hits	Mad Policy	The Acolyte	NMR!	Denver Glont	Hopscotch	Ode	Home of the Brave	Lokasenna	20 Years On	224
1984	RJW	Hopscotch	NMR!	Mad Policy	Die Poppel-Revue	Dolchstoss	Cut & Thrust	The Acolyte	The Church Mouse	Mach Die Spuhl	Take That You Fiend	258
1985 ⁴	RJW	Mad Policy	Dolchstoß	Home of the Brave	Hopscotch	Zine to be Believed	Denver Glont	Greatest Hits	War & Peace	Ode	Cut & Thrust	248
1986	JP	Home of the Brave	Dolchstoß	The Thing on the Mat	Take That You Fiend	Denver Glont	Zine to be Believed	Mad Policy	Vienna	Prisoners of War	Dib Dib Dib	194
1987	JP	War and Peace	Zine to be Believed	Cut & Thrust	Denver Glont	Prisoners of War	Vienna	Scorpio	Take That You Fiend	NMR!	Dolchstoß	339
1988	JP	Realpolitik	Zine to be Believed	Vienna	Cut & Thrust	Take That You Fiend	NMR!	Prisoners of War	Denver Glont	Ode	Dolchstoß	235
1989	IDB	NERTZ	Electric Monk	Realpolitik	Home of the Brave	Zine to be Believed	C'est Magnifique	Y Ddraig Goch	Dolchstoß	A Step Further Out	Take That You Fiend	197
1990	IDB	Electric Monk	Y Ddraig Goch	A Step Further Out	Realpolitik	Home of the Brave	Cut & Thrust	Dolchstoß	C'est Magnifique	Take That You Fiend	Ode	145
1991	IDB	Dolchstoß	Electric Monk	Greatest Hits	Arfle Barfle Gloop	Realpolitik	A Step Further Out	C'est Magnifique	S.F.C.P.	Cut & Thrust	Bloodstock	142
1992	IDB	Dolchstoß	Y Ddraig Goch	NERTZ	Spring Offensive	Take That You Fiend	C'est Magnifique	Age of Reason	Bloodstock	A Little Original Sin	Electric Monk	196
1993	IDB	Spring Offensive	Smodnoc	Cut & Thrust	Dolchstoß	A Little Original Sin	Y Ddraig Goch	The Cunning Plan	Up Around The Bend	Take That You Fiend	Age of Reason	136
1994	RD	= Spring Offensive & Take That You Fiend		Dolchstoß	Greatest Hits	The Cunning Plan	Back to the Dark Ages	Smodnoc	Cut & Thrust	Hopscotch	LIES	132

Save where noted below, the Zine Poll was calculated on a straight average vote calculation from 1974-1977, on the basis of a Preference Matrix from 1980-1983 and on a 75% Preference Matrix, 25% average vote from 1985 onwards.

¹ This Poll was run on a Positional System with every voter having to vote for 5 zines (no more, no less).

² These results were Mick Bullock's Positional System, not the average votes previously used.

³ In 1979 Mick Bullock did not issue any definitive results - here the average votes have been used as this system had more support among the general hobby at the time.

⁴ This time a Positional System was used, 1st position = 10 points, 10th = 1 point. Highest total of points wins.

THE OGRE'S DILEMMA

OR

HOW I LEARNED TO STOP WORRYING AND FOLD THE ZINE

by Geoff Challinger

The fold of Electric Monk has not been without its moments and misconceptions. But such is the way with folding a zine. No one sees it clearly or objectively at the time and that definitely includes the editor doing the folding.

As far as I'm concerned the deranged mental condition here is that of an editor going about his daily business of running a zine. The natural human behaviour pattern would be to avoid such an unnecessary and apparently masochistic business. The fact is, that for editors of games/Diplomacy magazines, the enjoyment that they obtain from running their zines exceeds the suffering which they have to undergo to get them into the public domain.

Let's face it the mere typing alone of a zine is a long task let alone the effort that has to be put in to come up with something remotely intelligible. GMing games and the effort of dealing with miscellaneous games and zine admin just add to the hassles, of course these days for most people the work pauses there whilst some kind person prints the zine for them. Work resumes on collation (sometimes), address labels and stamps and physically getting the zine out of the door.

The easing of the printing burden is one of the things which enables the zine to ever make it out of the door for a lot of editors and it's certainly one of the things which enable the large number of zines to reach issue 100 and beyond. Nothing is more soul-destroying and hence more fold-inducing than a mis-behaving duplicator. It just adds impotence to injury in that it buggers up your schedule and you are powerless to do anything about it.

So why do editors do it? For the same reason as train-spotters or aerobics-junkies or stamp-collectors do it. What keeps a person committed to a bizarre and pointless pursuit is that the pleasure they obtain, by, in the case of an editor, (a) being able to pontificate to others and/or (b) providing entertainment for others, outweighs the hassles which they have to go through and the time they have to put in.

A fold happens when that premise no longer holds, when an editor is simply not getting enough enjoyment out of running their magazine, or is getting enjoyment elsewhere or has an attack of modesty and no longer wishes to preach to the world (as if). Whatever the cause I have to see it as a return to sanity from a psychotic state rather than a going off the rails. Running a zine is just a phase you go through. The perfect solution for an editor on the way out is the controlled one, born of self-knowledge. Realising that it's never going to work for you again, you simply run off a copy of a recent address list and credit records and send it to the OGRE along with a cheque.

This flies in the face of human nature as far as I have ever experienced it -that's not to say there are not controlled folds but that they are not the norm. I guess we are all born feeling guilty. Can you imagine what it's like to be a Jewish/ Catholic working mother? Fortunately for the hobby, not many such are running zines, but we all have our share. For it's guilt which comes number 1 on the list of impediments to a decent fold. The outgoing editor wants to:

- a) get the credit list up to date because he's been neglecting the admin that has all gone pear-shaped in the last 6 months and no one else will understand it.
- b) get that Railway Rivals game sorted out because there was an error in turn 2 and it's now turn 6 and the racing will go wrong if it's not seen to.
- c) write notes for all the people who've supported him in the past
- d) ensure that the games go to good homes instead of being parcelled out in a way he would dislike.

Someone who feels guilty about their apparent inability to achieve these aims, will be finding it harder to achieve these ends because of that very guilt. The only way to purge this is to actually do it and the aim should be get the editor to do that of his own volition. Pressure to do the right thing increases guilt and reduces the chance that this will happen. Plus you have to recognise that editing a zine reinforces any element of cussedness in an editor. You spend your first 50 issues asserting your opinions through the pages of your magazine. When people start to voice criticism (however justified it might be) the knee-jerk reaction is "well, screw you".

Then there is the disturbing lack of self-knowledge which there is about. How deep is the malaise which one feels while grinding out a 'wall' issue? Is it temporary? If you are finding it hard to get around to sorting out that credit mess from 2 issues ago, is it because your heart is no longer in it? The only person who can know this is the editor himself and usually then only with hindsight.

What do the rest of us do about it? Well, what are the most important things to bear in mind in a fold?

- a) Keeping the games in motion with an enthusiastic and reliable GM.
- b) Keeping the interest of the ex-GM who may one day return to the hobby.
- c) Finding a compatible home for non-playing subscribers
- d) Getting credits returned to their rightful owners
- e) Blaming people.

I have folded more zines than most people have had vegetarian meals so can claim some expertise here. In most instances, the only one way that a zine can be rescued and at least the first 3 aims achieved is the help and on-hand assistance of a friend of the editor who is still within the hobby. When you're saddled with the guilt of being in the thick of a fold you don't want letters suggesting you sort things out. Phone calls are many times better, but you have to be wary of the personalities involved. Some people can cause mortal offence on the phone whilst ordering a Chinese, let alone put the case that the recalcitrant editor should stop being such a dick-head and hand over the reins now.

Some people can be teased out of their shell by post but your chances are much greater in person, or on the phone, where you can convince, cajole and above all, get the editor to accept self-imposed deadlines, along the lines of 'can I act unilaterally if the zine isn't out by the end of the month? You can also re-assure the editors of the very important facts that the games are pre-eminent and sorting out money comes a long way down the list.

This might seem hard to accept, but even at the elevated prices which zines charge these days, any editor who gets into double figures has given good overall service, even if he then folds and nicks the subs. Editors do not make a profit and have to put their time and effort in for free. If at the end of their time as an editor they are unable to fully reimburse the credits, they will usually have given sufficiently of their time for this not to be a problem, overall. That's not to say they shouldn't be reimbursing people, but that problems of getting credits repaid should not stand in the way of a smooth hand-over. Of course this is only looking at the generality and some people will be shafted more than others and dearly, a fiver's credit can mean more to a struggling student than it does to some fat rich git of an accountant or solicitor.

In the case of 95% of all folds things work out in the end. A new home is found, the money is returned and life goes on. But the pursuit of folding editors, intended to ensure that things don't go disastrously wrong, ends up delaying things instead of solving problems.

ENDGAME REPORTS

TREBIA

Regular Diplomacy. Zine: Spring Offensive. GM: Stephen Agar. Started: July 1993. Finished: November 1994.

	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08
AUSTRIA (Billy Stephen)	3	4	4	1	1	0			
ENGLAND (Richard Newby)	3	4	5	4	5	5	3	1	0
FRANCE (Andrew Feather)	3	5	5	6	8	10	13	15	18
GERMANY (Dave Allen)	3	4	4	3	1	1	0		
ITALY (Jonathan Grose)	3	4	5	6	5	7	8	10	12
RUSSIA (Tony Hastings)	4	6	6	8	7	3	2	2	0
TURKEY (David Rowbotham)	3	4	5	6	7	8	8	6	4

dropped out A07

Andrew Feather (France) - Winner

At the beginning of this game I was lucky in that both England and Italy both approached me with friendly guarantees of neutrality. From this I was able to suggest a 3-way pact which would sweep east, which was warmly welcomed by both England and Italy.

At first, I was very co-operative, putting the interests of my allies above my own, e.g. by supporting Italy into Mun and allowing England a temporary loan of Bre to give him an extra build (which he failed to order!). This was very risky but it allowed me to see the playing styles and personalities of my allies. While both England and Italy are both loyal players, England was weaker in that he failed to order crucial retreats and builds.

By 1904-5 the central powers of Germany and Austria were out, squeezed by the E/F/I alliance in the west and Russia and Turkey (who never co-operated together). At this stage Russia had over-expanded and was very thin in depth. I managed to woo Turkey into the E/F/I alliance and we all hit Russia for a build each.

By this time England was deeply committed against Russia in the north and I gambled that the last thing he'd expect would be a stab. As a very risky move I grabbed NTH in the spring which had the effect of isolating half his forces in Scandinavia. At this stage England and Russia should have negotiated a peace, but as happens quite often, England was tempted by the easy gains to be made from Russia and took Moscow, thus digging his hole deeper. By this stage I was vulnerable to an attack from Italy had he wanted to do it, but again luck stuck. Turkey went into anarchy, tempting Italy with easy gains in the east, rather than against me.

In summary, I won this game by knowing my opposition and assessing their styles. It helped that the eastern board was negligible in asserting its domination when it had it, which enabled it to become a "soft" target as the focus of all the attention.

Finally, I have to say this: both Tony and Richard gained a lot of my respect for the way they stayed with the game, sending orders in to the end. Not many would have done that. By doing so they probably delayed a French victory by a year or two - who knows?

GM (Stephen Agar):

Congratulations to Andrew on an impressive victory. I was slightly surprised that Richard didn't see the stab coming, but by the time it did there was very little he could do about it. I kept hoping that Italy would challenge France, but Jonathan left it too late. Turkey's disappearance did not so much as imbalance the game, as hasten a result which was looking increasingly inevitable. Getting to 18 centres in 16 moves is pretty impressive, given that Andrew didn't have a drop out to make things easy for him. Well done.

YARMUK

Regular Diplomacy. Zine: Spring Offensive. GM: Stephen Agar. Started: November 1993. Finished: April 1995.

	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07
AUSTRIA Allan Stagg	3	4	3	3	1	1	0	
ENGLAND Dave Horton	3	5	7	8	10	10	11	12
FRANCE Ian Rose	3	5	3	2	0			
GERMANY Nigel Quinn	3	5	6	6	7	6	4	4
ITALY Chris Brann	3	4	6	7	9	10	11	10
RUSSIA Tony Hyland	4	5	4	3	3	3	3	2
TURKEY Edward Board	3	4	4	4	4	4	5	6

Victory was conceded to England after Autumn 1907.

Dave Horton (England) - Winner

This was my first attempt at England and I very much enjoyed it. At first I decided I'd prefer if possible to ally with Germany than France, and Nigel seemed very amenable. 1901 went extremely well as after getting into ENG I managed to second-guess Ian and got into Brest, so France was already on the ropes. In fact Ian never wrote again after 1901, which was a shame.

Nigel had irritated Tony in Russia by denying him Sweden, and Tony moved an army to Sil. This really seemed to throw Nigel. Perhaps too he was concerned about my progress, but while I wanted an all-out swift destruction of France, he decided to backtrack. This isn't my style at all and it bugged me, along with his penchant for changing orders at the last minute. Mind, he later told me I do the same thing; it's funny how you notice others' faults! When in Autumn he made what I suspected to be a deliberate misorder (he later admitted it) it appeared the alliance wasn't worth continuing.

In the South Tony and Allan (Austria) had very close addresses, so most jumped to the conclusion that they would be allies (which they vehemently and ineffectually denied.) Therefore Nigel and I encouraged the alliance of Turkey and Italy, so that there would be an even balance there while we carved up France. Unfortunately even though Edward (Turkey) forgot to build in 1901, Italy (Chris) played masterfully and by skillful diplomacy tricked Russia into turning on Austria. Neither ever recovered, while Italy bloomed.

Therefore by 1903 I had decided to turn on Germany but a front-runner had also emerged in Italy. France was stubbornly defending while to my chagrin he allowed Chris to waltz into his centres unopposed. My stab on Germany wasn't great as he sussed me out and this was the low point of the game for England. When I decided Italy's growth had to be curbed whatever the cost and stole Spain, I was at war with every one of my neighbours. Yikes!

Fortunately it was possible to drive back Germany into Russia in 1904/1905 and finish off France, while in choosing to retake Spain Chris lost his opportunity to break through into MAO, which could have been devastating. Thus I managed to blockade the entrance to the Atlantic and persevered against Nigel. But the crux was Turkey. He was Italy's loyal ally, but while Chris had destroyed Austria and advanced West, by 1905 Edward still had only four centres to Chris' nine. This I think was Chris' fatal mistake; you can't be too greedy with an ally, can you? In order to have a chance I had to get Edward to change camps. This was done to my joy, but by extremely devious means, for which I apologise to Edward for misleading him and to Chris for slandering him. To set the matter straight, to my knowledge Italy did not really intend to attack you, Edward! He probably would have eventually, mind! Nor as far as I know did he think you were an imbecile...oo-er. Anyway, to my elation Turkey changed sides, and after quite a shock in Spring 1906 when he "appeared" to go haywire when he hadn't actually sent orders in, I persuaded him to re-

scind a long-standing agreement (he'd forgotten about) with Italy and proxy his units to me. Russia also gave control to me due to personal circumstances so I was able to mount effective resistance to Italy in the East while still expanding as England in the West. From there it was relatively plain sailing.

Thanks to all for the game. Allan and Nigel particularly were prolific writers and I always enjoyed their letters. Chris played a tremendous game, particularly early on. He will get revenge no doubt in future. Edward and Tony - I did my best with your units, thanks for the trust. Good luck to all and special thanks to the understanding GM, Steve. This was my first game outside Springboard and I have found Spring Offensive a brilliant magazine to play in. Long may it continue.

Nigel Quinn (Germany)

The game started well with plenty of correspondence and the initial diplomacy encouraged me to opt for an alliance with Dave (England) against Ian (France). Through incisive play and good guesswork Dave soon achieved the upper hand against France in an offensive in which Germany's role proved to be both limited and counterproductive.

This arose from the poor state of German/Russian relations which saw Tony (Russia) opening to Livonia (prompting a standoff in Swe) and then invading Germany in autumn 1901. The continued Russian threat to Ber/Mun prevented me from concentrating on France, to England's great benefit, until finally in frustration I switched my forces eastwards to drive Russia back. With hindsight this would have been better before France had been fatally weakened. (Russia's other neighbours were quick to take advantage of Tony's persistence with an attack that was too weak to do more than act as a major irritant).

I had mistakenly hoped that Dave would delay stabbing me to avoid an early German-Italian alliance before Germany was fully engaged in the east. Chris (Italy) had emerged dominant from the Balkan battles despite a determined defence by Allan (Austria) and looked to have the potential for a decisive breakthrough into the Atlantic. Italy's position was undermined however first by a failure to seize MAO and then by Dave's success in reactivating Edward's (Turkey) hostility to Italy helped by his apparent control of the remaining Russian units.

As the fall of Germany was inevitable I had maintained my units in existence by occupying northern Russia from where they could cooperate towards the achievement of the hoped for stalemate against England. When this proved a nonstarter my aim was reduced to survival hence my agreement to the endgame proposal.

This was my first game for some time and it proved enjoyable although the eventual lack of interest in stopping England made for a tame ending. Congratulations to Dave on a well deserved win which reflects his overall superiority in terms of both diplomacy and tactical play. Thanks to Chris for the support and encouragement, to Allan for being philosophical about nonexistent German help (!) and to all who corresponded and helped to make this a worthwhile game. Not forgetting our GM - thanks Stephen for the service.

Allan Stagg (Austria)

Given that Tony and I were near neighbours, there was always the likelihood that the other countries (especially Turkey and Italy) would assume that a close Austro-Russian alliance would develop. Turkey's declaration of hostilities made this assumption self-fulfilling. I must admit that I was totally outplayed by Chris in the early stages, and after Tony's ineffectual stab I was always doomed. It was just a question of how long I could hold on for, as it turned out it was longer than I expected, but not long enough to matter. Congratulations to Dave for his win, and my respects to Chris, who was a tricky opponent.

GM (Stephen Agar)

This game saw some brilliant play and some, ahem, er... how shall we say... less than inspiring play. Without doubt, Dave put the most effort into it, but Chris was a formidable opponent who impressed me greatly. Half the fun as the GM was waiting to see who was going to order the Turkish units next. The English stab on Germany, when it finally came, really decided the game, as Chris neighbours were putting up just a little too much resistance for him to make progress fast enough.

No dropouts in this game, a fact which is always rather pleasing.

Rebalancing Axis & Allies

by D. Albert Harrell

Is the game imbalanced?

Yes. The clear advantage is to the Allies. This was the first parameter of the environment which had to be adjusted in order to achieve equal starting polarity between the two sides. This is a complex issue because the Allies start with less material, but get one extra move per round.

This puts pressure on the Axis to win quickly. Unfortunately for the Axis, A&A is not a game in which either side can reliably force a quick win. My experience has been that the only way the Axis would win under the first rule version was when they got dice-lucky and/or met with a novice at the eastern front. The force of this perpetual additional move is very difficult to overcome. The second versions of the rules was indecisive, and offered inadequate compensation for the severe imbalance.

Indeed, the offer to suspend all factory installations is clearly of more benefit to the Allies; since the English can easily develop an effective alternative to an Asian/African presence; in contrast to slim Japanese opportunities; the Imperial forces are clearly crippled without the ability to crank out armour and/or personnel on the mainland.

To restore equality I eventually discovered a most elegant adjustment "valve". Indeed, these alterations would seem to more closely parallel the true picture of world forces in the spring of 1942.

The "Boats Valve Fix" (BVF)

To begin the contest with parity, make the following three permanent non-optional definite rule changes.

1. No attack by Russia on the first round. (This was the only bold, correct, and historically parallel change offered by the Rules version 2 Gamemaster) (Additionally you must "turn" the "boats valve")
2. Increase the number of German submarines in the Atlantic Ocean (Western Europe) from 1 to 4.
3. Increase the number of Japanese transports in the Philippines from 1 to 4.

Many persons will think this too severe. They are probably underestimating the value of an "extra move" per round. A good Allied commander need only hold out until this snowball is of sufficient mass to roll over the Germans from three directions during one round. The Japanese can only look on from a distance in horror, as the 3rd Reich is overwhelmed by the inevitable triple-national invasion of Europe. This reduces the gaming event from a contest of skill, to one of patience.

I would be pleased to hear from A&A players all over the board.

D. Albert Harrell (DAHarrell@aol.com)



The Spring Offensive Anagram Challenge - The Answers

Zines

1. Arch giddy-go. = Y Ddraig Goch
2. Snobbish Yank battled rectum. = Backstabbers United Monthly
3. Message mega gems. = Games Games Games
4. Ammonia gale. = Megalomania
5. Okay, the daft unite. = Take That You Fiend
6. Girlie installation. = A Little Original Sin
7. Parallel bog offer. = Arfle Barfle Gloop
8. Oh! Redundant pebe! = Up Around The Bend
9. God! Hadn't he huge urinal! = The Laughing Roundhead
10. Piss off! Even grin? = Spring Offensive
11. Christ! He foamed. = The Ides of March
12. Drab pong, sir! = Springboard
13. Killer patio. = Realpolitik
14. Ego anthem. = On The Game
15. Dopy claim. = Mad Policy
16. Lemon cricket. = Electric Monk
17. Hogs attacked baker. = Back To The Dark Ages
18. Tighter asset. = Greatest Hits
19. Channel punting. = The Cunning Plan
20. Scold hosts. = Dolchstoss

Editors

15. I wino bean. = Iain Bowen
10. Miracle on mollusc. = Malcolm Cornelius
17. Pulsated carnal heaven, OK? = Paul Evans and Theo Clarke
16. Charming shirt. = Chris Tringham
18. Ha! Now an invading northern jerk. = Kavin Warne and John Harrington
3. Torch villa. = Vic Hall
6. Mirror skis. = Kris Morris
2. Drab horny. = Harry Bond
5. Damn anus cad! = Duncan Adams
20. Negate Sharp! = Stephen Agar
14. March lips. = Chris Palm
11. Mad lynch talk and anon. = Danny and Kath Collman
8. Mushy toga. = Guy Thomas
7. Yuck! Opal acne! = Paul Cockayne
9. Lice drink hardware. = Richard Walkerdine
1. Any day damned kid! = Andy and Maddi Key
4. Sandwich order. = Richard Downes
13. Skip beret. = Pete Birks
12. I candle nun. = Neil Duncan
19. Harsh card rip. = Richard Sharp

Full marks go to: James Hardy, Keith Loveys, Haz Bond, Neil Duncan, and Patrick Finglass.

Tie-breaker

Please complete in less than 16 words and in the best possible taste...

"I think Andy Bate is wonderful because my Froggy sub is well in the red and I don't feel a bit guilty."

"I think Andy Bate is wonderful because he winds up that smug git Agar."

"I think Andy Bate is wonderful because he hops into and hops out of the hobby in such a very tasteful way."

but the winner is... *"I think Andy Bate is wonderful because I have had my brains removed and don't know any better, what's your excuse."*

First prize to Neil Duncan, with suitable runners-up prizes to all the others.

DIPLOMACY - THE WORST GAME EVER?

Chris Kessel

Well, this one is sure to stir debate, but Diplomacy gets my vote as one of the worst games. Talk about a game where your mental wits mean nothing at all. Everything is determined entirely by your ability to negotiate.

Yea, yea, I know, that's why it's called Diplomacy, but I always end up asking myself: Why not just pick a subject and argue? You'll get just as much interaction as Diplomacy, if not more, and it'll take just as much game playing skill (i.e. none). Just my opinion of course.

Alan Kwan

Seconded. I usually consider "mental wits" in a game as the (abstract) mathematical reasoning process through which a player derives an optimal strategy (or, more precisely, a tractable, heuristic strategy that approaches the optimal strategy). In Diplomacy, very little of this can be done. The game does next to nothing but creates a n-person, "zero-sum" conflict situation, in which there is no true "optimal strategy" or "equilibrium" in the strictest sense.

In my not so humble opinion, any game where a player (or a subset of players) can use a strategy that some players consider "unethical", yet can generate favourable payoff (as defined in the game) to the offending party, is a broken game design. Here, I'm referring to previous discussions concerning players who form "unbreakable alliances" in Diplomacy, and some players' view that such strategy is "unethical". Another situation is when players make offers which, explicitly or otherwise, involve future games other than the one being played.

A "good" game, would be difficult to design a closed-form algorithmic strategy for. Cases will come up when the player has to make analysis and decisions on the fly. There are general rules or strategies, but exceptions come up from time to time. The human player will be able to adapt,

because he knows why the general rules are useful, and hence will be able to spot it when it shouldn't apply. On the other hand, it would be difficult to program /all/ the exceptions into the computer using conditional statements and evaluation functions. The process of developing a heuristic strategy by a human should be an ongoing process, for a game to maintain the player's long-term interest. Most "good" computer games ("good" referring to the game design, not the AI) have got lousy AI with them, because the problem of writing a "good" AI for the game is near intractable.

Why I don't like Diplomacy? Well, "good" games have intractable strategies, as opposed to some games (either very simple ones, or games not designed for the sake of playability) which have not-to-complex near-perfect heuristics. In Diplomacy, the problem of deriving a "good" strategy is, in my opinion, not even well-defined (as opposed to being a well-defined but computationally complex problem), so the game is (flame-proof suit on) more or less a bunch of players just messing around with pointless arguments.

Andrew Thomas Krog

Hear! Hear! However, let's not pull punches. Everything is determined by your ability to LIE THROUGH YOUR TEETH! I have found negotiation and skilful crafting of treaties with convenient loopholes to have been largely disregarded in favour of the full-toothed-smile bald-faced lie. If you are good at lying to your friends (or perfect strangers), then you will more likely than not be successful at Diplomacy. If, however, you have a natural aversion to lying to your friends (or strangers) then you will either hate playing or not lie and get crushed by the liars.

Diplomacy, therefore, is only best played with enemies. The trick is getting all your enemies to sit down at a table with you for a few hours.

DIPLOMACY

THE MOST POPULAR OPENINGS

This has taken ages, so I hope you find it interesting. What follows is a summary from various issues of The Numbers Game published by Richard Sharp of Norton House, Whielden Street, Amersham, Bucks., HP7 0HU. The basic criteria is that I've included all openings with an overall frequency of $\geq 1\%$. The figures for the 70's, 80's and 90's are just the average for the percentages for the individual years. Note that these figures are not completely up to date, so the figures for the early 90's are based on small samples of data and that by the 1970's I really mean 1972-79 as the data samples for 1970-71 are too small to be useful. The overall figure includes the 11 games from 1969-71.

AUSTRIA

	70's	80's	Early 90's	Overall	
F(Tri)-Alb, A(Bud)-Ser, A(Vie)-Tri	29.61%	20.54%	24.16%	23.25%	Balkan Gambit, Trieste Variation
F(Tri)-Alb, A(Bud)-Ser, A(Vie)-Gal	15.94%	18.52%	25.2%	17.67%	Balkan Gambit, Galicia Variation
F(Tri)-Ven, A(Bud)-Ser, A(Vie)-Gal	5.81%	24.29%	20.17%	17.47%	Southern Hedgehog
F(Tri)-Alb, A(Bud)-Ser, A(Vie)-Bud	14.23%	5.67%	10.40%	8.65%	Balkan Gambit, Budapest Variation
F(Tri)-Alb, A(Bud)-Ser, A(Vie)-Tyr	4.72%	2.77%	1.10%	3.70%	Balkan Gambit, Tyrolian Variation
F(Tri)Std., A(Bud)-Ser, A(Vie)-Gal	1.71%	4.18%	2.37%	3.18%	Southern Hedgehog, Houseboat Variation
F(Tri)-Alb, A(Bud)-Ser, A(Vie)Std.	3.66%	2.00%	0.00%	2.45%	Balkan Gambit, Vienna Variation
F(Tri)-Ven, A(Bud)-Rum, A(Vie)-Gal	1.68%	1.43%	0.53%	1.72%	Hedgehog
F(Tri)Std., A(Bud)-Ser, A(Vie)-Bud	1.13%	2.52%	0.00%	1.67%	Hungarian Roadhog
F(Tri)-Ven, A(Bud)-Ser, A(Vie)-Bud	1.16%	1.69%	0.00%	1.51%	Hungarian Hedgehog
F(Tri)-Alb, A(Bud)-Gal, A(Vie)-Tri	0.77%	1.53%	4.00%	1.41%	Squashed Hedgehog
F(Tri)-Ven, A(Bud)-Ser, A(Vie)-Tyr	1.21%	1.08%	0.73%	1.25%	Italian Attack
Total %	81.63%	86.22%	88.66%	83.93%	
Total No. of Games	768	1,016	120	1918	

ENGLAND

	70's	80's	Early 90's	Overall	
F(Edi)-NWG, F(Lon)-NTH, A(Lpl)-Yor	35.62%	41.76%	52.6%	39.89%	Northern Opening, Yorkshire Variation
F(Edi)-NTH, F(Lon)-ENG, A(Lpl)-Yor	21.60%	27.04%	16.8%	24.27%	Southern Opening, Yorkshire Variation
F(Edi)-NWG, F(Lon)-NTH, A(Lpl)-Edi	30.51%	19.93%	17.05%	22.47%	Northern Opening, Edinburgh Variation
F(Edi)-NTH, F(Lon)-ENG, A(Lpl)-Wal	7.21%	6.34%	9.90%	7.02%	French Attack
F(Edi)-NTH, F(Lon)-ENG, A(Lpl)-Edi	1.07%	1.49%	0.00%	1.29%	Southern Opening, Edinburgh Variation
Total %	96.01%	96.56%	96.35%	95.03%	
Total No. of Games	768	1,008	65	1855	

FRANCE

	70's	80's	Early 90's	Overall	
F(Bre)-MAO, A(Mar) S A(Par)-Bur	21.94%	15.91%	20.65%	18.95%	Maginot Opening
F(Bre)-MAO, A(Mar)-Spa, A(Par)-Bur	12.06%	17.56%	14.35%	15.34%	Burgundy Opening
F(Bre)-MAO, A(Mar)-Spa, A(Par)-Pic	13.29%	10.24%	14.45%	11.48%	Picardy Opening
F(Bre)-MAO, A(Mar)-Bur, A(Par)-Pic	5.40%	7.67%	10.45%	7.27%	Belgian Gambit
F(Bre)-MAO, A(Mar)-Bur, A(Par)-Gas	2.04%	5.99%	5.18%	4.56%	Vineyard
F(Bre)-ENG, A(Mar)-Spa, A(Par)-Pic	5.94%	3.98%	2.85%	4.51%	English Attack
F(Bre)-ENG, A(Mar)-Spa, A(Par)-Gas	3.78%	3.50%	5.13%	3.91%	English Defence, Gascony variation
F(Bre)-ENG, A(Mar) S A(Par)-Bur	3.30%	3.97%	2.33%	3.91%	English Maginot
F(Bre)-MAO, A(Mar)-Spa, A(Par)-Gas	3.13%	3.35%	5.85%	3.36%	Gascony Opening
F(Bre)-ENG, A(Mar)-Spa, A(Par)-Bur	2.43%	3.42%	1.93%	2.91%	English Defence, Burgundy variation
F(Bre)-MAO, A(Mar)Std., A(Par)-Pic	2.97%	2.75%	1.05%	2.66%	Picardy Opening, Marseilles Variation
F(Bre)-Pic, A(Mar) S A(Par)-Bur	2.58%	2.42%	1.45%	2.51%	Maginot Opening, Picardy Variation
F(Bre)-ENG, A(Mar)-Bur, A(Par)-Pic	1.19%	2.82%	2.05%	2.26%	Northern Dash
F(Bre)-MAO, A(Mar)-Pie., A(Par)-Bur	0.90%	1.99%	0.00%	1.50%	Burgundy Opening, Piedmont Variation
F(Bre)-MAO, A(Mar)Std., A(Par)-Bur	0.97%	1.18%	2.53%	1.35%	Burgundy Opening, Marseilles Variation
F(Bre)-MAO, A(Mar)-Gas., A(Par)-Pic	1.31%	1.11%	0.85%	1.25%	Picardy Opening, Gascony Variation
F(Bre)-Pic, A(Mar)-Spa, A(Par)-Bur	1.20%	1.05%	0.85%	1.10%	Burgundy Opening, Picardy Variation
Total %	84.43%	88.91%	91.95%	88.83%	
Total No. of Games	768	1,021	192	1,995	

GERMANY

	70's	80's	Early 90's	Overall	
F(Kie)-Den, A(Ber)-Kie, A(Mun)-Ruh	43.21%	31.67%	38.20%	34.85%	Blitzkrieg, Danish Variation
F(Kie)-Den, A(Ber)-Kie, A(Mun)-Bur	10.11%	25.12%	19.70%	19.31%	Anschluß, Danish Variation
F(Kie)-Hol, A(Ber)-Kie, A(Mun)-Ruh	18.44%	11.46%	15.40%	15.04%	Blitzkrieg, Holland Variation
F(Kie)-Hol, A(Ber)-Kie, A(Mun)-Bur	11.36%	5.34%	3.90%	7.71%	Anschluß, Holland Variation
F(Kie)-Den, A(Ber)-Kie, A(Mun)-Tyr	2.34%	6.04%	2.75%	4.77%	Anschluß, Tyrolian Variation
F(Kie)-Den, A(Ber)-Kie, A(Mun)-Std.	2.26%	6.09%	5.55%	4.44%	Anschluß
F(Kie)-Den, A(Ber)-Mun, A(Mun)-Ruh	1.22%	4.30%	5.00%	3.11%	Anschluß, Ruhr Variation
F(Kie)-Den, A(Ber)-Sil, A(Mun)-Ruh	0.77%	1.70%	0.00%	1.33%	Polish Blitzkrieg*
F(Kie)-Den, A(Ber)-Kie, A(Mun)-Sil	0.87%	1.06%	2.75%	1.11%	Anschluß, Silesian Variation
Total %	90.58%	92.78%	93.25%	91.67%	
Total No. of Games	768	1,010	75	1,867	

ITALY

	70's	80's	Early 90's	Overall	
A(Rom)-Ven, F(Nap)-ION, A(Ven)-Tyr	23.08%	21.88%	21.03%	22.31%	Tyrolian Attack
A(Rom)-Apu, F(Nap)-ION, A(Ven)-Std.	15.34%	15.42%	16.40%	15.11%	Lepanto
A(Rom)-Ven, F(Nap)-ION, A(Ven)-Pie	13.69%	11.30%	7.43%	11.64%	Alpine Chicken
A(Rom)-Apu, F(Nap)-ION, A(Ven)-Tri	6.33%	14.25%	15.07%	11.38%	Key Lepanto
A(Rom)-Ven, F(Nap)-ION, A(Ven)-Tri	9.26%	4.26%	8.33%	6.69%	Stab Lepanto
A(Rom)-Apu, F(Nap)-ION, A(Ven)-Tyr	3.40%	2.72%	1.80%	3.06%	Lepanto System, Tyrolian Variation
A(Rom)-Ven, F(Nap)-TYS, A(Ven)-Pie	2.31%	3.13%	2.47%	2.86%	French Attack, Venice Variation
A(Rom)-Apu, F(Nap)-ION, A(Ven)-Pie	1.54%	3.22%	2.47%	2.65%	Lepanto System, Piedmont variation
A(Rom)-Nap, F(Nap)-ION, A(Ven)-Std.	3.89%	2.18%	2.10%	2.50%	Napolitan Lepanto*
A(Rom)-Tus, F(Nap)-TYS, A(Ven)-Pie	2.85%	2.39%	2.10%	2.45%	French Attack, Tuscany Variation
A(Rom)-Ven, F(Nap)-ION, A(Ven)-Apu	0.93%	2.33%	2.47%	1.89%	Lepanto System, Venice Variation
A(Rom)-Ven, F(Nap)-TYS, A(Ven)-Tyr	2.29%	1.39%	1.90%	1.74%	Tyrolian Attack, Tyrrhenian Variation
A(Rom)-Tus, F(Nap)-ION, A(Ven)-Std.	0.99%	1.47%	1.90%	1.33%	Tuscan Folly*
A(Rom)-Ven, F(Nap)-TYS, A(Ven)-Tri	0.65%	1.63%	0.07%	1.17%	Stab Lepanto, Tyrrhenian Variation
A(Rom)-Std., F(Nap)-TYS, A(Ven)-Pie	0.86%	0.87%	2.47%	1.02%	French Attack, Rome Variation
A(Rom)-Nap, F(Nap)-ION, A(Ven)-Tri	0.24%	1.45%	1.77%	1.02%	Stab Lepanto, Napolitan Variation
Total %	87.65%	89.89%	89.78%	88.82%	
Total No. of Games	768	1,020	157	1,959	

RUSSIA

	70's	80's	Early 90's	Overall	
A(Mos)-Ukr, A(War)-Gal, F(Sev)-BLA	20.84%	36.42%	36.65%	30.10%	Southern Defence
A(Mos)-Ukr, A(War)-Gal, F(Sev)-Rum	13.47%	7.90%	4.2%	10.55%	Austrian Attack
A(Mos)-StP, A(War)-Gal, F(Sev)-BLA	6.31%	9.30%	6.45%	8.37%	Squid
A(Mos)-StP, A(War)-Gal, F(Sev)-BLA	2.13%	9.31%	1.00%	6.15%	Octopus
A(Mos)-Sev, A(War)-Ukr, F(Sev)-BLA	5.03%	4.63%	5.55%	5.14%	Turkish Attack
A(Mos)-Sev, A(War)-Ukr, F(Sev)-Rum	5.86%	3.90%	4.30%	4.88%	Rumanian Opening
A(Mos)-StP, A(War)-Ukr, F(Sev)-Rum	3.80%	3.46%	6.60%	4.35%	Northern System, Ukraine Variation
A(Mos)-StP, A(War)-Gal, F(Sev)-Rum	3.63%	1.58%	1.00%	2.44%	Northern System, Galician Variation
A(Mos)-Ukr, A(War)-Sil, F(Sev)-BLA	1.60%	2.16%	2.25%	2.12%	Ukraine System, Silesian Variation
A(Mos)-Sev, A(War)-Gal, F(Sev)-Rum	1.78%	1.20%	1.15%	1.43%	Rumanian Opening, Galician Variation
A(Mos)-Ukr, A(War)-Std., F(Sev)-BLA	1.03%	1.35%	3.25%	1.27%	Warsaw System, Ukraine Variation
A(Mos)-Ukr, A(War)-Gal, F(Sev)-Std.	1.22%	0.86%	1.15%	1.01%	Ukraine System, Southern Houseboat Variation
Total %	66.70%	82.07%	73.55%	77.81%	
Total No. of Games	768	1,056	93	1,887	

TURKEY

	70's	80's	Early 90's	Overall	
A(Con)-Bul, F(Ank)-BLA, A(Smy)-Con	31.64%	52.62%	61.83%	45.01%	Russian Defence
A(Con)-Bul, F(Ank)-BLA, A(Smy)-Arm	26.17%	22.02%	18.33%	24.73%	Russian Attack
A(Con)-Bul, F(Ank)-Con, A(Smy)-Ank	14.95%	9.96%	10%	11.24%	Bosphorous Opening, Ankara Variation
A(Con)-Bul, F(Ank)-Con, A(Smy)-Std.	10.18%	4.93%	6.10%	7.53%	Bosphorous Opening, Smyrna Variation
A(Con)-Bul, F(Ank)-Con, A(Smy)-Arm	0.54%	2.68%	2.97%	1.99%	Bosphorous Opening, Armenian Variation
A(Con)-Bul, F(Ank)-Std., A(Smy)-Con	3.37%	1.30%	0.73%	1.99%	Houseboat Opening, Constantinople Variation
Total %	86.85%	93.51%	99.96%	92.49%	
Total No. of Games	768	1,016	115	1,913	

Maybe some of you might be inspired by all this information to contribute a Diplomacy tactics article to [Spring Offensive](#)? Go on, stranger things have happened.

BALKAN WARS IV

A DIPLOMACY VARIANT by FRED C. DAVIS Jnr, 1987

BALKAN WARS I was designed by Charles N. Reinsel in 1974. BALKAN WARS II, a five-players game, has vanished without a trace. BALKAN WARS III was Fred Davis' first modification of Reinsel's game, to improve the map and rules, in 1986.

Introduction

BALKAN WARS is set in the period immediately prior to the outbreak of the Great War, when several local conflicts involved the newly-independent Balkan states and the waning Ottoman Turkish Empire (Turkey in both DIPLOMACY and this variant), as they fought over territories like Thrace and Macedonia (which is disputed by Yugoslavia, Greece, Bulgaria and Macedonian nationalists - who want an independent Macedonia today). Italy became involved as a mediator, and picked up the Dodecanese Islands for themselves (presented here by the province of Rhodes).

For playability, certain liberties have been taken with the Balkan map (after all, Montenegro is missing on the standard mapboard). For example, Rumania owned Bessarabia between the two World Wars. In Reinsels' original version, there were just 21 land spaces - all home supply centres. This led to a hopelessly clogged board. In the third version of the variant, several ordinary provinces, such as Croatia, Macedonia and Transylvania were added, but there were still no neutral supply centres. In the fourth version, five such centres have been added: just enough to make things interesting without greatly increasing the size of the game. A lot of negotiation will be needed to settle the distribution of such centres.

All three Greek centres are now located on the mainland, which gives Greece a better chance of survival. In some cases, more modern names have been used for provinces in both the third and fourth versions - such as "Skopje" for Uskub - to make them easier to identify. A few names have even been invented. "Arda" is the name of a river near Adrianople, and an irresistible pun (the old NAVB publication was called ARDA). "Mt. Jara" is the abbreviated name of the tallest mountain on the Albanian-Serbian border.

Finally, note that Albania and Montenegro are played as a single power.

Rules

1. The standard rules of DIPLOMACY apply unless otherwise specified.

2. The seven powers and their starting units are as follows:

ALBANIA: F(Tirana); A(Montenegro); A(Valona) *but see Rule 6*
 BULGARIA: A(Sofia); F(Varna); Choice of A(Plovdiv) or F(Plovdiv)
 GREECE: Choice of A(Athens) or F(Athens)*; A(Salonika); F(Patras)
 ITALY: F(Rome); F(Sicily) ; A(Trieste) or F(Trieste)
 RUMANIA: A(Bucharest); A(Galati); F(Constantsa)
 SERBIA: A(Belgrade); A(Nish); A.(Skopje)
 TURKEY: A(Constantinople); F(Izmit); F(Smyrna)

* Athens has only one coast due to the Corinth Canal - as with Kiel.

3. There are 26 supply centres (21 home and 5 neutral). The victory conditions are EITHER ownership of 14 supply centres OR a majority of units on the board at any time (there are only six inland supply centres unreachable by fleets).

4.. A power may build new units in any unoccupied supply centre s/he owns. Fleets must be built in coastal supply centres. In addition, SERBIA may build fleets in Croatia when s/he owns that space, as Serbia does not have a sea-coast.

5. The first turn is Spring 1911.

6. Optional Albanian starting places allow for Albania to start it's initial fleet from ANY of it's home supply centres, with armies in the other two.

7. Fleets in Bessarabia or Constantsa may move or support, via the Danube river, into Galati and vice versa. Fleets may be built in Galati. The Danube is not a space. Fleets remain in the regular provinces.

8. Winter builds are made secretly - neither the location nor type of unit(s) built are revealed. In postal play, the Winter and Spring seasons are played together. However, if a player NMRs on an Autumn turn, the GM may call for a separate Winter season while obtaining a standby player.

9. Unordered retreats after the Spring move will be handled by Just's Right-Hand Rule (the GM retreats the unit to the first vacant province, starting with the space immediately to the right of the province from which the attack came, then the first to the left, etc.). Retreats following Autumn moves will be handled with Winter orders. Retreats take precedence over builds. Players may write potential retreat orders with their orders to avoid the application of the Right-Hand Rule.

10. There are several Direct Passages across narrow bodies of water which may be used by both armies and fleets, without interfering with the passage of fleets between adjacent sea spaces. Fleets may also "jump" between the Ionian and South Adriatic Seas, and between the Central Mediterranean and Cyclades, but may not convoy armies directly between those two sea spaces.

Notes

There is a rule of thumb in the design of DIPLOMACY variants that not more than 50% of the spaces should be supply centres, and preferably less. In BALKAN WARS III there were 21 centres and 23 non-centre provinces. In BALKAN WARS IV I've added five new neutral centres, two new ordinary spaces, and two new sea spaces (Cyclades and the Eastern Med.), so there are now 26 centres and 26 non-centres. This was the best I could do in a very restricted area, which could not be expanded either without totally getting away from the concept that this is supposed to be a Balkan scenario.

It is hoped that the newly added spaces will provide enough manoeuvring room for a good game, while preserving a balance between the various powers. Note that Bessarabia now borders Cluj and Transylvania

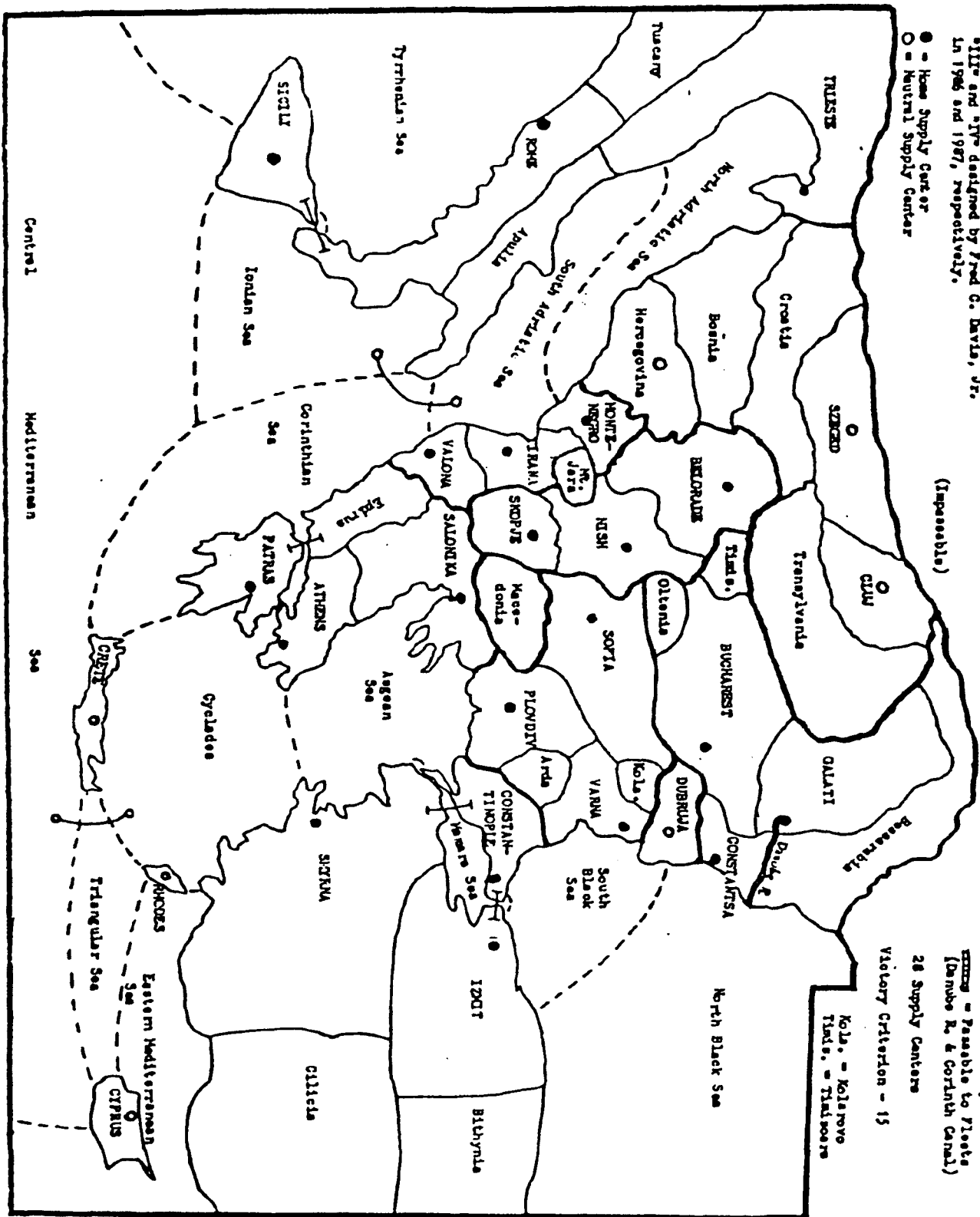
It bothered me that Serbia is land-locked. Eventually, Serbia could build fleets in captured centres, but I wanted another option. By allowing the player to build fleets in Croatia (which is not a supply centre), I have allowed Serbia to build a fleet without first having to over-run Greece or Albania. This makes an alliance between them possible. The GM will have to keep a note about who owns Bosnia.

With Galati accessible to fleets via the Danube, fleets can now reach all but six of the centres (5 home and 1 neutral). Therefore, nearly every power will have a use for fleets.

With such a tight board, this is going to be a deadly game. One error or NMR could ruin a player, and much diplomacy will be needed to enable powers to work together for success - no one will get very far on his or her own. At least by raising the victory criteria from 11, the possibility of a sudden quick win is less likely, and most players will get to handle a few more units than was possible in BALKAN WARS III.

Incidentally, between 1919 and 1945 Italy owned the entire Istrian Peninsula, as shown her in the Trieste space, so Italy really was a Balkan power in those days.

BALKAN WARS IV



BALKAN WARS IV - original design by Charles Kohnel, 1976
 IIIc and IVc designed by Fred G. Davis, Jr. in 1986 and 1987, respectively.

● = Home Supply Center
 ○ = Neutral Supply Center

— = Direct Passage
 ○—○ = Fleet Jump
 ——— = Possible to Fleets (Dardanelles & Corinth Canal)
 28 Supply Centers
 Victory Criterion - 15
 Kola. = Kolarova
 Tlad. = Tladsove

THE NAMING OF ZINES

by Stephen Agar

The name of a zine can be its making or its curse. When I launched Spring Offensive I tried to come up with a name which would be serious, have a casual reference to Diplomacy and a bit of World War I in it. I turned to a book of World War I poetry for inspiration and Spring Offensive was the first poem I saw. It seemed right so I went for it. Looking through the names of other zines over the years, a few themes do stand out.

Starting in the mid-60's in the US, many early Diplomacy zines were named after mythical places. Indeed the first four Diplomacy zines ever were, in chronological order, Graustark (John Boardman - May 1963), Ruritania (Dave McDaniel - Sept 1963), Freedonia (John Boardman - May 1964) and Brobdingnag (Richard Schultz - May 1964). In fact there were so many zines named after mythical places that one early variant Mythomacy by Terry Kuch consisted of a mythical continent with the Great Powers consisting of six of the mythical places represented by Diplomacy zines at the time (Gaillardia (Robert Johnson 1971-72), Erehwon (Rod Walker 1966-1984), Laputa (Betsy Childers 1970), Mu (Chris Schleicher 1971) and Lemuria (Dan Sundrie 1971). The trend never really caught on in the UK, though the first UK Diplomacy zine was called Albion (Don Turnbull 1969-1975). Perhaps Tony Crouch's Rhubovia (1977-79) may also count.

Word Games

One feature of some early UK zine titles was word games connected to Diplomacy, such as Richard Walkerdine's Mad Policy (an anagram of "Diplomacy") and Grafeti (Brian Yare 1972-74) and Frigate (Duncan Morris 1973-75), both anagrams of the initial letters of the seven powers in Diplomacy. Rats live on no evil star (Pete Swanson 1976-78) was of course a palindrome, Sno-Pake and the Seven Dwarfs (Paul Hurley 1976-78) and Sauce of the Nile (Richard Bartle 1977-78) both claimed to be puns, while more recently Toby Harris Smodnoc was "condoms" spelt backwards. One of my own zines Variants & Uncles (1980-81) was a pathetic variation of "aunts & uncles" but Mark and James Nelson obviously liked it enough to revive it in the 70's. Other word games included various rhymes with the word "zine", such as Shaun Derrick's A Zine of the Times (1979-80) and Shaun's later zine produced with Nick Kinzett Zine to be Believed (1982-91) which taken together gives no indication as to how Shaun thinks "zine" is pronounced at all. Walter Luc Haas's Buum was meant to be onomatopoeic for the sound a canon makes when it is fired, but it's similarity to "bum" meant the zine wasn't taken as seriously as it should have been by some at the time (though, oddly enough, one of today's more successful zines is indeed called BUM).

Music, Literature and TV

Other sources of inspiration have included music, such as Pink Floyd, Ummaqumma (Martin Davis 1973-74); Emerson Lake and Palmer, Tarkus (Colin Walshe 1974-75); Elton John, Don't Shoot Me (Mike Benyon 1981-83); Queen, Bohemian Rhapsody (Malcolm Smith 1981-82); Hawkwind, spirit of the age (Pete Calcrafft 1978-81); and even an album by someone called Chris Rainbow entitled Home of the Brave (Geoff Challenging 1981-91) has had a zine named after it. Roger Kitchener's Uriah's Heap (1975-76) could have been named after the group or the Dicken's character, I'm not sure. Although it's a US zine called Schuldigkeit Des Ersten Und Vornehmsten Gebotes, Die, K.35 (Conrad von Metzke - 73-74) or K.35 for short, which probably has the most unpronounceable musical title (being an early Mozart opera).

Speaking of Dicken's, literature has also featured in zine titles. Mr Gladgrind (John Miller 1977-82) is a character from Dicken's Hard Times, the IDA Novice Package The Tangled Web We Weave is almost a Shakespeare quote, War & Peace (Derek Caws 1982-89) is obviously Tolstoy, Boojum (Richard Morris 1983-86) is of course a homage to Lewis Carroll, Leviathan (Eric Willis 1976-78) is the great work by Thomas Hobbes and Turn of the Screw (Greg Hawes 1975-77) is the title of a short story by Henry James.

Popularist literature is represented by Moorcock, Tales from Tanelorn (Matt Williams 1983-85, which changed its name to the slightly surreal Swansea With Me); Tolkein, Shelob's Lair (Les Pimley 1974-75) and Voice of Sauron (Mark Nelson 1989-94). Douglas Adams is represented at least three UK zines, Life, the Universe and A(Par) (Matthew Wright 1985-86, known in its later days as Arnageddon), Share & Enjoy (Pete Tulk, 1988) and, of course, Electric Monk (Andy & Maddi Key 1988-94) which is a type of robot appearing in Dirk Gently's Hollistic Detective Agency. I'm not sure if Sellar & Yeatman's 1066 and all that counts as literature or history, but it is the inspiration behind Mick Bullock's great zine 1901 and all that (72-78).

TV hasn't inspired many zines. John Piggott's Ethil the Frog (72-74, 77-79) was named, at the suggestion of Will Haven, after an incidental Monty Python character; Fall of Eagles Richard Hucknall - 77-84) was named after a 70's TV series on the decline of the German, Russian and Austrian monarchies; Moonlighting (Bate, Egan & Jackson, 89-91) reflects the cult US detective series; Ripping Yarns (Richard Gooch - 80-83) is a reference to the Michael Palin TV series as well as a reference to Richard's nickname, Rip. Everyone knows where He's Dead, Jim! (Jeremy Maiden - 75-77) comes from.

Ancient History / Mythology

Ancient history hasn't produced the crop of zine titles I would have expected. Hannibal (Andrew herd - 73-75) was really called Hannibal the Cannibal which puts it closer to Hannibal lector than the Carthaginian General, though the recent The Ides of March (Chris Palm - 95-??) is a decent ancient title. Caissa (Norman Williams - 76-77), Icarus Flight Manual (Gavin Addison, 88-89) and Cassandra (Anthony Bourke - 1985-86) all refer to characters from Greek mythology, while Chimaera (Clive Booth - 75-83) and Griffin (Keith Thomasson - 78-80) are at least mythological creatures. One area in which ancient history has been influential is the number of zines with Latin titles: Ad Nauseam (Steve Pratt - 75-78), Bellicus (Will Haven - 72-77), Mercurius Aulicus (Paul McGivern - 82-86), Fortis est Rana (John Piggott - 75-77), Aut Vincere Aut Mori (Paul Harper - 76-78), Causus Belli (Mark Strangward - 1981), De Excidio (Bill O'Neill - 90-92), Victor Ludorum (John Piggott - 75-76), O Tempora O Mores and Veni Vidi Vici (Brian Frew - 85-90) (which funnily enough was Chris Palm's preferred title for The Ides of March).

Diplomatic and Military

Given the nature of the game, there have always been the rather serious zine titles with names connected to Diplomacy, diplomatic activity, stabbing etc. etc. the best known of which must be Dolchstoß which is German for "stab" (Richard Sharp 1972-79, 1983-today). Similar zines which spring to mind include Stick the Knife In the short-lived zine from Nigel McCabe (1982) and the rather longer-lived Watch Your Back (John Wilman - 77-85), Age of Reason (Andrew Moss - 91-94), Entente (Shaun Derrick - 78) and Guy Thomas's Realpolitik (84-95?) all conjure up the beginning of the century flavour. There have been a clutch of the inevitable zines with unadventurous titles along the lines of Dip... (the most famous of which are Diplomacy World (various eds. 74-) and Diplomacy Digest (Mark Berch - 77-94). Also included are the likes of The Diplomat (Malc Smith - 80-81) and Der Garvey's variant zine An Taidhleoir (78-79) which is Irish for The Diplomat.

Given the game recreates European warfare, it is perhaps surprising that more zines haven't had militaristic titles. One early zine was War Bulletin (Dave Berg and Hartley Patterson 1970-75) but the only others I can think of are Pyrrhic Victory (Mike Allaway - 78-84, 88-) Prisoners of War (Wallace Nicoll - 84-91) and Aide de Camp (Douglas Mills - 77-78).

Personal

Finally, we have a loose category of zine titles which reflect something personal to the editor. A brief selection: Queen's Lane Advertiser (Tullett & Doherty - 78-79) was named after Queen's Lane which is the road on which St. Edmund Hall, Oxford stands - the college where both

editors were studying. Keith Lovey's Snorwood Gazette (78-82) was so called because Keith lived in S. Norwood. The Orient Express (Steve Plater - 79-81) reflected the fact that the editor was in the F&CO in Japan, while Pigmy (Stephen Agar - 77-79) was so called because it started life as a one game single sheet zine; Whiskey Mac (Paul Openshaw - 78-79) acquired it's name because it was Paul's favourite tippie, which says about Paul; Fred Davis's Bushwacker was named after a cartoon character he created himself as a child. Y Ddraig Goch (Welsh for the Red Dragon) reflected Iain Bowen's Welsh sentiments, even if he did misspell his own zine title as the unfortunate Y Ddraig Coch for the first few issues. Another foreign language represented is Vietnamese in the shape of Ac-Mong (Gordon McDonald, 86-93) which translates as nightmare.

Over the years there have been surprisingly few duplicates in the UK, though Richard Egan did cause some confusion when issue one of LiES had the title Lies, Damned Lies & Diplomacy which was also the title of an earlier and rather obscure late 80's zine. Ian Harris's Borealis was originally called Bloof & Iron (which was the name of a zine edited by Lew Pulsipher, 71-75), but he changed the name when he realised the name had been used before. The same is not true in the US where there have been two each of Frigate, Dogs of War, Laputa, Phonix, Ragnarok, Retaliation, Ruritania, Stab, Thulcandra, Vortex and at least three zines called The Diplomat.

Let's end up with some zine names which I can't fathom at all. How about The Tinamou, ATU XVIII, A Subtle Powder, Froggy, Ode, 10 Lime Avenue, Gazfinc. Any ideas? And that's just to be going on with.

HOW TO PLAY ITALY

By Scott Kauzlarich

Italy is the most challenging country on the board to play if you asked me. Of course "Challenging" is just a nice way of saying that Italy is nearly impossible to win with. But it can be done.

Openings

Basically, Italy has two logical openings: Attack Austria or Attack France. The former, attacking east, holds the possibility of a quick centre or two. The latter offers no such reward, but is the better choice of the two.

Attacking Austria means that nine times out of ten, you have allied with Russia and/or Turkey. The problem with this is that by helping unseat Austria, you have assured yourself that Turkey and/or Russia will gobble you up next. Better to keep Austria alive and acting as a buffer between you and the eastern hordes.

Now, if you can arrange for Turkey and Russia to start fighting as soon as you have taken Trieste and Vienna, then be my guest: attack the Habsburg. But we all know what a natural alliance Russia and Turkey can make: it's a tall order to stab Austria while fostering ill: will among the white and yellow pieces. They will suck into the vacuum you have created by destroying Austria, and take you on next. They will have the advantage.

Chances are, you will throw Germany into a tizzy by attacking his natural neutral friend. This can mean a stab at you, or worse yet, he will collapse under the weight of Russia, who is growing fat in places like Budapest and Rumania. A good German knows that units popping up in Warsaw to attack Austria often end up in places like Silesia.

If you must move East, be ready to fight the Turk or his Russian pal. Austria will collapse quickly, and you will get a brief victory. unless you are planning well: ahead, it will also be only a short time before you find yourself devoured by Turkey and/or Russia. What can you do to make an eastern campaign successful? First of all, hope that someone in the West (usually England) is stuffing the Russian in Scandinavia. Step 2: Ally with Russia or Turkey against the other early on. I prefer Russia to Turkey. In fact, I'd say this is definitely your best chance at alliance. Turkey and Austria have such animosity in most games, you and Russia might make quick work of them. The best way to work this is for you to hammer at Turkey while Russia takes on Austria. If you can befriend one of them long enough to hear some plans...voila! The attack might work. Of course, Russia then has the advantage of momentum and better situated units in most scenarios, but hey...I advocate a Western campaign anyway.

In the long run, going WEST is BEST

This is because it's clear that an attack on Austria is a risky thing after a few quick builds. Be patient. Take your time. Attack France. By hitting France, you won't bring Germany and or England racing to your door step. In fact, the Western end of the Med. is very defensible. Your three targets are Spain, Portugal, and Marseilles. In my opinion, a good French player has to leave himself open to you at some point. by playing coy, you can lull him into sleep and then POW! you stab into the western Med. and the Gulf of Lyon. The attack can be parried, of course, but what Germany won't come to you in glee when you hit France? Same for England. You

will have one or two friends as soon as you hit La Marseilles with both fists.

The French attack is slow and your units will need to hold spaces far from home. You will be open to Turkish or Austrian assaults (They will be fighting each other hopefully. By helping topple France, one of the Western Powers will grow , giving Russia some pause.

You can see that there aren't any great options in your Italian openings. You must decide which side of the board you are going to play on, while being careful to not over commit unless the other side was the better choice. Or maybe you feel your only chance is to roll the dice and over-commit. If you do, Roll on the West, unless your mom is playing Russia. In that case, hang your hat on the Czar and see how far the ride takes you.

Now, what about Lepanto?

Fool's Gold. Only attack Turkey at the start if Russia and Turkey ally to assault Austria. Then, you have no choice: If Austria falls, he will you. So you have to attack Turkey. Those pieces may look yellow, but there is no pot of gold for you in Smyrna. It takes a long time to get in a good position over there, all the while reaching over Austria for centres he or Russia will just take away later. Only attack Turkey in self defence. You can attack her later, and you will have to know how to do it: so practice a Lepanto from time to time, but don't commit to it right away.

Much the same for Germany: Don't commit to an attack right away. It is too difficult for most Italians to contemplate: All you will get is Munich, the hardest piece of territory on the whole damn board to hold by a foreign power. Attack Germany later if needed, in places like France.

So far, I've concluded that Italy can attack east and trade quick gains for quick death, or attack west for slow gains and a slim possibility that you can win that way. Attacking Germany or Turkey at the start of the game is silly in most cases.

The best early game strategy I can recommend for Italy is to hang around and wait for the best opening: then strike with all vigour possible. Give a little more weight to an attack west than east, all things being equal. Use your considerable diplomatic clout: you don't have a great tactical position, but you are in a key spot diplomatically.

At mid: game, Italy might find itself having to deal with England around Iberia, or Germany in France. Obviously, you will want to play them off of each other, allying with one over the other or flip: flopping between the two, to try and make the most ground. Be careful about going against Germany with England: Germany might be in a good spot against Russia or some other eastern Power, and you wouldn't want him to collapse, allowing Austria or Russia or Turkey to invade you while you are busy in the west. Favour Germany over England, but not by much.

Another common mid: game headache for the Italian is turkey. He might have come out on top in the east and now finds himself pushing into your waters. You should always encourage Turkey to build armies (good god, man... Did you see that Russia just built an army? and Austria too! Better keep up: that kind of stuff) hopefully, someone will be able to aid you

against the Turk: if not he will whip you more than you whip him. he just has a better position, with no one behind him.

Always open to the Ionian

Always. You've got nothing to gain by opening to Tyrrhenian. You might convoy an army into Tunis and have a one: turn jump on getting into the Gulf of Lyon, but you might as well announce to the world you are attacking France. You Don't want to commit that first year. Not that hard. Ionian openings give you flexibility you don't have in Tyr. Sea. You should also open to Apulia as a rule of thumb: to support Venice if needed and to convoy to Tunis or Greece if needed. If things with Turkey are going comfortably: be nice and put the fleet in Tunis (then popping out to Western Med. possibly): if not, it's clear that you are not going to let him roll all over Austria.

Never go to Piedmont

Never. Attacking France is hard enough. Why would you want to tell him what you are doing? He will get involved with England and Germany, affording you a better chance. Openings to Piedmont are great for Germany and England, awful for Italy.

Your pal the Archduke

What Austrian in his right mind would attack you and invite a sudden death at the hands of Russia and turkey? Probably a few, but you still should look for a pact with Austria I have only been turned down once: and Austria really regretted it. Let Austria be the big shot in the east: Two good things will happen. One, you will have a free hand to attack France and then charge into the MAO, wreaking every plan England ever had. Two, with Turkey and/or Russia weakened by a strong Austrian, you might be able to attack east and not have it come back in your face like pie. Be assured that Austria will come after you when he is in control in the east. If you time your stab right, you might come up aces, especially if you can grab Greece.

Ah Greece

What can you say? If you hope to do anything in the game, at some point you have to control Greece: gateway to the Balkans (well, Trieste too). But just be damn patient.

Final Thoughts

You'll win the game by controlling the left, right, or bottom sided of the board. 99% of the time you'll win by taking the bottom of the board. I recommend shoring up the west, plugging that gap at Gibraltar, and then turning on those bickering eastern neighbours with terrible vengeance, all while insuring that no one power gets too huge in the West. Now you see why everyone, including me, hates to be Italy.



GLOBETROTTER GLOBETROTTER GLOBETROTTER GLOBETROTTER

Shaun Derrick, 313 Woodway Lane, Walsgrave, Coventry CV2 2AP

June /July 1995 Short issue!!

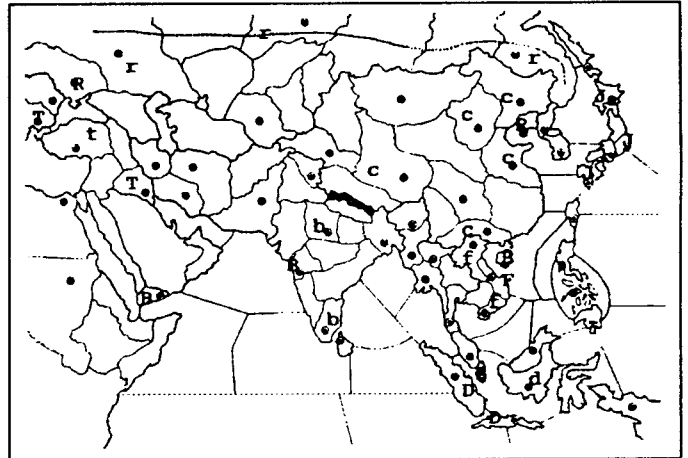
I make no apologies for a titchy issue as I am off to sunnier climes to get wed! I will almost certainly be back by the time you read this unless Stephen has produced a record turnaround. I have been relatively immune to what has been happening in the hobby in the last couple of months, even though I have read all the mail it isn't sinking in. I do like John Dodds 'Hobby News' which could be expanded upon if he had more correspondents willing to send him the details -I will send you the MasterCon III info' very soon, John.

No player profiles this time, I just haven't had the chance or the inclination to wade through all the Dip results again. I hope to produce a few stats of less successful players as well as the top players that I have recently concentrated on.

Anybody in the UK heard anything of WorldDipCon V?.. .no; nor have I!

Colonial Diplomacy

I have got 4 players on the waiting list: Colin Smith, Steve Walton-"Benko", Chris Latimer and Vick Hall, only three more needed. I have got preference lists from all the above players, so if anyone else wishes to play the rules were in last issue of *Spring Offensive*, or even better if you have a copy of the game. I will not be charging any gamefee. There were a couple of minor errors in the rules last time. There is a Russian fleet in Odessa and British fleets in Singapore, Hong Kong and Bombay. The TSR order should have been A(Mos) TSR Via which is Army Moscow to Vladivostok via the Trans-Siberian Railway.



Start positions in CD. Upper case for fleets, lower case for armies.

Is The Alpine Chicken A Tasty Bird?

Richard Sharp christened the Italian Opening A(Ven)-Pie, A(Rom)-Ven, F(Nap)-ION as the Alpine Chicken "Because it shows the desire to attack Austria unsupported by the courage to go through with it." Richard's basic thesis is that the A01 stab on Austria (A(Pie)-Tyr, A(Ven)-Tri) is rather obvious, while the move to Piedmont will just irritate France. If it is truly intended as an attack on Austria then Richard may well be right, but on the other hand if the intention is to go for France and if Italy has the guaranteed support of England or (preferably) Germany then I think I prefer the Chicken to standard French Attack (A(Ven)-Pie, F(Nap)-TYS) because the very fact that it can be a springboard to a stab on Austria means that there is at least a possibility of taking France by surprise.

A standard French attack would convoy A(Rom) from wherever it had moved to to Tun, leaving a F(TYS). A(Pie) may be used to go for Marseilles, cover Venice if necessary, or just stand. Spring 1902 sees F(TYS)-GoL for a supported attack on Mar. But the overriding problem with this tactic is that Italy has to telegraph his intentions to France a couple of game years in advance.

The superiority of the Chicken is that it gives Italy more flexibility. If Austria goes for a variant of the Hedgehog, then Venice will be protected. If Austria allows A(Rom)-Ven to succeed, then it is safe to use A(Pie) against Mar without leaving yourself open to an Austrian (or German) attack on Venice. The fleet goes F(Nap)-ION and the F(ION)-Tun for the build. In S02 if all is going to plan F(Tun)-WMS, F(Nap)-TYS; if all is not going to plan then head east with F(Tun)-ION, F(Nap)-Apu. What to do with A(Pie) is difficult. I would of course assure France that I was playing the stab on Austria, but if France still had an A(Marseilles) I would go for Marseilles myself (if you fail to get it it means that France has one build less). If France has A(Spa) I'd probably stand in Piedmont in the hope that France orders A(Spa)-Mar and denies himself both a build and an opportunity to build in Marseilles.

The stats show that the Chicken is the third most common Italian opening, used overall 11.64% of the time. However, that figure masks a 70's popularity of 13.69% which has declined to a mere 7.43% in the early 90's. So the Alpine Chicken is not as popular as it once was. Maybe renaming it the Savoy Shuffle would revive its fortunes?

LETTERS // LETTERS // LETTERS // LETTERS // LETTERS

Geoff Challenger

Thanks for the recent Spring Offensive 34 and you do well to send me the zine despite my lack of credit. As a subscriber I'm always going to fall into this sort of trap. The time-sense which I once possessed is gone so I couldn't actually notice when Spring Offensive didn't turn up and seek to think why? We recently replaced our window-cleaner when we found out from someone else that he hadn't been for 6 months. I thought it had been a while since we paid him!

So here's a cheque which should keep us going for a few months. The bank manager came to see me today and said how pleased he was with us and could we buy some of his insurance packages from him. It's hilarious to see a bank scabbling for the commissions on products these days. One year recently Lloyds made £2M from UK retail banking and £750M from other UK sources. Now I wonder what???

Still, he's happy to have the overdraft continue at its current level, so for once I will get the credit cards paid off. This is practically unheard of, especially as we've paid for the holiday and will have most of the spending money for the same from Julie marking GCSE exams. I have this vague delusion that some time in 1996 we might be able to do some of this new financial thing, called saving. I haven't even got a shortfall in the hardware area any more to soak it up.

SA *My overdraft is current over £7,000 which really isn't very good, is it? Saving has never been one of my strongpoints.*

Tell Esme to forget about Alan Frost in ALOS. This is entirely a wind-up. I'd guess Alan does have some leanings towards the rather bizarre views he expresses but is enjoying the reaction he gets. Don't give the guy the enjoyment of the criticism he clearly craves. Oh and while we're on about Esme - what's this about her frying to get a £4,000+ oboe? This is more than most of my oboist/clients would be paying for theirs and this includes the principles of the LPO and the Royal Opera House.

SA *After some negotiation, Esme is now only going for a £2,150 model. That means there is a PC / oboe parity in the household.*

If Esme is seriously instrument-hunting, let me know, I have a few contacts who might prove to be of use. Mind you I've never got on with the oboe - my brother having been semi-pro. of course you realise that all oboists are nervy (just as all violinists are anally retentive, viola players are control freaks and all brass players are loud mouthed, sexist drunks). Well it's true about the brass players anyway...

Another important question is - where are you getting the Callahan cartoons from? I had thought I was the only hobby fan and I thought I had his only 2 books; Don't Disturb Any Further and He Can't Have Gone Far (or something like that). More info please.

SA *The book I have is called Digesting the Child Within (Statics - 1991). ISBN 1 - 873922 - 05 - 1, purchased in WH Smiths about 3 months ago for a mere £5.99.*

Somewhere in Home there is an article called 'Great Gropes' or something similar which addresses a little less discretely the problem you mentioned. 'Getting close' indeed. How coy. I'll see if I can find it, but your archive is probably better organised than mine. The gist of it was that there were certain necessary ingredients of a Great Grope, but the most important element was self-pity, best typified by 'Man of the World' by Fleetwood Mac, which starts... "Should I tell you about my life?" NO! should be the loud chorus, but the singer (Peter Green? Danny Kirwan?) ploughs on.

My own favourite in this line is 'Sympathy' by Rare Bird. Very slow waltz time with a lyric that goes 'And when you climb into your bed tonight/And when you lock and bolt the door/Just think of me out in the cold night air/cos there's not enough love to go round'. Which roughly translates as "your place or mine".

SA *Maybe this should go to a vote. Are there any other contenders for good grope music?*

I'll put a vote in for The Power of Love and Bright Eyes as well, but would affirm 'Seasons in the Sun' as complete crap. There's a lot of bad punk stuff as well which it's very un-PC to criticise, but the fact is that a lot of the punk singles in 76/77 were pretty bad - taken out of context. Sham 69? The Slits? Early Siouxsie & The Banshees? At the time they made up for the lack of tune, rhythm, musical skill and lyrics with Attitude. Unfortunately that dates very badly. But of course it's not done to criticise a song like 'Beat on the Brat' by the Ramones is it?

SA *Well, I like early Siouxsie - I was playing Join Hands in the car only last week. One could almost call it tuneful.*

Seeing Brian Connolly on the Glam Rock Top 10 was a bit saddening, but there is a trifle more than straight alcoholism, including a couple of strokes. Definitely my favourite band of the era and I was annoyed that the program categorised Slade as Glam because they wore a little glitter and high heels. By this reckoning, Elton John is the kind of Glam. T Rex were entitled to the prize and should be recognised now!

SA *Of course, Marc Bolan was the first Glam pop star. It all goes back to Hot Love in Feb. 1971. I was once going to write a book on Glam Rock and even produced a first chapter. Maybe I'll dig it out and publish it here, just to punish you all.*

I've just spent a day down in London making my head spin. A large percentage of my acquaintances seem to have started to behave in patterns in bizarre contradiction to the norm. There seems to be a strong feeling around age 40 that there is a need to consider greater philosophical truths, the where-am-I-going-in-life's, which I have to confess afflicts me as much as the next man.

Some of this comes out of Julie's recent 'conversion' to Christianity and the dedication (baptism/christening) of our girls. Plus the younger (Steph) is off to school in September and we have, to put it bluntly, got to decide what to do with the rest of our lives. A very strange feeling indeed

I finally got around to reading Spring Offensive 32 and 33 and your correspondence with John Colledge and others over folds. I've scribbled a little article which you might want to print (or not). It actually reads as a manifesto for doing the OGRE job (which is something I wouldn't mind next time it's between custodians) but I simply wanted to dear a few misconceptions up on behalf of those who've folded zines.

In the case of the Monk I think you did go over the top. Andy & Madi gave their time, undoubted skills and enthusiasm to the hobby for several years and at a point during recent months, they ceased to be zine editors. The reaction should be one of thanks for their efforts, help at smoothing transfers and above all, ongoing contact with them either by the OGRE or by one of Andy & Madi's friends to avoid silly ideas to embarrass them.

Did anyone ever suggest or hint at writing letters to Andy & Madi's employers to praise them for their zine or their efforts for and on behalf of the hobby? No. So why is their failure to properly organise their fold more relevant? You've no real way of knowing whether these hints contributed towards reimbursement (I seriously hope not), but I don't think this has really encouraged a Monk Monk II in a few years time has it?

SA *Back in 1980 one of the subscribers to Variants & Uncles wrote to the Warden of my college in Oxford to complain that I hadn't refunded his £1.85. I was pretty pissed off at the time (because the zine was only about 6 weeks late) but I did refund the money. And no, it didn't discourage me from launching Spring Offensive. I think keeping ex-subbers money is almost certainly theft. As for the effect of messy folds consider the following letter...*

Steve Turner

Your zine is excellent. However, the two zines I used to subscribe to were Electric Monk and Arfle Barfle Gloop. The way these have been run over the past year or so has pissed me off no end and I've lost interest in postal gaming. I shall continue to send orders in for Ducati and reply to other players' letters as I have always promised myself never to NMR (only once in 7 years and that because I ran out of credit so Danny Collman wouldn't allow the orders I'd sent in on time).

LETTERS /// LETTERS /// LETTERS /// LETTERS /// LETTERS

SA *It would be a shame if we lost you - zines do fold from time to time, and I agree that these folds were not handled that brilliantly, but bear with us. Spring Offensive has (I think) never been more than 10 days late ever, and even that's only happened twice in 3 years. I am surprised that Danny wouldn't accept your orders - probably every other GM in the hobby would have - but that's just another example of Danny's user-friendly attitude to newcomers I suppose.*

Pete Gaughan

Held up your zine a couple of days so I could write to you about SpOff. I enjoy your zine even during the long periods when I don't write to remind you of that. The baby news is quite welcome. My wife is now two weeks from her due date, so every bit of baby lore is gobbled up here. The really promising thing is your proof that not all babies are full-time whiner/cryers!

SA *This may sound like crap, but Kate is a pure joy 95% of the time. I have never known her to cry without a good cause. For most of the day she just smiles, giggles and mumbles and in the evening she goes to sleep on her own. But as she gets older keeping her entertained is such hard work.*

The Dip concentration in this issue is very high, for which I thank you. I share your enthusiasm for hobby history so don't go cutting that off thinking it's of interest to nobody - editors should do what they like and let the audience sort themselves out. High point of #34 is the combo Dip/history reprint by Richard Egan. It will be useful to send a copy out whenever some novice gets my zine and asks, "Why haven't you folks ever thought about tweaking the board a little?!" My FtF group came up with its own adjustments, like..." etc. So discount any comment that "military history [or fill in any other topic] doesn't belong in a Dipzine"-some of us can't be bothered to read zines which never admit of a real life outside gaming.

It's getting increasingly difficult for me to smile and ignore the stereotyping of Americans in Brit zines. Oh, I'm quite used to the two traditional claims: that we abuse English (a language which clearly thrives on abuse!); and that we short-change our children's education. (The latter is usually specified as 'having no history of our own to teach (huh?) we haven't seen the importance of imparting Britain's glorious heritage' or 'being abusers of language we're embarrassed to look at Latin and Greek'.) Bullshit of course, no more true than the idea over here that all Englishmen are dour, humourless drips or Cockney drunks. But there are now new slurs popping up, and most are such wild generalisations that I believe it's not really stereotyping at all.

F'rinstance: "Americans are capable of some truly hideous emotional outpourings." If you believe all emotional outpourings to be hideous then maybe the Dour English type is true. If it's just that some of our media is far more emotional than others, and some of that is hideous (I agree) then I'm still left wondering how the Italians, Indians, Mexicans and dozens of others got left out. (For truly hideous try Indian musical cinema!) I'll admit I don't have a clue who Dean Friedman is or what "Lucky Star" might be-I might agree it's hideous-but it seems we've simply become a catch-all slag-ee group. Used to be in this country any time you wanted to tell a moron joke it was "Did you hear about the Polack who...?" Same thing. The Davids Charlton and Oya coming to our defence in the latest Wimm? was quite refreshing.

SA *OK. A semi-retraction. I should have said "Californians are capable of some ..." I mean, who was it invented all the New Age crap?*

Sorry to hear that a new publisher was scolded for starting up. That makes up my mind for me: I'm writing to Chris today to offer a sight-unseen trade. (Oh, yes, Pete, very good, that's how you help the new editor is by increasing his deficit with overseas postage!) Well, just doing my part.

Danny Collman

You seem to have misinterpreted a couple of things. I suppose that you're correct that I seemed 'vehement', but I do need to answer your two points,

one concerning dropouts, the other about Chris Palm and his zine. You have both got certain factors -not quite straight.

Novice dropouts. I don't think I "actively encourage" dropouts (maybe you can throw that right back at me). What I actually say in my version of the 'Introduction' is:

"It is a 'springboard' from which beginners can bounce into the Hobby or bounce right back out again if they don't like postal play." "If you resign from Springboard, or even if you simply drop out, there are no recriminations and no hard feelings."

For me that is an acknowledgement that people totally new to the concept of postal play May not like it, having at least tried it.

SA *Perhaps, but if this is going to happen anyway, why acknowledge it? Far better to shame some of the buggers into finishing the game then give them an honourable discharge.*

Your statement ("Springboard novices drop out) far more so than novices in Mainstream zines" needs clarification. Presumably you know of novices in zines other than your own. You know also where your own novices came from: box-flyer respondents, or gamers of some kind already, responding to advertising, or possibly a third source. How many other zines do you know for a fact have novices, and where are they from? Those novices which come from the Box-Flyer are overwhelmingly non-gamers with no concept of what postal gaming is about. Those from other sources My well be gamers already, with a ready made concept of postal gaming, and who are therefore massively less likely to drop out.

SA *The rate of dropouts in Springboard is approximately double the rate of dropouts in old CGS gamestarts which were composed on people who responded through the flyer. Indeed, the number of dropouts in Springboard would be even higher but for your practice of allowing players in bad positions to drop out of the game, but sign their units over to someone else - which means that someone who no longer receives the zine could survive to the finish even though they'd dropped out many moves earlier. I know of no other zine editor who would accept a proxy in such circumstances.*

Chris Palm and his already successful new zine. Indisputable fact / opinion: Ides of March is exceedingly well produced, very professional in presentation, and already popular (deservedly so). Chris Palm is doing a damned good job so far. So why am I so vehement in my statements about Chris having started it (your word 'vehement' is entirely appropriate)? I suppose I am fearful of supernova and/or the potentially disastrous effect that this project could have on his family.

I entirely agree with you that the Hobby does need new editors I feel however, that there are two types of person who should not normally supply that need:

- The very young person (mid/late teens) whose interests are somewhat changeable, and who are therefore more prone to loss of interest in editing than the more mature person.
- The family man with a young family. We are talking here about a family Man starting a new zine, not an established editor starting a family - though the latter may well decide that the two activities are incompatible, and fold his zine. You, Stephen, considered that option (or said you did anyway), and I would have supported you strongly.

I am concerned about Chris and Ides of March, in the goals he has set himself (always with wife and family in the background of my mind): a 5-day turnaround, with punitive action against himself if the turnaround time is not met (your own intentions, Stephen, on turnaround were pretty strong, but you gave yourself the let-out. Chris has not); contents that will be in the zine; organising a Postal Diplomacy Championship. I feel that he is requiring (not asking) too such of himself.

If Chris Palm is so well organised that he can publish under the conditions that he has set himself, without doing severe damage to his marriage and/or (particularly) his children, and without having a breakdown, then I bow low to him in genuine admiration. But we may not know for another 12 months whether he can survive. I'm not sure I can watch.

LETTERS /// LETTERS /// LETTERS /// LETTERS /// LETTERS

Chris Palm

I believe Danny Collman has written to you about your comments and John Dodds's in Spring Offensive No.34, i.e. re. Danny's attempt to dissuade me from publishing a zine? Brenda spoke to Danny on the phone a few days ago (a query on her Springboard game) and Danny asked to speak to me about the passages in Spring Offensive. As I said to Danny, I do in fact agree with what he has written in that I don't think he should try and stop people publishing zines. Pointing out in a helpful way some of the pitfalls, do's and don'ts (as many have) is one thing, but I feel Danny went further.

Having said that, I think Danny is a little worried that casual readers will assume that he and I are at loggerheads - and the review piece on Springboard in the same issue, danny feels, suggests that he was really angry at me for starting a zine! he isn't, of course, and I'm not pissed off with Danny either. if you ask for advice, then you should expect an honest opinion otherwise the advice isn't worth having in the first place.

SA *I think that Danny's attitude is a little patronising. You and Brenda are old enough to make their own decisions in life. Neil Duncan has a young family and TCP is still going strong after nearly three years - John Harrington and his wife have brought up three kids while he edited Take That You Flend!. If there was one type of person who I think shouldn't run a zine it would be someone who de-motivates both his subscribers and fellow editors. I mention no names, of course.*

Rob Tesh

Rosie's trying to get me to subscribe to TIM, which looks pretty excellent but expensive to a stingy git like me. What are the gamefees for? Is he hiring an outside GM or something? I remain deeply puzzled; don't I distantly remember a postal debate concluding that editors shouldn't charge their readers more than the production costs of the zine? I get the impression that you lose quite a lot on Spring Offensive, so I don't have a problem with your gamefees.

Gihan Bandaranaike

Although I've promised to write an article, I'm afraid I've reneged. I've started a lengthy essay on strategy in Magic (deck construction and combinations) but then realised that it assumes (a) knowledge of Magic's rules and (b) familiarity with common cards. hence it would probably be meaningless to a majority of your readers so I abandoned the project. Mind you, that Colonization article was printed pretty recently, so maybe you will print a good Magic article. but this could lead to other articles on other well-known popular games such as Machiavelli, Civilisation, Axis & Allies, Britannia, History of the World, where would it all end? hence I'm sure that as Spring Offensive is a pure Dip zine, you'll rarely print non-Dip articles which will only dilute your excellent zine.

SA *Not at all. I would willingly and eagerly print articles on other popular boardgames, especially if they are of the introductory type, which may encourage people who do not know the games to try them out. Spring Offensive is a purist Dip zine because I don't feel qualified to run anything else, it is not an ideological preference. So, the answer is YES. Let's have articles on all the games you mentioned and maybe we can turn it into a regular feature.*

I have to admit to being a bit annoyed about the lateness of the last issue, but I immediately felt ashamed and ungrateful when I read your editorial and discovered, to my shock, that you actually lose money in providing Spring Offensive to ingrates like me. As much as £35-£40 per issue by my calculation! You will only recoup about half of this through gamestart fees, assuming an optimistic one gamestart an issue, but you only started charging gamefees recently to discourage gamestarts, understandable with your new domestic duties.

SA *I wish I only lost £40 per issue!. I lose 40p per copy per subscriber - with approximately 150 subscribers that equals £60. On top of that I have over 40 trades, which costs me about another £60 per month. Of course, I get pleasure out of the trades, but to an extent trading*

is necessary to make the zine interesting. Once you throw in the various sundries necessary I reckon Spring Offensive costs me about £130 per issue.

If you get annoyed if a zine is a week late, then you aren't living in the real world. Perhaps Spring Offensive has molly-coddled its subscribers too much - in postal Diplomacy generally one week delays are frequent, two week delays common and month delays not unknown. This is a hobby which we all do for the love of it you know!

I was wondering about a viability of all zine editors forming a collective and buying their paper and print from the same supplier? You know, economies of scale and all that. I work in advertising (on the client side) and we buy all our paper (for flyers etc.) from abroad in bulk for the whole year and, despite the cashflow problem, it works out far cheaper. Your other major cost is distribution so perhaps, as a collective, you could get a business postage licence and save money there as well?

SA *A non-starter I'm afraid. Businesses do not get cheaper postage in the UK for bulk, though they do get discounts for pre-sorting. in any event the minimum single posting under a Mailsort contract is probably equivalent to all the postings made by all the Diplomacy zines for a whole year! Most of us who use professional printing don't buy the paper separately, but even if we did, the logistics of getting the money out of everyone and transporting it around the country would defeat the whole object. We could all use the same printing service, but turnaround time would suffer a lot - and you're the one who thinks it's bad when there's a delay of a week! In the early 80s when one chap in Newcastle printed half the zine in the country, turnaround often took 2-3 weeks!*

Dave Allen

As I'm a keen gamer in the widest sense - I enjoy figure games, role-playing and boardgames of all types, I tend to have a field day when I walk into shops such as Esdevium in Aldershot - I could spend a great deal of money on games and if it wasn't for the fact that I have two very young daughters and very little playing time (approx. 4 hours per week) I'd spend a King's ransom.

Anyway, as I work in and around Midhurst I thought I'd pop up to Esdevium games and drool. I also had a mission - to find out more about these trading card games which I've seen many a spotty youth barter over cards in my local games store. I've heard that these games are mega-popular in the USA and cards are selling for hundreds of dollars. But I was determined not to jump on any bandwagon - just to seek out the allure of these cards.

The staff at Esdevium were very helpful and I was shown no less than ten different game systems ranging from D&D type systems such as Blood Wars by TSR and Magic: The Gathering to a card game equivalent of the computer game Sim City, a WW2 system and of course SF titles such as Galactic Empires and the very popular Star Trek system. there are even card games for die-hard wargamers such as Dixie which re-enacts ACW battles. the prices vary from £5.99 to £8.99 for the starter pack, with additional booster pack cards at about £2 per pack. These booster packs can contain rare cards which supposedly cause envy in your opponent when playing him/her and cause people to offer you stupid amounts of money to own the card. There are so many new systems coming out that I'm sure this whole concept will go wild. The artwork looks excellent on all the systems I saw and the game mechanics give a lot of scope for tactical and strategic play.

So after all the sales talk I opted to buy one starter set and a single booster pack of Blood Wars for experimental purposes only. When I returned to my car I found I had a rare card in the Booster pack... looks like I'm hooked.

SA *This all sounds like dangerous stuff indeed. The manufacturers must be laughing all the way to the bank, there can't be many products with such an enormous mark-up over manufacturing costs. I must resist.*

LETTERS /// LETTERS /// LETTERS /// LETTERS /// LETTERS

Peter J. Birks

All my love to Esme and Kate. Keep up on the exercise machine.

SA *I do hope you're not implying that I am unfit and in need of exercise...*

Andrew Lane

I'm sure you'll be almost as relieved as I am to find out that the operation was a success and the tumour was fully removed (although it had, apparently, begun to penetrate the brain membranes and wear away the bone of the skull, so it's a good thing they got it out when they did). The surgeon went in through the gap between my upper lip and my teeth (I've still got the stitches to prove it) and didn't even have to shave off any of the pituitary gland itself, which is something of a relief, but he did have to cut through the brain membranes and then patch them up with skin from my thigh afterwards (pre-shaved, but I'm wondering if it'll start sprouting in the near future).

I spent Monday night - the most uncomfortable night of my life - with packs up my nose and a bolster strapped beneath it to absorb the blood, an oxygen mask strapped around my face, two drips in my right arm (antibiotics and saline solution) and a monitoring clip on my right hand to keep track of my blood oxygen. As if that wasn't enough to stop me getting any sleep, the nurses woke me up every half hour to ask me where I was and what the date was. I should have had them write the info on my forehead - that way they wouldn't have had to keep bothering me to get it. Over the next few days the paraphernalia was progressively removed, until by Thursday I was feeling fairly reasonable. By Friday I'd run out of decent books to read and could taste the food enough to know I wanted to go home. By Saturday I'd talked the Doctor into letting me go, although I've popped back a few times for blood tests to determine how much of my normal hormone levels. I've recovered. And it's all free on the NHS. What a country.

Being as I was in the neurology ward, there were people wandering around who'd had major tumours removed the hard way - i.e. through trapdoors in their skull. They'll be in for some weeks yet, and every time I tasted the food I kept telling myself how incredibly, amazingly lucky I was. And when I turned on the radio I heard that the Bosnian forces were shelling Serb hospitals (or was it the other way around?). Life has a way of putting things in perspective for you.

I have a feeling that Helen, my wife, found the whole thing more of a strain than I did - she visited a few hours after the operation and saw me in all my bloodied glory - not I sight I had to see, thank God. And what did I learn from all this? (a) Shit things happen to people, and it can't be helped or predicted. (b) Nurses have to put up with a hell of a raw deal, and should get paid a lot more than they do. (c) Doctors work appalling hours, and it's a miracle they do the amazing job they do. (d) Every time I complain about a minor pain from now on, a little voice in the back of my mind will tell me how much worse it might be.

But I feel fine now.

SA *Gosh. I didn't realise that you were having such a major operation. I am sure I speak for everyone when I wish you a speedy and permanent recovery.*

Nic Chilton

I haven't got the last issue of SpOff with me, so I can't exactly remember the letter in the letter col, but I was interested in how to get new people into postal-Dip. Previous to last issue I would have said that we should be trying to get more people to go from e-mail to postal dip, but having thought about it, if you are used to turns every 2-3 days or even up to 2 weeks, then trying to sell 4 or 5 weekly playing probably isn't appealing. So we would be more likely to attract people from other areas, though not just from "history" orientated mags. I am now in 2 postal-Dip games (having started on e-mail) and in both games the vast majority are "into" Sci-Fi/Fantasy, so maybe we should have adverts in that field?

SA *I don't think I agree. Playing postal Diplomacy, with all the added advantages of reading matter and a sense of community, can compliment a career in email Diplomacy - they are not exclusive.*

If you (or someone) wanted to attract e-mailers, it should be on the idea of a regular "mag" that carries articles. Maybe you could have one of your issues as a postscript file, and offer to send it to anyone who requests it via e-mail. I will let you know the results of my "Diplomacy Survey" on the Internet sometime in July/Aug. So far I have 30 replies from US, 17 from UK, and 8 from the rest of the world. Although I originally posted for UK replies only, about half of my replies were from the US, so I thought I may as well expand it, since I can do a country comparison. So far nearly all Americans play by e-mail, with about a third subbing to a postal zine. In the UK half play by e-mail, and the majority sub to a zine. Although the UK figures may be skewed by the Oxford bunch, half of whom presumably think it is sacrilege to play anything other than F-to-F.

SA *Spring Offensive is available (although as a text file) on CompuServe. I may post it in Word format in future as Microsoft have released a Word Viewer program into the public domain.*

I was wondering if you wanted an article on the Internet, e.g. ftp, e-mail, and where the Dip information sources are for those that are thinking of having a look in that area.

SA *Yes, I would welcome an article on Diplomacy on the Internet, featuring rec.games.diplomacy etc. I published an article on Diplomacy on CompuServe a year or so ago, but I've never really touched on playing Diplomacy through a Judge.*

Mark Stretch

I notice from the last Spring Offensive that you have started to allow players to qualify for MidCon by playing Colonial Diplomacy. Why? the tournament in question is the National Diplomacy Championships, not the National Diplomacy Variants Championships. Do you intend to let players qualify by playing any variant? If so, you might just find yourself with rather a few games of intimate diplomacy on your hands.

I have never played Colonial Diplomacy, but from reading Globetrotter, it certainly doesn't seem balanced, and seems a poor choice for a tournament game. Japan can never be eliminated, thanks to the Island surrounded by only one other area. According to Shaun, France is only there to make up the numbers. It doesn't sound to me like the best game to run in a tournament. Also, it doesn't have 34 centres, so how on earth do you intend to score it up and compare it to regular diplomacy? You can't Get-ting to say ten centres in a game of colonial diplomacy is clearly going to be easier than in regular dip, simply because there are so many more centres about in this variant. So, why has it been included in the tournament?

SA *Mark, I know you've just started editing a zine, but if you want to spark controversy you'll have to do better than that!*

The purpose of the Qualifiers is to enable the players with above average Diplomatic skills to qualify for the National Diplomacy Championship. It is to sort the men from the boys, if that isn't a very un-PC thing to say. For this broad brush I don't see why Colonial Diplomacy shouldn't be included (especially given it is only a map-change variant), if it results in more games of diplomacy being played then would otherwise have been the case. Colonial Diplomacy won't feature in the Championship itself. For the purposes of qualifying scores, the Colonial centre total was reduced by the ratio of centres in regular Diplomacy compared to Colonial Dip.

Much as I respect Shaun Derrick's skill in Diplomacy - he hasn't played the game so his thoughts on France may not be well founded. The comment on Sakhalin is valid, indeed I made the same comment myself months ago, but then a one centre Japan is hardly going to qualify for the NDC is s/he?

LETTERS /// LETTERS /// LETTERS /// LETTERS /// LETTERS

Mark Golby

I read with interest the comments made by your other readers re. my letter in Spring Offensive No.32. Although it seems that some other people, including subscribers of TIM, appear to have got the wrong end of the stick. Having re-read my letter, I cannot find any specific mention that I think TIM is a better zine than Spring Offensive. Far from it, I said they "dovetailed nicely" in both subject matter and deadline schedules. A far cry from the assumed idea that TIM is a better zine.

My point, which I shall re-iterate for those hard of understanding, was that your magazine has rather too much hobby history for my personal tastes. Judging by John Harrington's comments he probably agrees although I cannot see me subscribing to Take That You Fiend! just yet bearing in mind his obvious boutique fetish - being fascinated by Pete Tamlyn's flared trousers is an offence in Albania under section 23 of the Tirana Law Code. To further allay John's fears I won't be submitting any History Today articles such as "Early Minoan Pottery and its influence on the Minoan Civilisation" for re-publication just yet. Hopefully any articles I submit to Spring Offensive (or TIM for that matter) are less cerebral and more infotainment.

SA Now listen hear, don't go submitting articles to that TIM zine - it's old creaky zines like this one that need invigorating!

There was one black spot in the reaction to my letter and that of course was Mr Walton-Blobb's small offering. It is of course no wonder to anyone who knows Steve, to find him attacking the fine old tradition of Sleepering (as the collecting of railway Sleepers is commonly known). For those of you who are interested I have a particularly stunning collection of old British sleepers. My prize possession is a set of points from Didcot Power Station, regularly used by the Warship class locos delivering coal to the aforementioned station. Mr Walton-Blobb is, quite frankly, just jealous of me given that I have such a fulfilling and exciting hobby which allows me to enjoy many a balmy summer night counting and stacking my Iron Pile (a Sleeperist term for a sleeper collection).

Anyway, who is he to poke fun - at least I don't while away my hours counting lampposts, as he apparently does by way of a recreational pastime.

SA Scrap? Over to you, Mr Walton-Blobb.

Richard Sharp

This bloke Steve Walton is a pain, but as long as he sticks to identifiable aliases I can live with it. If he suddenly decides to call himself Mary Poppins, I hope you'll let me know.

SA The problems of being a statistician. You do know that there are two Steve Walton's playing in Spring Offensive, don't you?

Allan Gordon

Did you see it?... that Rugby World Cup semi-final? No, not the one featuring Godzilla vs. the Pygmies, but the water-polo job. Incredibly, the inept organisers were caught with thumbs in bums as raindrops kept falling on their heads and could only bleat pathetically about a "pump" being on its way. I don't know if this marvel of technology ever showed up, but what we did see was a handful of Old Black mummies pressed reluctantly into service armed with brooms. Not a white face in sight - save for the obligatory Boss man, waving his arms belligerently in an attempt to herd on the resentful oxen-paced women. Some things never change.

SA Oddly enough something like that occurred to me to. Though I wouldn't have quite expressed it that way.

Colin Hobbs

I feel moved to agree with Graham Smith in issue 34 of Spring Offensive that the worst pop songs are the ones with banal, repetitive lyrics and irritating hooks. Nick Coleman is entirely wrong; the worst pop songs

are indeed the Chirpy Chirpy Cheep Cheeps although time has enveloped that particular song with a cosy mist. The worst ones are the songs you cry out in anguish at before reaching for the "off" switch on the radio, and so you may never know the singer's name. I have nevertheless compiled a list of the truly tortuous.

Your suggestion of MacArthur Park is to my mind the worst pop song of all time. John Dodds's suggestion of Una Paloma Blanca is just outside the bottom 10 and No. 12. The others would be 11: T'Pau, China In your Hand; 10: Freda Payne, Band of Gold; 9: Laurel & Hardy, The Trail of the Lonesome Pine; 8: Talking Heads, Psycho Killer; 7: Windsor Davies & Don Estelle, Whispering Grass; 6: Tears for Fears, Everybody Wants to Rule the World; 5: Wings, Silly Love Songs; 4: Timmy Mallett, Squashed Banana; 3: The Tweets, The Birdie Song; 2: Chris de Burgh, A Spaceman came Travelling.

A lot of these are from the early to mid 70's, which must have been a musical nadir. A special dishonourable mention for Disco Duck, Jive Bunny, Manhattan Transfer and Darts.

SA One interesting feature of this discussion, is that for nearly every song derided as crap by someone, someone else will step forward to defend it. I would certainly defend Psycho Killer, while the follow up single to Silly Love Songs which was Let 'Em In was far worse. Indeed, Wings At The Speed Of Sound was probably one of the worst albums of all time.

Fred Davis

There was a program on Creation Science on PBS (Public Broadcast Service - which the Republicans want to kill) last month. I was amazed to learn that a recent survey showed that about 47% of the American people believe that the Genesis account of creation is literally true. And now, the Fundamentalists wish to push their conception of the Universe on our kids in state schools, not just in the field of biology, but in astronomy, geology, and the other sciences as well. No wonder we're becoming a nation of scientific illiterates. Small wonder that Japan is winning the trading wars.

During the program, the question was raised as to why the Fundamentalists couldn't agree to concede that the Genesis chapter was shown by science to be completely in error. The answer, it seems, is that if they yielded even the tiniest bit on their concept that the entire Bible is holy writ, this would be the opening wedge on an examination on the validity of the entire Bible. The last thing they want is any rational study of the bible by historians and scientists.

The Fundamentalists are also trying to suppress any form of sex education in the schools. Their only platform is "total abstinence" to "keep our children pure". This will only lead, of course, to an increase in teen pregnancy. As I said to Inge as we watched the program, how can they expect teenagers with raging hormones to practice abstinence when even 50% of Catholic priests aren't practising it?

SA Or, as one comedy put it on TV last night, the Catholic Church only accepts sex within the bounds of certain defined relationships - that of man and wife, and priest and child. From the point of view of an outsider, the rise of Christian Fundamentalism in the USA seem indistinguishable from the rise of Islamic Fundamentalism in Iran.

Doug Rood

By the way, how about a series on playing other games e.g. a mugs guide to railway Rivals? I for one am always impressed by the patience of experienced gamers when a novice like me makes up the numbers at an event like ManorCon. Their patience would perhaps be a bit less tested if we had an inkling of the rules and strategies in advance. Others to consider might be 18xx, Civilisation, History of the World etc. - all the games that are played regularly at Cons.

SA See below. Great idea. Any volunteers?

America Latina 1822.

Spring 1822: Moves.

Columbia (Bolivar / NEIL NEWMAN): F(Nica cc)-Hond cc, A(Pana)-Bogo, A(NGre) S A(Pana)-Bogo, F(Cara)-CAS.

Argentina (San Martin / IVAN WOODWARD): A(Cord)-Mend, A(PMon) S A(Cord)-Mend, A(Mend)-Stgo, A(Prna)-Cord, F+(Buen)-Pamp.

Peru (Pezuela / CALUM MACINNES): A(Plat)-RMad, A(Iqui) S A(Plat)-RMad, F(Titi)-Anto, A(Poto) S F(Titi)-Anto, F(Lima)-SPO.

Brazil (Jean VI / COLIN SMITH): F(Amaz) stands, F(Aleg)-Snto ac, A(Prgv)-Snto, F(Bele)-NAO, A(Bahi)-Jane.

Chile (O'Higgins / DOUG KENT): F(Fern)-CHW, F(SPO)-PTS, A(Pamp)-PMon.

Britain (Cochrane / JOHN BOOCOCK): F(BGui)-LAS, F(FGui)-DGui, F(SPat) S F(MAG)-PTS, F(MAG)-PTS, F(Falk)-GSJ, A(Guat)-Hond, A(Jama) stands, F(BHon)-CAS.

Autumn 1822: Orders.

Columbia (Bolivar / NEIL NEWMAN): A(Bogo)-Iqui, A(NGre) S Brazilian F(Amaz)-RMad, F(Nica cc)-CAS, F(Cara) S F(Nica cc)-CAS.

Argentina (San Martin / IVAN WOODWARD): A(Stgo) S Peruvian F(Anto), A(PMon) S A(Cord)-Pamp, F+(Buen) S A(Cord)-Pamp, A(Cord)-Pamp, A(Mend) S A(PMon).

Peru (Pezuela / CALUM MACINNES): A(RMad) S A(Iqui)*, A(Iqui) S A(RMad), A(Poto)-Plat, F(Anto) S F(Lima)-SPO, F(Lima)-SPO.

Brazil (Jean VI / COLIN SMITH): F(NAO)-Cuba, F(Amaz)-RMad, A(Jane)-Bele, A(Prgv)-Plat, F(Aleg)-EBC.

Chile (O'Higgins / DOUG KENT): F(CHW) S F(SPO)-Anto, F(SPO)-Anto*, A(Pamp)-Buen*.

Britain (Cochrane / JOHN BOOCOCK): F(PTS)-Chil, F(SPat)-CPat pc, F(GSJ)-MAG, F(DGui) stands, F(BHon)-CAS, F(LAS) S F(BHon)-CAS, A(Jama) stands, A(Guat) stands.

Retreats.

Peruvian A(RMad), Chilean F(SPO) and Chilean A(Pamp) all disband.

Winter 1821: Adjustments.

Columbia: Bogo, Cara, Nica, Pana = 4. No change

Argentina: Buen(2), Cord, Mend, PMon, +Stgo = 6. Build A(Cord).

Peru: Plat, Cuzc, Lima, Poto, Iqui, +Anto = 6. Builds A(Plat), A(Cuzc).

Brazil: Snto, Bahi, Bele, Aleg, Amaz, Prgv, +Cuba, +RMad = 8. Builds F(Aleg), A(Bahi), A(Snto).

Chile: (Stgo), (Anto), Fern = 1. No change.

Britain: BHon, Jama, BGui, Falk, SGeo, Guat, FGui, SPat, +Chil, +CPat, +DGui = 11. Builds F(Falk), F(BGui), F(SGeo).

Press and Clarifications.

Brazil-Peru: Sorry, but I didn't trust you.

Pax Latina: Native states of Brazil, Columbia,, Peru and Argentina should unite to crush imperialist Anglo invaders.

Cochrane-San Martin: Oi! Stop driving him my way.

Pezuela - Bolivar: Accept de facto situation and we can talk peace. Try to recapture Iqui and play into Cochrane's hands.

Argentina - Chile: "Bye".

Cochrane-Bolivar: H.M.G. could not possibly consider doing deals with drug-traffickers. Besides, Peruvian stuff is better quality!!

Argentina-Brazil: Good idea count me in.

Chile: I thought you couldn't move from Mend-Stgo because of the mountains?

PGB: Mountains are impassable in the Autumn season according to the Spring Offensive rules (rule 10, page 10 of issue 26). San Martin's move was in the Spring.

Change of Address: Neil Newman to 87 Portview Road, Avonmouth, Bristol. This is three junctions up the M5 from me Neil, so our paths might cross some day.

Next deadline WEDNESDAY 2nd AUGUST 1995.

SOPWITH THE BOARDGAME

by Tom Tweedy

Due to being thrust unceremoniously into what I'd always supposed to be a purist mag for Diplomacy, **Spring Offensive**, I've been asked by Steve to write a short introduction to this game to give future (prospective?) players some idea of what the game is all about. I say unceremoniously because this is the third time my games ('Tomcat' and 'Intruder') have been 'chucked out' and re-housed. (I take the time here to thank Steve for his care in re-housing a poor orphaned GM.) John Miller's wry comment when handing me his latest orders was, which will be the next zine to fall to the 'Curse of the Tweedys'. Well Steve's editorial escapades have weathered worse things than the likes of me before - though many years ago now, his student persona for one!

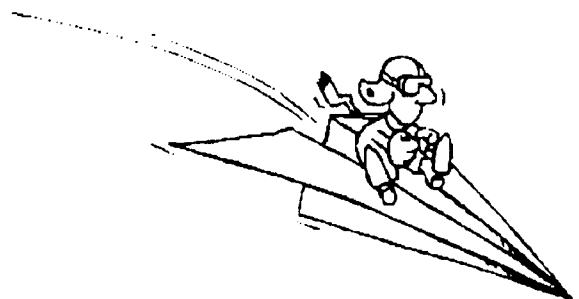
Now, on to the game...

Mainly, the name 'Sopwith' speaks for itself. It's a loosely (very loosely) First World War flight sim boardgame for six players based on dog-fighting bi-planes. I first introduced it to the Play-by-Mail Diplomacy hobby in August 1980 in sub-zine to Clive Booth's infamous **Chimaera**, the very first multi-game PBM zine. (In those days all the hobby zines were purist Diplomacy.) The original boardgame was played by everyone placing their counters in the relevant slots on their own panels, and disclosing the panels simultaneously after it was agreed each person's moves had been done. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd Moves along with the shooting were worked out and damage and shot counters along the edge of the board were adjusted accordingly. After that the six clouds were moved (decided by a die roll) and that was basically all a full Turn consisted of - it was EASY. So much so, it was a cinch to devise postal rules and open it up to the hobby.

Of course the game doesn't sound so exciting here, but the point was, from a player's point of view it was easy to play and easy to send moves in (subscribers felt they were contributing to their favourite zine even if they said or did nothing else). And from the GM's point of view it was a dream to adjudicate (well, easier than Diplomacy anyhow), and it filled the zine up with another six bodies. The game, if you'll excuse the pun, just took off. To date, 232 'T' numbers have been issued to 232 games, and according to my database, to date 483 different contenders have taken part. Not bad for a simple little boardgame.

Unfortunately, the actual original boardgame cannot be had anymore (unless you advertise for a second hand one) as the game went out of print because it was originally aimed at the wargaming aficionados. It flopped because these hardened veterans thought the game was just too simple. They were right, it was! So, when I was editor of **Dib Dib Dib** I bought up all the last copies off the shelves and sold them on a first-come-first-served bases to my subscribers. When the inventor of the game found out the game was taking off in the postal hobby he tried reintroducing it again as a boardgame. Unfortunately it turned out to be a disappointing failure as he thought to change the game by introducing robots and other silly extras. It was definitely NOT the same game.

Thankfully you don't need to buy the boardgame to play it by post. I've uploaded the postal rules to Steve, which should appear alongside this. The rules explain the game much better than I could here. And to help the players (who receive a copy of them on starting) they'll also get printouts of the actual board each Turn. There, you can't have a game fairer than that, now can you?



POSTAL SOPWITH RULES (Mk.III)

by Tom Tweedy

RULES: Rules will be as per the Sopwith rule book unless stated otherwise by the GM.

MOVEMENT: RT = Right Turn; RS = Right Slip; A = Ahead; LT = Left Turn; LS = Left Slip; O or N = No Move (N.B. If this move used in 'Move 2' must also be used in 'Move 3'); and I = Immelman Turn (see below).

IDENTIFICATION: Players may choose a name to fly under e.g. Hissing Sid, Kraut Von Hinkle, etc.

AMMUNITION AND DAMAGE: The ammo and damage counters will be set at: 16 ammo; 12 dge. Players may reload (back up to 16) every time they land at own airfield.

CLOUDS: Clouds will be placed by the GM and players will be notified of their position at the start of the game. They will be moved once at the end of each Turn (i.e. a set of three 'Moves'), ready for the next turn.

AIRFIELDS: At airfields the three airstrips will be noted, from left to right, as ALPHA, BETA, GAMMA [or Left, Centre, Right]. On landing and taking off, players must state their intention to do so - and which air strip they intend to use.

ORDERS: For ease of translation, orders must be written thus:

Turn 1: ALPHA/BETA/GAMMA airstrip [or Left, Centre, Right]
 Move 1: A
 Move 2: A [When landing and taking off players must move
 Move 3: ? Ahead on the two hexes of the airstrip.]

The next season/Turn, with firing, could be written thus:

Turn 2:
 Move 1: A - fire A
 Move 2: LT - fire R
 Move 3: RS - fire L

If a player doesn't specify an airstrip in his orders when taking off, his 'plane will take off on the BETA airstrip. If a player doesn't tell the GM of his intention to land, then he won't be allowed to do so.

FIRING AND BEING HIT: Players are only allowed three bursts of fire per turn. They may be used spread over the three moves (as above), used all in one move (e.g. "fire L+R+A"), or any other combination over the three moves. An asterisk in front of your fire (i.e. A -*fire A) means you have *made* a hit that move. A bracketed 'Move' (i.e. [A] - fire O) means you have been *hit* that move.

AMBIGUOUS FIRING ORDERS: All ambiguous firing orders (e.g. "A - FIRE") will be centralised. If you have three bursts left, it will be L+R+A; if you have two bursts left it will be L+R; one burst will be A.

NMR'S: If a player NMR's while his 'plane is in flight, his 'plane will fly AHEAD for the three moves of his turn. (A player can NMR any number of times, but his 'plane is considered to have crashed when he reaches the edge of the board.)

ACCIDENTS: If a player accidentally flies off the board, he will be considered to have crashed.

REPAIRS: A player may decide he no longer has sufficient endurance left and therefore in danger of being shot down. In this case he may land and for each complete TURN spent on the ground may repair two damage points. A 'plane may not recover to a strength higher than eight points.

ACE PILOTS: When a player has inflicted/reached 40 hits/points on other players (including bonus points) he then becomes an Ace and is allowed to use the Immelman Turn (see below). If, after being shot down etc, his score falls below the 40 mark, the player loses his Ace status. When an ace starts in a new game, the fact that he is an ace will be published for the benefit of new players.

POINTS TABLE:

Hits made on enemy 'plane.....	+1 point
Enemy 'plane shot down.....	+5 points
Player shot down.....	-5 points
Enemy Ace shot down.....	+10 points
Ace shot down.....	-10 points

If a 'plane crashes either by going off the edge of the board or flying into a cloud, the damage points he has left will be shared out amongst the players still in the game. When shared these points will be rounded down.

THE WINNER: The last surviving 'plane is the winner (and is awarded 5 bonus points).

PRESS: Press and alliances are encouraged [and indeed are needed against Aces].

DECEPTION: Deception of the GM is frowned upon.

THE GM'S DECISION IS FINAL!: (So there...)

IMPORTANT: Firing for the ordinary player is in the left, right and ahead directions. The range is 4 hexes, and the damage done to the target depends on the distance.

- Four damage if the target is at one hexagon distance.
- Three damage if the target is at two hexagons distance.
- Two damage if the target is at three hexagons distance.
- One damage if the target is at four hexagons distance.

Ace planes fire better than other planes:-

- Five damage if the target is at one hexagon distance.
- Four damage if the target is at two hexagons distance.
- Three damage if the target is at three hexagons distance.
- Two damage if the target is at four hexagons distance.

(NOTE: The range of four hexes remains the same...)

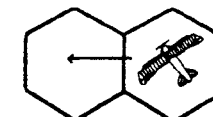
MANOEVRES

There are four basic manoeuvres available to the ordinary pilot (left slip, right slip, left turn and right turn) in addition to the ordinary moves straight ahead and no movement at all. In each case the plane finished facing in the direction shown by the arrow. The Immelman Turn is a manoeuvre available only to 'Ace' pilots. The 'plane finishes faced in the direction shown by the arrow.

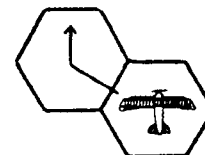
LEFT TURN



RIGHT TURN



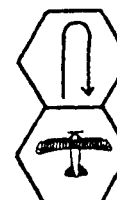
SLIP LEFT



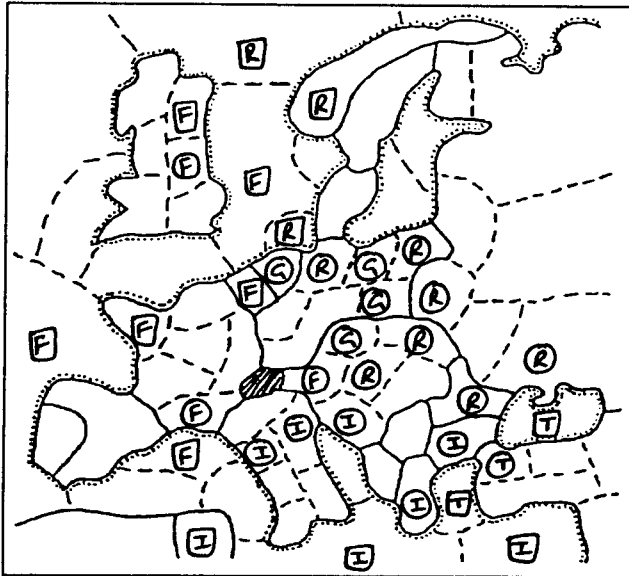
SLIP RIGHT



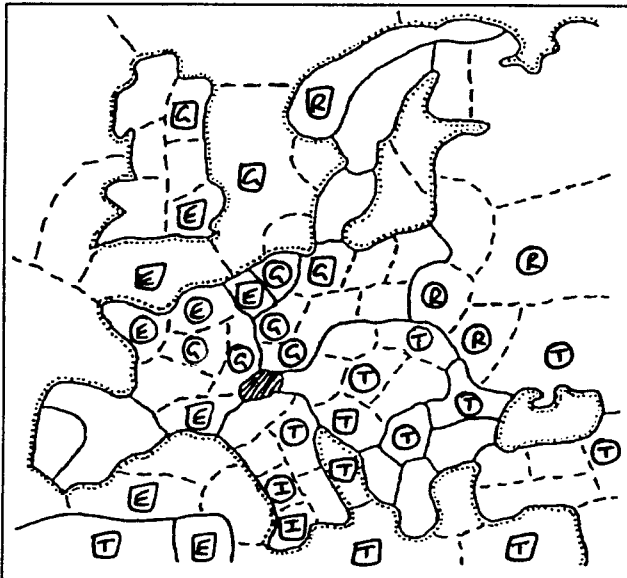
IMMELMAN TURN
(Aces Only)



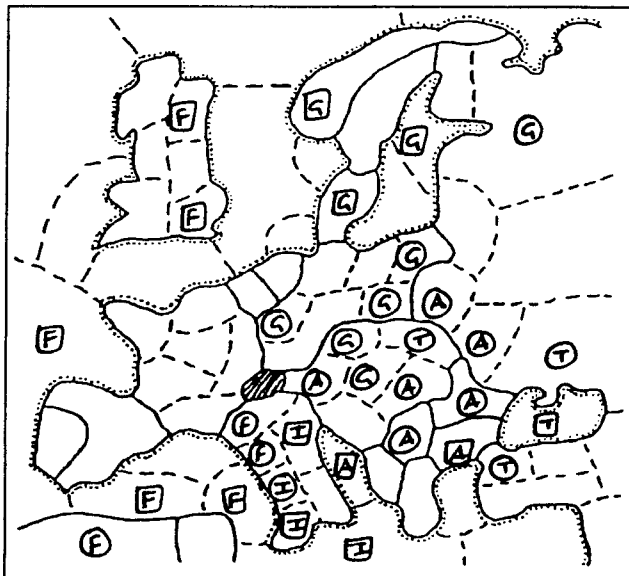
Other manoeuvres are straight ahead and stand still.



COCHISE (Spring 1908)



EURYMEDON (Autumn 1916)



HANNIBAL (Spring 1906)

COCHISE (Spring 1908)

France (JONATHAN BARBER) F(Edi) S F(Lon) - NTH; F(Bel) S F(Lon) - NTH; A(Lpl) - Yor; F(Bre) - ENG (FAILED); F(WMS) - MAO; F(GoL) Stands; A(Tyr) - Vie (FAILED); A(Mar) Stands; F(Lon) - NTH

Germany (ALAN LAIRD) A(Kie) - Hol; A(Ber) S A(Mun) - Sil; A(Boh) S FRENCH A(Tyr) - Vie; A(Mun) - Sil

Italy (MARK WALKER) A(Gre) S A(Bul); A(Bul) S A(Gre) (CUT); F(ION) - EMS; F(Tun) - ION; A(Pie) - Tus; A(Tri) S RUSSIAN A(Vie); A(Ven) S A(Tri); F(TYS) - Tun

Russia (ROY BURNETT) A(Mos) - War; F(NTH) - ENG* (FAILED, DISLODGED TO HEL); F(StP) nc - Nwy; F(Nwy) - NWG; A(Den) - Kie; A(Lvn) - Pru; A(War) - Gal; A(Vie) S A(War) - Gal (CUT); A(Sev) S A(Rum); A(Rum) S ITALIAN A(Bul)

Turkey (PAUL RIDOUT) F(BLA) S A(Con) - Bul; F(AEG) S A(Con) - Bul; A(Con) - Bul (FAILED)

EURYMEDON (Autumn 1916)

England (PAUL RIDOUT) F(ENG) S F(Hol) - Bel; A(Bre) S A(Pic) - Par; F(GoL) - Mar; F(WMS) S F(TYS) - Tun; F(Hol) - Bel; A(Pic) - Par (FAILED); F(TYS) - Tun

Germany (TIM DEACON) A(Par) Stands; A(Bur) S A(Par); A(Bel) S A(Ruh) - Hol (DISLODGED TO Ruh); F(NTH) - Edi; F(SKA) - NTH; F(Den) - Kie; A(Ruh) - Hol

Italy (ANDY BASSETT) F(Ven) - Tri (FAILED, DISLODGED - DISBANDS); A(Apu) - Rom; F(Nap) - ION (FAILED)

Russia (CHRIS STONE) F(Nwy) S GERMAN F(HEL) - NTH (MISORDER); A(Mos) - Sev (FAILED); A(Ukr) S A(Gal) - Rum (CUT); A(Gal) - Rum (FAILED, DISLODGED TO War)

Turkey (JAMES EMONY) F(EMS) S F(ION); F(ION) S F(Tun) (CUT); F(Tun) S F(ION) (CUT, DISLODGED TO NAF); A(Arm) - Sev (FAILED); A(Sev) - Ukr (FAILED); A(Rum) S A(Sev) - Ukr (CUT); A(Bud) - Gal; A(Vie) S A(Bud) - Gal; A(Tyr) - Ven; F(Tri) S A(Tyr) - Ven; F(ADS) S A(Tyr) - Ven; A(Bul) - Ser

Winter 1916 Adjustments:

- E: Bre, Mar, Bel, +Tun, Spa, Lon, Por, Lpl, -Edi, = 8; No change. Builds F(Lon).
- G: Par, +Edi, Kie, Hol, Den, Swe, Mun, Ber, = 8; Gains 1. Builds A(Mun).
- I: Rom, Nap, -Ven, = 2; Loses 1.
- R: Nwy, Mos, War, StP, = 4; No change.
- T: Sev, Rum, Vie, +Ven, Tri, Ser, Bud, Gre, Bul, Con, Ank, Smy, -Tun, = 12; No change.

Wilfred: Endgame defeated, 3 yes, 1 no, 1 abstention. We have a new proposal of 1st T, 2nd G & E, 4th R, 5th I. Votes please, unanimity required, NMR = yes, abstention = no.

Press:

Italy-Germany: Please do see Turkey's move as aggressive, he may be stupid enough to try and take Munich - I wish!

HANNIBAL (Spring 1906)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Shaun Derrick) F(ADS) S ITALIAN F(Ven); A(Tri) - Bud; A(Tyr) - Mun (FAILED); F(Gre) - Bul sc; A(Ser) S F(Gre) - Bul sc; A(Sev) - Rum; A(Ukr) S A(Sev) - Rum; A(War) - Mos (FAILED)

FRANCE (Simon Scott) F(Edi) Stands; F(Lon) Stands; F(MAO) C A(Gas) - NAF; F(WMS) S F(TYS); F(TYS) S A(Tus) - Rom; A(Pie) - Tus (FAILED); A(Tus) - Rom (FAILED); A(Gas) - NAF

GERMANY (Mike Sykes) A(StP) - Mos (FAILED); F(GoB) - StP sc (FAILED); A(Pru) - War (FAILED); A(Gal) - Vie; A(Boh) S A(Gal) - Vie; A(Mun) - Sil; A(Ruh) - Mun (FAILED); F(Nwy) Stands; F(Den) Stands

ITALY (Mark Stretch) F(Ven) S AUSTRIAN A(Tri) (MISORDER); A(Rom) S F(Ven) (CUT); F(Nap) S A(Rom); F(ION) C. FRENCH A(Tus) - Alb (MISORDER)

TURKEY (Steven Slater) A(Rum) S A(Arm) - Sev* (DISLODGED TO Gal); A(Bul) S A(Rum)* (CUT, DISLODGED - DISBANDS); A(Smy) - Con; F(Ank) - BLA; A(Arm) - Sev

Wilfred: Steven Slater has been in hospital recently with a detached retina. I am sure I speak for everyone in wishing him a speedy recovery. Best of luck, mate.

Press:

France-All: Trouble at work, trouble at home, apologies to all. Sorry for the lack of correspondence.

Italy-Angry of Ascot: What would you have liked me to have done in this game. Just about all of my moves throughout the game have been forced.

JIGSAW (Autumn 1905)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (DAVE ALLEN) A(Tri) S A(Ser)* (CUT, DISLODGED - DISBANDS, NRO); A(Ser) S A(Tri) (CUT); A(Bud) - Rum; A(Gal) - Ukr (FAILED)

ENGLAND (KEITH ASHBOLT) A(Edi) Stands; F(MAO) - NAO

FRANCE (GERWYN MICHAEL) A(Spa) - Por; A(Bur) - Mun; A(Pic) S A(Bel); A(Bel) Stands

GERMANY (STEVE BIBBY) F(Lon) - ENG; A(Mun) S A(Ruh) - Bur* (DISLODGED TO Sil); A(Hol) S F(Kie); A(Ruh) - Bur; F(Kie) Stands

ITALY (RICHARD WILLIAMS) F(EMS) - AEG; F(ION) S F(EMS) - AEG; F(ADS) S A(Ven) - Tri; A(Ven) - Tri

RUSSIA (CHRIS PALM) A(Ukr) S F(Sev) (CUT); A(Ber) S FRENCH A(Bur) - Mun; F(Den) - Kie (FAILED); F(Nwy) - NTH; A(War) - Gal (FAILED); A(Rum) - Ser* (FAILED, DISLODGED - DISBANDS); F(Sev) Stands* (DISLODGED - DISBANDS)

TURKEY (DAVID HORTON) F(AEG) - Smy; F(Gre) S A(Bul); A(Bul) S AUSTRIAN A(Bud) - Rum; A(Arm) - Sev; F(BLA) S A(Arm) - Sev

Winter 1905 Adjustments:

A: Ser, +Rum, Bud, Vie, -Tri, = 4; No change. Builds A(Vie)

E: +Edi, Lpl, -Por, = 2; No change.

F: +Por, +Mun, +Bel, Spa, Par, Mar, Bre, = 7; Gains 3. Builds F(Bre), A(Par), F(Mar)

G: Hol, +Kie, Lon, -Den, -Bel, -Mun, -Edi, = 3; Loses 3. Removes F(ENG), A(Sil)

I: +Tri, Ven, Tun, Nap, Rom, -Kie, = 5; No change. Builds A(Ven)

R: Ber, +Den, War, Nwy, Swe, StP, Mos, -Sev, -Rum, = 7; Loses 1. Builds A(Mos), A(StP)

T: Smy, Gre, Bul, +Sev, Con, Ank, = 6; Gains 1. Builds **F(Con)**.

Wilfred: Congratulations to Gerwyn who has just become a father - baby Alexander weighed in at 6lbs 13oz.

Press:

Con-Vie: Here goes!

Paris-Capt. Paranoia: Your nightmare becomes reality.

Con-StP: Sorry pal.

KISS (Autumn 1904)

FRANCE (KIERON QUIRKE) F(MAO) - IRI; F(Bre) - ENG; A(Gas) S A(Bur); A(Tyr) - Vie* (FAILED, DISLODGED - DISBANDS, NRO); F(Lpl) Stands; A(Pic) S A(Bur); A(Bur) Stands

GERMANY (JAMES EMONY) A(Mun) S A(Kie) - Ber; A(Ruh) - Bel; F(Bel) - NTH; F(HEL) - Den; F(Lon) - Yor (FAILED); A(Kie) - Ber

ITALY (ANDREW FEATHER) F(EMS) - Smy; F(AEG) S F(EMS) - Smy; A(Ven) - Tyr; A(Tri) S A(Ven) - Tyr; A(Gre) Stands; F(ION) S A(Gre); F(ADS) S A(Tri)

RUSSIA (MIKE SYKES) F(Cly) - Lpl (FAILED); A(Yor) S F(Cly) - Lpl (CUT); F(Swe) - Nwy; F(GoB) - Swe; A(Pru) - Sil; A(Sil) - Boh; A(Vie) - Bud (FAILED); A(Ser) - Bud (FAILED); A(Bul) S A(Sev) - Con; F(BLA) C A(Sev) - Con; A(Sev) - Con (FAILED)

TURKEY (DAVE ALLEN) F(Smy) S A(Con) (CUT, DISLODGED TO Syr); A(Con) S F(Smy) (CUT); A(Ank) S A(Con)

Winter 1904 Adjustments:

F: Lpl, Par, Bre, Por, Spa, Mar, -Mun, = 6; Loses 1.

G: +Mun, Bel, Den, Lon, Ber, Hol, Kie, = 7; Gains 1. Builds A(Kie).

I: Smy, Tri, Gre, Ven, Tun, Nap, Rom, = 7; No change.

R: Nwy, Swe, Vie, Ser, +Bul, Sev, Rum, Bud, Edi, Mos, StP, War, = 12; Gains 1. Builds A(War).

T: Con, Ank, -Bul, = 2; Loses 1. Removes F(Syr).

Wilfred: We have an endgame proposal of 1st R, =2nd I & G, 4th F, 5th T. Votes please, unanimity required, NMR = yes, abstention = no.

Press:

Russia-Germany: Go get the Frog.

Russia-Italy: Go get the Turk.

Russia-France: Go get the Tea.

MATCHBOX (Autumn 1904)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (ROB WILLS) A(Bud) - Gal; A(Rum) S A(Bud) - Gal* (CUT, DISLODGED TO Ser); A(Vie) S A(Bud) - Gal; F(Alb) - ADS

ENGLAND (PETER BERLIN) F(Nwy) S A(Fin) - StP; F(NTH) C A(Lon) - Bel; A(Bel) - Pic; A(Kie) S F(BAL) - Ber (CUT); F(ENG) S F(IRI) - MAO; A(Fin) - StP (FAILED); F(BAL) - Ber (FAILED); F(IRI) - MAO; A(Lon) - Bel

FRANCE (ALLAN STAGG for TONY HYLAND) F(MAO) - Bre* (FAILED, DISLODGED TO Por); A(Gas) - Bre (FAILED); A(NAf) - Tun; F(GoL) - TYS (FAILED); A(Mun) - Kie (FAILED); A(Tyr) - Pie

GERMANY (PATRICK FINGLASS) F(Ber) S FRENCH A(Mun) - Kie (CUT); A(Ven) S AUSTRIAN A(Bud) - Tri (MISORDER); A(Mos) S RUSSIAN F(StP) nc

ITALY (JAMES BROWN) A(Tun) Stands* (DISLODGED - DISBANDS); A(Tus) - Rom; F(TYS) Stands

RUSSIA (STEVE BIBBY) A(Gal) - War; F(StP) nc Stands

TURKEY (GUY THOMAS) F(BLA) - Bul ec; A(Ukr) - Rum; A(Sev) S A(Ukr) - Rum; F(ION) S FRENCH A(NAf) - Tun; F(AEG) - Gre

Winter 1904 Adjustments:

A: Ser, +Vie, Tri, Bud, -Rum, -Gre, = 4; Loses 1.

E: Nwy, Kie, Bel, Swe, Den, Hol, Edi, Lon, Lpl, = 9; No change.

F: Por, +Tun, Mun, Spa, Par, Bre, Mar, = 7; Gains 1. Builds F(Bre)

G: Ber, Ven, Mos, = 3; No change.

I: Rom, Nap, -Tun, = 2; Loses 1.

R: War, StP, -Vie, = 2; Loses 1.

T: Bul, +Rum, Sev, +Gre, Ank, Con, Smy, = 7; Gains 2. Builds A(Con), F(Smy)

Press:

Italy(Govt.)-London: I'm afraid I'm back and this time I'm mad! Yes, I might have granted you a proxy but at the time our diplomacy was limited and you were in alliance with France!

France(Govt.)-England: Come off it! F(Lpl)-IRI because the Beatles are going to tour the continent?

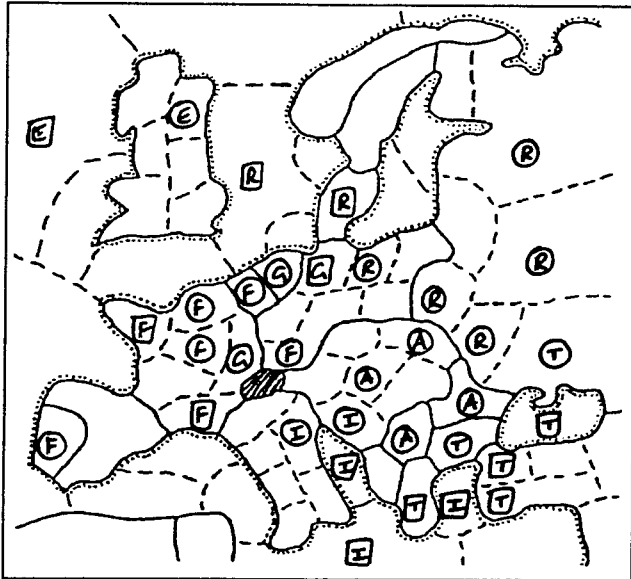
Italy(Govt.)-Vienna & Constantinople: Friends, Romans, Countrymen! What is our plan?

France-Italy: Sorry, but I need Tunis more than you do.

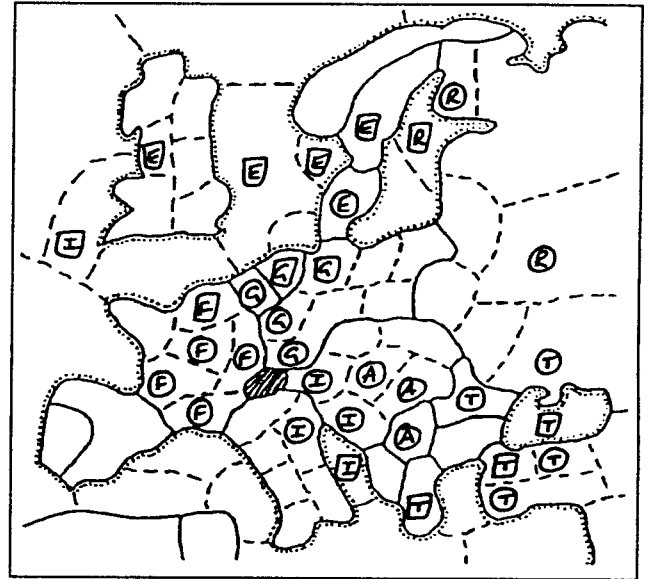
Italy(Govt.)-Venice: You will please return control to me or I will be forced to run up and down from Tuscany to Rome and back for the rest of the game!

Le Soir: Government Heads announced the formation of the **European Union**, an organisation whose sole aim is to prevent the domination of Europe by any non-mainland power. Current membership is 5.2 countries.

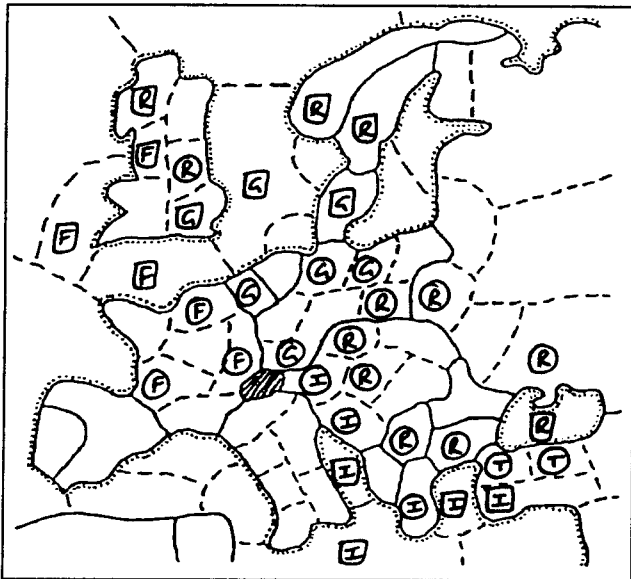
Vienna(Govt.): "Well, Professor, is my lovely new weapon ready?", cackled the mad Archduke, pawing at the slim cylindrical casing. "Almost", agreed the Professor reluctantly. "The final adjustments are somewhat delicate." he fell silent as the conical end piece slid into position with a final "clunk". "There, it's done", he said, adding "you fiend!" under his breath. The Archduke failed to notice this remark. He began pacing around the bench. "At last!" he cried, "now Europe is at my mercy! My armies may not be the strongest, but with this, the largest ball point pen in the world, I can write more and better Press than anyone else!!!" The Professor shuddered at the sound of the triple exclamation mark. (To be continued.)



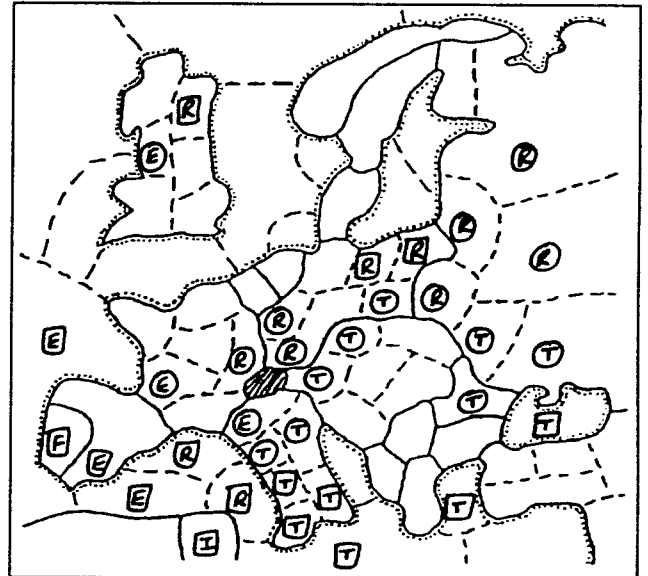
JIGSAW (Autumn 1905)



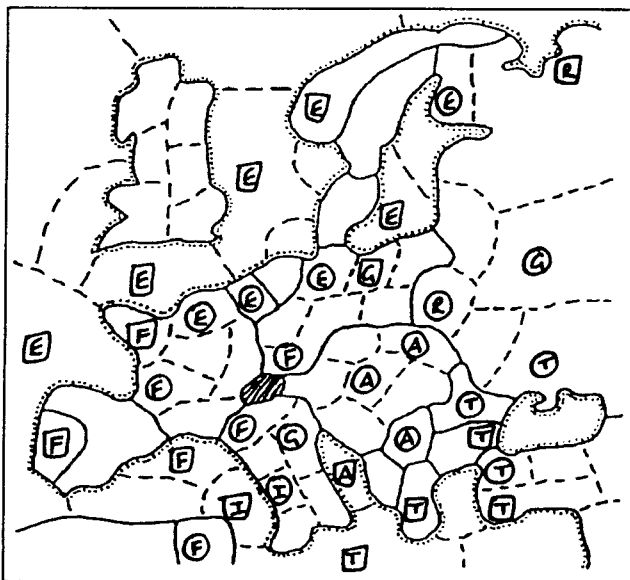
NUCLEUS (Autumn 1903)



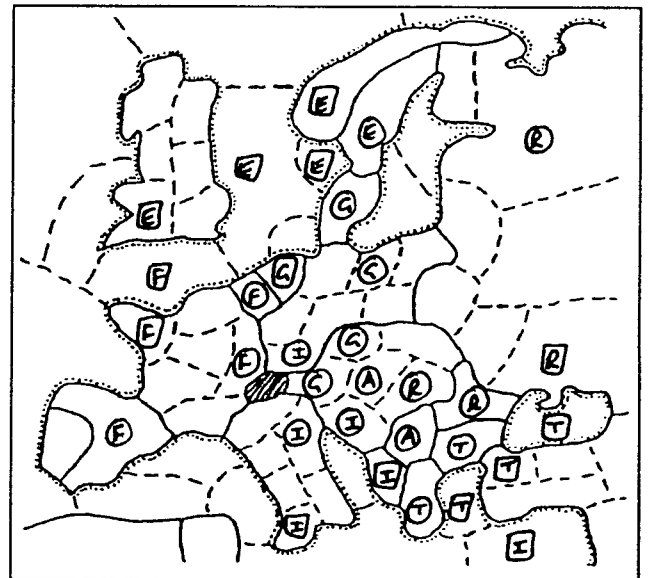
KISS (Autumn 1904)



ORCHOMENUS (Spring 1913)



MATCHBOX (Autumn 1904)



OSIBISA (Spring 1903)

NUCLEUS (Autumn 1903)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (TIM DEACON) A(Vie) - Tri (FAILED); A(Bud) S A(Vie) - Tri; A(Rum) Stands* (DISLODGED TO Ser)

ENGLAND (JOHN BOOCOOCK) F(Wal) - Lpl; F(Nwy) - Swe; F(SKA) S F(Nwy) - Swe; A(Den) S F(Nwy) - Swe; F(NTH) S A(Den)

FRANCE (PAUL ATMORE) F(Pic) - ENG (FAILED); A(Par) - Pic (FAILED); A(Bur) S A(Par) - Pic; A(Gas) S A(Bur); A(Spa) - Mar

GERMANY (NEIL NEWMAN) A(Mun) S F(BAL) - Kie; A(Ruh) S A(Bel); F(Hol) S A(Bel); F(BAL) - Kie; A(Bel) Stands

ITALY (PETER SHORTALL) F(IRI) - ENG (FAILED); F(ADS) - Tri (FAILED); A(Tyr) S A(Tri) - Vie; A(Tri) - Vie (FAILED)

RUSSIA (KEITH ASHBOLT) F(Swe) Stands* (DISLODGED TO GoB); A(Fin) S F(Swe); A(StP) - Mos; F(Arm) - Ank (FAILED)

TURKEY (NOEL TURNER) F(Con) - Ank (FAILED); F(Gre) Stands; A(Bul) - Rum; A(Sev) S A(Bul) - Rum; F(BLA) S A(Bul) - Rum

Winter 1904 Adjustments:

A: Vie, +Bud, Ser, -Tri, = 3; No change.
 E: Lpl, Swe, +Den, Nwy, Edi, Lon, = 6; Gains 1. (No build ordered)
 F: Par, Mar, Spa, Por, Bre, = 5; No change.
 G: Mun, Hol, Kie, Bel, Ber, -Den, = 5; Loses 1.
 I: +Tri, Ven, Tun, Nap, Rom, = 5; Gains 1. A(Ven)
 R: Mos, StP, War, -Bud, -Rum, -Sev, = 3; Loses 3. GM Removes F(Arm)
 T: Con, Gre, +Rum, +Sev, Bul, Ank, Smy, = 7; Gains 2. Builds A(Ank), A(Smy)

Press:

Austria-Italy: Let's talk about Turkey!

Turk-World: Sorry about the lack of a smug press release in the Spring. I didn't want to count my Turkeys until Russia had laid the eggs!

Austria-All: how about some letters?

England-Italy: I suppose you're going to claim that you're just showing the flag. Well, I've seen it and I don't like it, push off back south!

German(Govt.)-All: Please note COA.

Austria-Russia: Bye-bye. Next time order some retreats!

ORCHOMENUS (Spring 1913)

England (RICHARD WILLIAMS) F(Spa) sc S F(ENG) - MAO; F(WMS) S RUSSIAN F(TYS); A(Mar) - Pie; A(Par) - Gas; A(Lpl) - Edi (FAILED); F(ENG) - MAO

France (BOB KENDRICK) F(Por) - MAO (FAILED)

Italy (PAUL BARKER) F(Tun) S RUSSIAN F(TYS)

Russia (JIMMY COWIE) F(BAL) - Ber; F(Pru) S F(BAL) - Ber; A(War) - Gal (FAILED); A(Lvn) S A(Mos); A(StP) S A(Mos); F(GoL) S ENGLISH A(Mar) - Pie; F(TYS) S ITALIAN F(Tun); F(Edi) - ENG (MISORDER); A(Mun) - Tyr (FAILED); A(Bur) - Mun (FAILED); A(Ruh) S A(Bur) - Mun; A(Mos) Stands

Turkey (LORRAINE TULLETT) F(BLA) Stands; A(Ukr) - War (FAILED); A(Gal) - Sil; A(Tyr) S A(Pie) (CUT); A(Rom) - Tus; F(Apu) S F(ION) - Nap; F(EMS) - ION; A(Sev) - Mos (FAILED); A(Rum) - Gal (FAILED); A(Boh) S A(Gal) - Sil; A(Pie) S A(Rom) - Tus* (CUT, DISLODGED TO Ven); F(Nap) - Rom; F(ION) - Nap; F(AEG) S F(EMS) - ION

Press:

French Govt. in Exile: England isn't meant to stomp on Portugal - oldest allies and all that.

England-France: If you always moan like this, the world must be thankful that you don't get stuffed too often. I wish I made mistakes more often if it means you go from claiming you are on the way to victory, down to 0 centres, while I recover from being on the way out. Are you sure you aren't the one making the mistakes? Are you going to be humble enough to admit that you have got the game just a teensy weensy bit wrong? Gosh, have I just seen a flying pig?

OSIBISA (Spring 1903)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Donal O'Nuallain) A(Bud) S A(Ser)* (CUT, DISLODGED TO Vie); A(Ser) S A(Bud)

ENGLAND (Dave Allen) F(Nwy) - SKA; A(Swe) - Den (FAILED); F(NWG) - Nwy; F(Lon) - Wal; F(NTH) S F(Nwy) - SKA

FRANCE (Derek Wood) A(Pic) - Bel; F(ENG) S A(Pic) - Bel; F(Bre) S F(ENG); A(Gas) - Bur; A(Por) - Spa

GERMANY (Gerwyn Michael) A(Ber) - Mun (FAILED); A(Vie) - Tyr; A(Boh) S A(Vie) - Tyr; F(Hol) - Kie (FAILED); A(Den) - Kie (FAILED); F(Bel) S ENGLISH F(NTH) - ENG* (MISORDER, DISLODGED - DISBANDED)

ITALY (Bill Eaton) F(ION) - EMS; F(Nap) - ION (FAILED); F(ADS) - Alb; A(Tri) S RUSSIAN A(Gal) - Bud; A(Mun) - Tyr (FAILED); A(Ven) S A(Tri)

RUSSIA (Rosie Sexton) F(SKA) - NTH* (FAILED, DISLODGED - DISBANDED); A(Lvn) - StP; A(Rum) S A(Gal) - Bud; F(Sev) - BLA (FAILED); A(Gal) - Bud

TURKEY (Gihan Bandaranaike) A(Gre) S A(Bul); A(Bul) S A(Gre); F(AEG) - ION (FAILED); F(Ank) - BLA; F(Con) S F(Ank) - BLA

Press:

Vienna-European Heads of State: Too many stabs spoil the broth.

Scene from an Italian Tragedy: "Et tu Brute?" the victims cry out as he plunges a dagger into the backs of two of his allies. "That's 3 stabs in 2 years! Who to stab next?" he ponders, turning both faces to survey the map. His gaze finally rests on gullible France and faltering Russia. he types beautifully written lies to his remaining allies (after all, he is a journalist) and assures them that he is an "honourable man". And they believe him! But wait! What's this? he has foolishly stabbed to wound, not to kill. And rumours of his first victim's demise have been greatly exaggerated. Oh dear. The audience watch enthralled as his betrayed allies regroup and forma triumvirate vowing revenge. You just know there's going to be tears before bedtime...

Delilah-Philistines: Bastards! When I catch you it won't be just your hair I chop off...

Turks-Wops: Well, well, well... I must thank you for your promised support into Serbia last turn (after I'd cut support to give you Trieste) but mainly for giving me an opportunity to gain a reputation of being a reliable ally and a vindictive enemy when crossed. As for your reconciliation letter, you're dead right I don't write to enemies. And don't bother writing any more lies; I've got enough toilet paper.

Old Italian Proverb: You scratch my back, I'll stab yours.

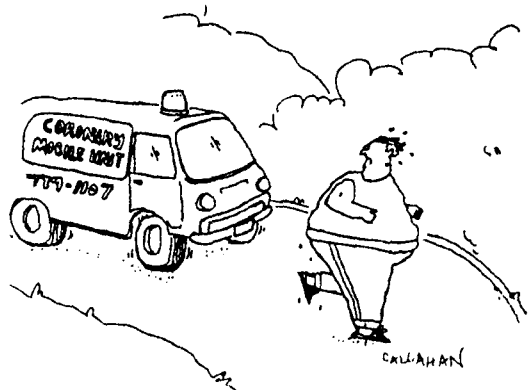
Turks-Frogs: When are you going to realise that, if the Wops defeat me, he'll then turn on you? He'll just eat you u- and spit you out as a third course (Austria was the Appetiser). He's already got more units than either of us! No doubt he's advised you to go for a long drawn-out siege against England's four fleets, which will get you nowhere, whilst he grows faster. And what will he do with his fleets after I'm gone?

Turks-Krauts: Kill the Wops.

Turks-Commies: Let me kill the Wops! Please leave me alone to do this. F(BLA) is purely defensive.

Turks-Beleaguered Serbs: My apologies. Thank you for your support last turn. I just wished I'd trusted you. Expect no further attacks from me. I just want to get the Wops and will celebrate when Trieste is liberated.

Wilfred-All: Do you get the impression that Gihan has fallen out with Bill?



PILOT (Spring 1903)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Steve Walton-Grobb) A(Vie) - Tyr; F(Alb) S A(Tri); A(Tri) S A(Vie) - Tyr (CUT)

ENGLAND (Andrew Feather) F(NTH) - Den; F(SKA) S F(NTH) - Den; F(NWG) - NTH; F(Lon) - ENG

FRANCE (Pete Duxon) A(Gas) - Lpl; F(MAO) C A(Gas) - Lpl; F(NAO) C A(Gas) - Lpl; A(Pic) S A(Bur); A(Bur) S A(Pic) (CUT)

GERMANY (Simon Rose) F(Den) Stands* (DISLODGED TO BAL); F(HEL) S F(Den); A(Mun) - Kie; A(Bel) - Bur (FAILED); A(Hol) - Ruh; F(Kie) - Hol

ITALY (Jonathan Wills) F(ADS) - Tri (FAILED); F(Nap) - ION (FAILED); A(Ven) S F(ADS) - Tri; A(Tun) Stands

RUSSIA (Ivan Woodward) F(Swe) S ENGLISH F(NTH) - Den; F(StP) sc - GoB; A(Gal) S TURKISH A(Rum) - Bud; A(Sev) Stands; A(Mos) S A(Sev)

TURKEY (Phil Barker) A(Rum) - Bud; A(Ser) S A(Rum) - Bud; F(BLA) - Con; A(Con) - Bul; F(Smy) - AEG; F(EMS) - ION; F(Gre) S F(EMS) - ION

Wilfred: please note there was an error in last season's builds. Turkey built F(Smy) not A(Smy).

Press:

Ministry of Photocopies: What's the matter, has the toner run out? Here's a chilling thought: the W-G patented telephone conversation recorder, transcriber and faxer.

Mos(Govt.)-Vie: Sorry old son, but I'm not going to get any bigger around the waist by sticking with you. Your photocopying days are nearly over, I fear.

Pocket Xerox-All: Someone boot Ivan, the old spooner's needle's stuck.

Ber-StP(sc): That's funny - I only built a fleet because you built a fleet (because I built a fleet - because you built a fleet...).

Canon-Xerox: Yes, lovely paper, it photocopies a treat. Ask anyone else in Europe!

Bullfinch: The huge idol with its hideous face painted black and a distended blood red mouth was placed on a tower sixty feet high moving on wheels. Six long ropes were attached to the tower by which the people drew it along. A number of the devout worshippers threw themselves on the ground in order to be crushed by the wheels and the crowd shouted their approval of this pleasing sacrifice to the idol. The Juggernaut was in town!

Incredible Shrinking Man-Rome: Boo!

Forza Italia: Can somebody please tell me what to do with my unit in Tunis?

Austria(Govt.)-Phil: Do you think there's such a thing as male rape?

PYDNA (Autumn 1912)

England (ANARCHY ex-JIM PILLING) F(Lon) Stands

France (JAMES HARDY) F(NWG) Stands; F(Edi) S F(NWG); F(ENG) - Wal; F(MAO) - ENG; A(Pic) S A(Bel); A(Bel) Stands; A(Bur) S A(Tyr) - Mun (CUT); A(Mar) S A(Bur); A(Tyr) - Mun (FAILED)

Germany (KEN FLOWERS) F(HEL) S F(NTH); F(NTH) S A(Hol) - Bel; A(Ruh) - Bur (FAILED); A(Mun) - Bur (FAILED); A(Hol) - Bel (FAILED)

Russia (GEOFF NORWOOD) F(Nwy) - NWG (FAILED); A(Mos) S F(Sev); F(Sev) S F(Rum) (CUT); A(Ukr) S F(Rum); A(Gal) S F(Rum); A(Boh) S A(Vie); A(Vie) S A(Bud); A(Bud) S F(Rum) (CUT); F(Rum) Stands

Turkey (PETER BERLIN) A(Arm) - Sev (FAILED); F(BLA) S A(Bul) - Rum; A(Ser) S A(Bul) - Rum; A(Tri) - Bud (FAILED); F(ADS) S A(Alb) - Tri; F(AEG) - Con; F(Tus) - Rom; A(Bul) - Rum (FAILED); A(Alb) - Tri (FAILED)

Winter 1912 Adjustments:

E: Lon, = 1; No change.
 F: Edi, Bel, Mar, Ven, Bre, Par, Lpl, Tun, Por, Spa, = 10; No change.
 Builds F(Bre).
 G: Mun, Hol, Ber, Den, Kie, = 5; No change.
 R: Nwy, Mos, Sev, Vie, Bud, Rum, StP, Swe, War, = 9; No change.
 T: Ser, Tri, Con, Rom, Bul, Nap, Gre, Ank, Smy, = 9; No change.

Wilfred: I have a gameend proposal of a 4-way draw. Votes please, unanimity required, NMR = yes, abstention = no.

Press:

Con-Par: I told you so.

Turkey-Germany: I quite agree with you, but every time I turn my back on Geoff he sticks a knife in it.

Moscow: Good night Vienna?

German Antagonist-French Friend: Eh? (again).

Con: Apologies for lack of communication - I've been out of the country.

France-Germany & Russia: Now that wasn't very nice, was it?

QUATRO (Pre-Autumn 1903)

I have had a letter from Iain Herron-Stamp indicating that he will not be able to continue with this game - Iain has unexpectedly and suddenly in the middle of a divorce at the moment. However, Iain has appointed Gareth Davidson, 11 Tyersal Drive, Tyersal, Bradford, BD4 8EP Tel. 01274-667703 to take over his units. Therefore, the game is held over for one season. Orders on file from everyone except Russia.

DIPLOMACY II - BEDLAM (Pre-Spring 1908)

There has been a slight cock-up in this game. It all goes back a long way. Are you sitting comfortably? then I'll begin. In A05 (issue 30) Germany finished up one unit short, a build of A(Ber) being accidentally omitted. I don't know if that was my cock-up or Paul didn't order enough builds. At the time Germany had an A(Bur). In S06 I printed A(Ber)-Mun and A(Bur) disappeared from the game report (God knows how). That meant that Germany was now one short - 11 centres, 10 units. No one pointed this out to me. In A06 Germany went up to 13 centres and was given two builds (F(Mar) and A(Ber)), but still remained one short, and still no one pointed it out to me. Germany didn't order A(Bur) again until A07, three seasons after it had accidentally disappeared from the game report. This problem has been exacerbated by the use of a computer to adjudicate - I obviously confused A(Bur) and A(Ber) back in S06 and manually adjusted the program. That error was carried forward through an autumn season because I just trusted the computer, and no one noticed anything was amiss.

While, I completely accept that this was my fault, I'm sorry Paul, I can't really re-adjudicate A07 on the basis that A(Bur) is there, as it has been absent from the game report for too long (3 seasons). Nor would it be fair to re-play A07 given the English stab. So, with reluctance I must hold that the A07 adjudication stands. Please accept my humble apologies, Paul. Everyone should note that Germany disbanded A(Boh), A(Gal) not the garbage which was printed last time.

One further point. the Turkish order F(Lib) S A(Tun)-NAf was invalid as NAf and Lib are not connected by a coast. It makes no difference to the adjudication though.

Thanks to all this I will have to hold the game over. Orders on file may of course be changed.

UTICA (Spring 1910)

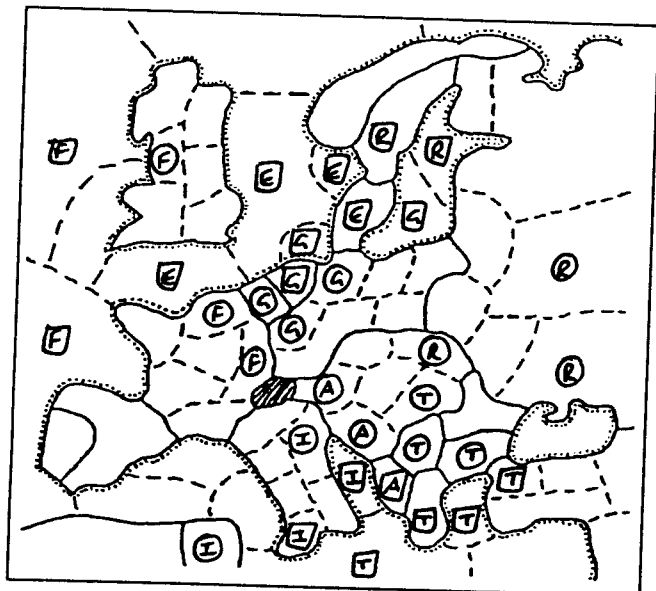
England (ALLAN GORDON) F(WMS) - TYS (FAILED); F(Tun) S F(WMS) - TYS; F(Spa) sc - GoL; F(NTH) - HEL; F(Lon) - NTH; F(SKA) - Swe; A(Nwy) S F(SKA) - Swe; A(Den) - Kie (FAILED); A(Pic) - Bel; F(ENG) S A(Pic) - Bel

Germany (ANDREW LANE) A(Sil) - Mun (FAILED); A(Pie) - Mar; F(Swe) Stands* (DISLODGED TO GoB); A(Pru) - Kie (FAILED); F(BAL) C A(Pru) - Kie; A(Gas) - Bre; A(Par) S A(Gas) - Bre; A(Bel) - Pic (FAILED, DISLODGED TO Hol)

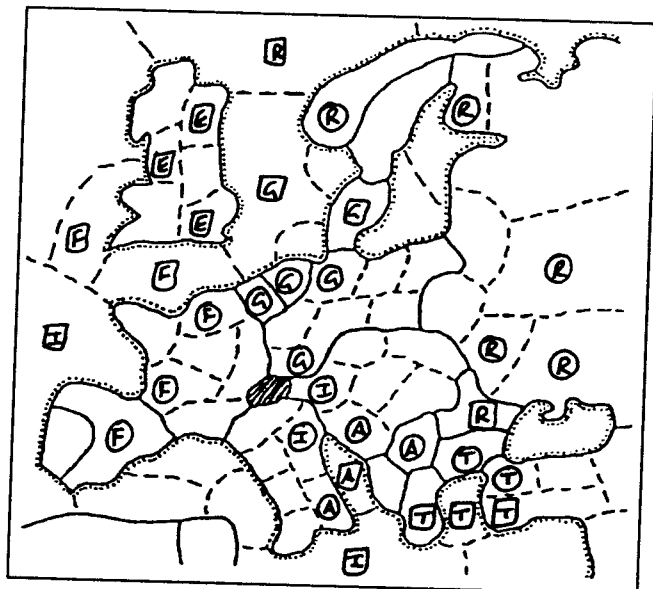
Italy (RICHARD WILLIAMS) F(Con) - BLA (FAILED); F(AEG) S A(Alb) - Gre; F(ION) S F(Nap) - TYS; A(Ank) Stands; A(Alb) - Gre; A(Rom) S A(Tus) - Ven; F(Nap) - TYS (FAILED); A(Tus) - Ven

Turkey (CALUM MACINNES) A(Gal) S A(War); A(Mos) - StP; A(Tyr) - Mun (FAILED); A(Ser) S A(Tri) - Alb; F(BLA) - Con (FAILED); A(Tri) - Alb; A(War) Stands

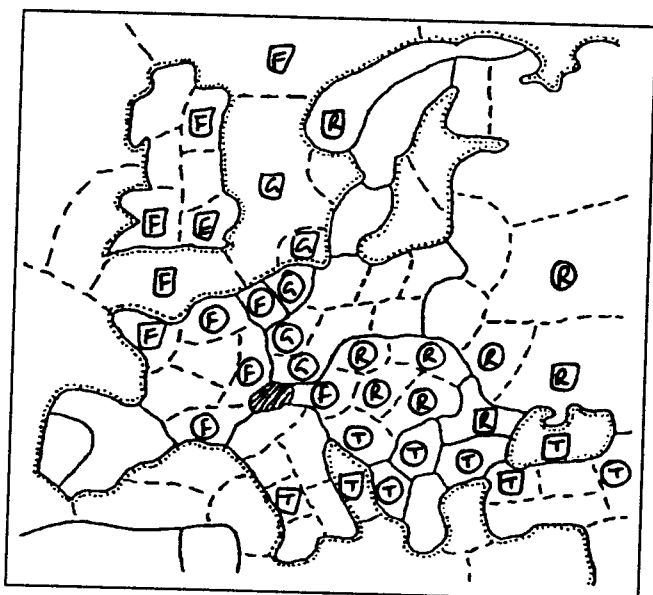
Wilfred: Endgame proposal failed, 2 against, 2 abstain.



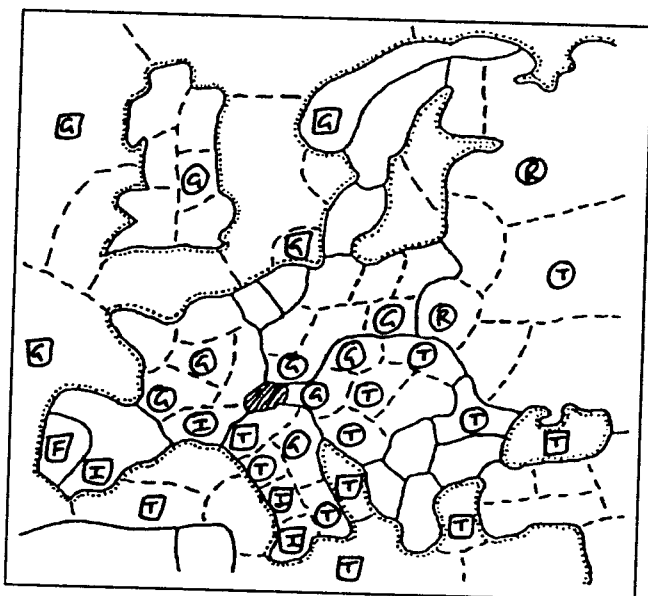
PILOT (Spring 1903)



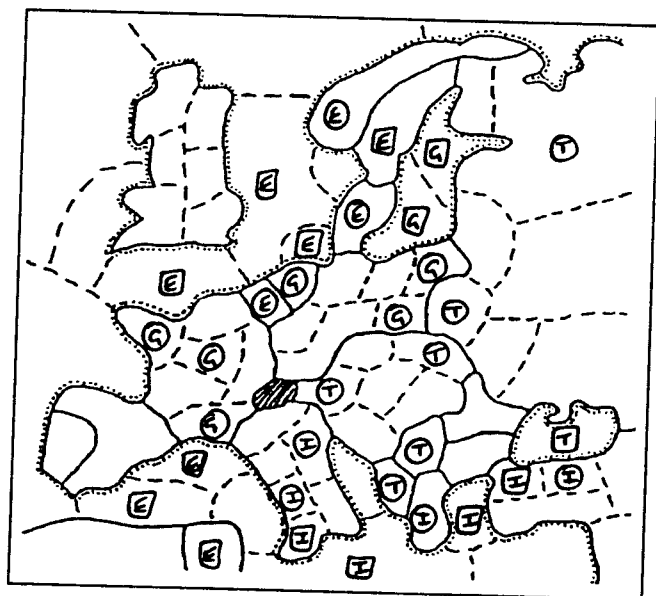
RAINBOW (Autumn 1902)



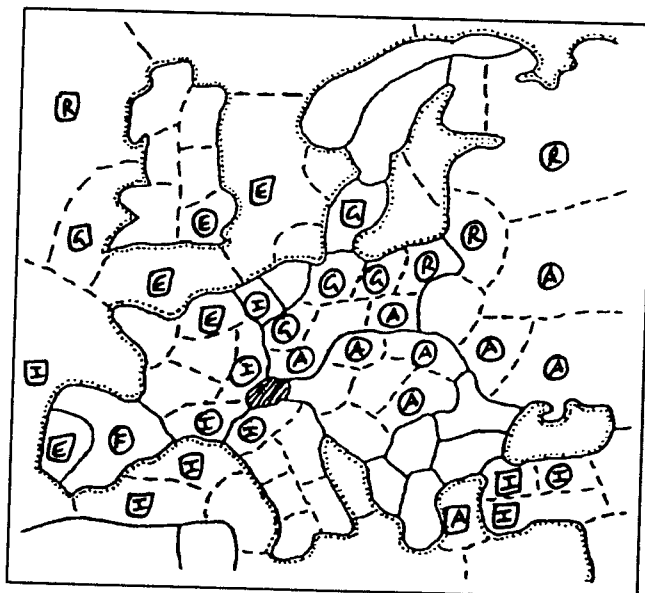
PYDNA (Autumn 1912)



XERXES (Spring 1910)



UTICA (Spring 1910)



FOGHAT (Spring 1907)

Press:

Turks-Wops: Wouldn't your navy be better placed in the W.Med especially given the multi-national force surrounding Italy? If you vacate, I promise to retake slowly to a negotiated timescale. Might be your best chance!

Mr Nice Guy-Sulkers: If you've stopped rapping with me, then the only fun left in the game will have to be handbags at ten paces.

Turkey-All: Please note COA.

Fox: Nice, clean, job. Sudden, swift and painless - although he couldn't be sure about the last, at least the late danish lager boot-legger had made no protest at the introduction of a blade in the rib-cage. Carlsberg were wellpleased and paid without demur... in fact, they had asked about a certain Swedish financier as an encore.

RAINBOW (Autumn 1902)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Steve Ade) A(Ser) S ITALIAN F(ION) - Gre (MISORDER); F(ADS) C A(Tri) - Apu; A(Vie) - Tri; A(Tri) - Apu

ENGLAND (Stephen Fitzgerald) A(Bel) - Bur* (FAILED, DISLODGED - DISBANDS); F(NTH) - ENG (FAILED, DISLODGED TO Edi); F(NAO) - Lpl; F(Lon) S F(NTH) - ENG

FRANCE (Keith Loveys) A(Pic) S GERMAN A(Ruh) - Bel; F(Bre) - ENG (FAILED); F(IRI) S F(Bre) - ENG; A(Spa) Stands; A(Gas) - Bur (FAILED)

GERMANY (Jeremy Tulett) A(Hol) S A(Ruh) - Bel; F(Den) S F(HEL) - NTH; A(Mun) - Bur (FAILED); A(Ruh) - Bel; F(HEL) - NTH

ITALY (Calum Macinnes) A(Tyr) S A(Ven); F(ION) - ADS (FAILED); F(WMS) - MAO; A(Ven) Stands

RUSSIA (Richard Williams) F(Nwy) - NWG; F(Rum) Stands; A(Ukr) S F(Rum); A(Mos) Stands; A(Fin) S A(StP) - Nwy; A(StP) - Nwy

TURKEY (Stewart Cross) A(Bul) S F(AEG) - Gre; F(Con) - AEG; A(Smy) - Con; F(AEG) - Gre

Winter 1902 Adjustments:

A: Ser, Tri, Vie, Bud, = 4; No change.

E: Edi, Lpl, Lon, -Bel, = 3; Loses 1.

F: Bre, Spa, Por, Mar, Par, = 5; No change.

G: Hol, Den, Mun, +Bel, Ber, Kie, = 6; Gains 1. Builds A(Kie).

I: Ven, Tun, Nap, Rom, = 4; No change.

R: Rum, Mos, +Nwy, Swe, StP, Sev, War, = 7; Gains 1. Builds A(Sev).

T: Bul, Con, +Gre, Ank, Smy, = 5; Gains 1. Builds F(Smy)

Press:

Italy-Austria: if you didn't attack...oops.

London-All: Our Ambassador to the League of Nations is bringing a motion calling for the recall of Geoffrey to keep order in the House. We request you all support this motion.

Italy-France: Do you want to adopt this fleet?

XERXES (Spring 1910)

France (JOHN TODD) NMR! F(Por) Stands

Germany (GRAHAM TUNNICLIFFE) A(Lpl) - Yor; A(Bre) - Par; A(Gas) S ITALIAN A(Mar) - Spa (MISORDER); F(Cly) - NAO; F(Nwy) Stands; A(Boh) S A(Tyr); F(ENG) - MAO; A(Pie) - Ven; A(Tyr) S A(Pie) - Ven; A(Mun) S A(Tyr); A(Ber) - Sil; F(Kie) - HEL

Italy (DAVE ALLEN) F(Spa) sc S A(Mar); A(Mar) S F(Spa) sc; F(Nap) S F(Rom); F(Rom) S F(Nap)

Russia (BILLY STEPHEN) NMR2! A(StP) Stands; A(War) Stands; A(Gal) Stands* (DISLODGED - DISBANDS)

Turkey (PATRICK FINGLASS) F(Tun) - WMS; F(ION) C A(Alb) - Apu; F(ADS) S A(Alb) - Apu; F(Smy) - AEG; F(Tus) - Pie; A(Ven) S F(Tus) - Pie* (DISLODGED TO Tus); A(Tri) S A(Vie); A(Vie) S A(Bud) - Gal; A(Rum) S A(Bud) - Gal; A(Sev) - Mos; F(BLA) Stands; A(Alb) - Apu; A(Bud) - Gal

Wilfred: The concession to Germany was defeated, 1 yes, 2 abstentions = no. We have a new proposal of =1st G/I/T, votes please, unanimity required, NMR = yes, abstention = no. With the second, surprising, NMR from Billy, Russia goes into Anarchy.

Press:

Germany-Turkey: nice try Patrick! But the draw's the only result possible.

Turkey-Russia: Having received no reply to any of my letters, I have been forced to play these moves. If you haven't NMR'd fine, I will be able to defend you. But as I write I can only assume you might well have. If I had taken no action it is very likely that Germany would have stormed Warsaw by 1911. hear from you soon?

FOGHAT (Spring 1907)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Ian Coleman) A(Gal) S A(Sil); A(Mun) Stands; A(Boh) S A(Mun); A(War) - Mos; A(Ukr) S A(War) - Mos; A(Sev) S A(War) - Mos; F(AEG) Stands; A(Bud) Stands; A(Sil) Stands

ENGLAND (Chris Stone) F(Edi) - NTH; F(NTH) - ENG; F(Bre) - Pic; F(Por) - Spa (MISORDER - NO COAST SPECIFIED); A(Lon) Stands

FRANCE (Anarchy ex-Deborah Lloyd) A(Spa) Stands

GERMANY (Rob Tesh) F(BAL) - Den; A(Ruh) S A(Kie) - Mun; A(Ber) S A(Kie) - Mun; F(MAO) S FRENCH A(Spa) (CUT, DISLODGED TO IRI); A(Kie) - Mun (FAILED)

ITALY (Steve Watts) F(Naf) - MAO; F(WMS) S F(Naf) - MAO; F(Mar) - GoL; A(Pie) - Mar; A(Ven) - Pie; A(Bur) S AUSTRIAN A(Mun); A(Pic) - Bel; F(BLA) - Con; F(Con) - Smy; A(Smy) - Ank

RUSSIA (Bob Kendrick) F(NWG) - NAO; A(StP) - Lvn; A(Mos) - War* (FAILED, DISLODGED TO STP); A(Pru) - Sil (FAILED)

Press:

The North-The South: Go away, we want to fight amongst ourselves for a bit. Can't you attack each other instead?

Austria-World: Wanted: Nice Holiday Chalets, solid concrete construction - Mr & Mrs Hitler.

Dying Sheep (various)-Dead Sheep in Formaldehyde: Swank.

England-World: Beware, the Vann-Trads are coming.

DIPLOMACY II - ITHACA (Spring 1906)

Austria-Hungary (John Boocock) A(Boh) S A(Sil); A(Sil) S ITALIAN A(Pru) - Ber; A(Tyr) S ITALIAN A(Pie) - Swi; F(Gre) S A(Bul); A(Bul) S F(Gre); A(Vie) Stands

England (John Etherington) F(MAO) S FRENCH F(Por); F(NAO) S F(MAO); F(ENG) C A(Bel) - Bre; A(Nwy) S RUSSIAN F(StP) nc; F(NWG) S A(Nwy); A(Bel) - Bre

France (Billy Stephen) NMR2! F(Por) Stands; A(Gas) Stands; A(Bur) Stands

Germany (Aidan Slattery) F(BAL) C A(Swe) - Pru; A(Mun) S A(Ber); A(Swe) - Pru; A(Ruh) S A(Mun); A(Ber) S A(Swe) - Pru; A(Kie) S A(Mun)

Italy (Dave Aplin) A(Pie) - Swi; A(Mar) S A(Pie) - Swi; F(GoL) S A(Mar); A(Spa) S A(Mar); F(Naf) S A(Spa); F(Tun) - ION; A(Pru) - Ber* (FAILED, DISLODGED TO War)

Russia (Jed Stone) F(StP) nc Stands

Turkey (Allan Stagg) A(Sib) - Sev; F(AEG) - Con; F(Rum) Stands; A(Lib) Stands; A(Mos) S RUSSIAN F(StP) nc; F(WMS) S ITALIAN A(Spa)

Wilfred: France is now in Anarchy.

Press:

Turkey-Austria-Hungary: Your continued silence is a source of some concern. My moves are still defensive, but you had best write soon.

AH-Turkey: Sorry, but no harm done! Honours even, pax (but not Pax Britannica thank God!).

Russia-England: Thanks very much!!

Turkish A(Mos)-Russian F(StP)nc: We love you!

AF to Her Glorious Allies: The first rotten fruit is about to drop off the tree!

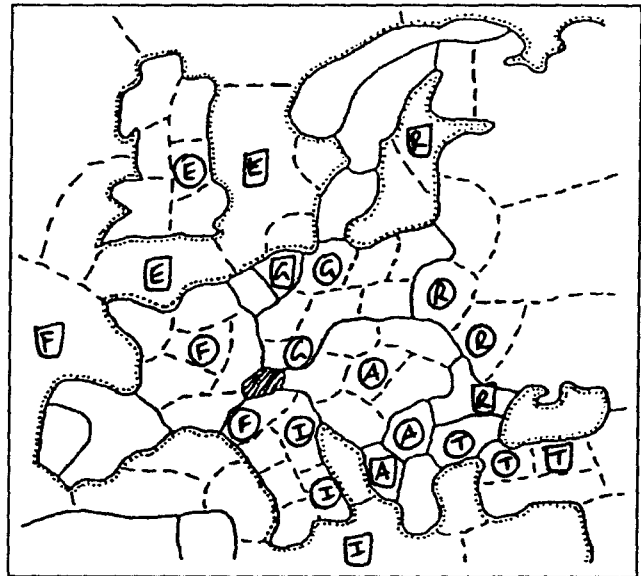
Italy-France: If you are going to NMR, I would be grateful if you would let me know beforehand.

SAILOR (Spring 1901)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Steve Walton-Stein) F(Tri) - Alb; A(Bud) - Ser; A(Vie) - Gal (FAILED) (17.67% Balkan Gambit, Galicia Variation)
 ENGLAND (Veronica Conboy) F(Lon) - ENG; A(Lpl) - Yor; F(Edi) - NTH (24.27% Southern Opening, Yorkshire Variation)
 FRANCE (Mark Scott) F(Bre) - MAO; A(Par) - Bur (FAILED); A(Mar) - Pie (1.50% Burgundy Opening, Piedmont Variation)
 GERMANY (Gihan Bandaranaike) A(Mun) - Bur (FAILED); F(Kie) - Hol; A(Ber) - Kie (7.71% Anschluß, Holland Variation)
 ITALY (Jimmy Cowie) F(Nap) - ION; A(Ven) - Apu; A(Rom) - Ven (1.89% Lepanto System, Venice Variation)
 RUSSIA (Andrew Clawson) F(StP) sc - GoB; A(Mos) - Ukr; A(War) - Gal (FAILED); F(Sev) - Rum (10.55% Austrian Attack)
 TURKEY (Mark Golby) F(Ank) Stands; A(Con) - Bul; A(Smy) - Con (1.99% Houseboat Opening, Constantinople Variation)

Press:

Istanbul-All: D. Perry is alive and well and living in Smyrna.
Berlin-Moscow: The reason why I didn't want you to open A(Mos)-StP was obvious: unless England orders a NWG opening (unlikely), convoying to Nwy will be futile with A(StP) and she will try to steal bel / Hol / Den instead. As you see I have kept my word and will not be standing you out of Swe. I hope you've kept yours.
Par-Ber: What happened to all the good will?
Berlin-Paris: Our spies have intercepted your communique to ze Englanders. ve do not like double-crossing. Frogs! Ze burgundy demilitarization is off! Ve will trust in ze Schlieffen Plan to crush you filthy French swine! Ze kaiser vill not be satisfied until Paris is liberated by ze vermach! Your downfall vill instill zeitgeist and schadenfraude (and any other German words we can think of) in the rest of Europe! Surrender now and ve will be merciful...
Par-Rom-Ber: I heard a vicious rumour.



SAILOR (Spring 1901)

Wilfred: An awkward space to fill at the end of the zine, so let's use it to comment on the opening season of this game. The French opening is interesting, but unlikely to get any further in Italy, so it could prove a bit of an own goal, by denying France Spain. If England proves hostile to France, then Mark will have his work cut out. The TS players who invested in France may have made a mistake. Germany has guaranteed Russia Sweden, and with Rum safe, Russia is on for two builds. Early indications are of an Austro-Italian alliance and maybe a Juggernaut, but it's too soon to call. Greece is the space to watch next season.

TROUBLESHOOTER (Which accompanies Sailor)

The Businessmen

	Crowns		Pounds		Francs		Marks		Lira		Roubles		Piastres	
	Trade	Bal	Trade	Bal	Trade	Bal	Trade	Bal	Trade	Bal	Trade	Bal	Trade	Bal
Steve Bibby	0	400	0	400	0	400	-200	200	0	400	+400	800	-200	200
Nic Chilton	0	400	+400	800	-200	200	-200	200	-200	200	+200	600	0	400
Paul Cockayne	+33	433	+33	433	-200	200	+35	435	+33	433	+33	433	+33	433
Bill Eaton	-200	200	0	400	-200	200	+300	700	-200	200	+300	700	0	400
Patrick Finglass	0	400	0	400	-200	200	+200	600	0	400	0	400	0	400
Mick Haytack	-200	200	+400	800	-200	200	+400	800	-200	200	-200	200	0	400
Kieron Quirke	-150	250	0	400	-150	250	-150	250	-150	250	0	400	+600	1000
Allan Stagg	+300	100	-200	200	-200	200	+300	700	0	400	0	400	-200	200
Colin Smith	0	400	0	400	0	400	-200	200	0	400	0	400	+200	600
Mark Stretch	+200	200	+66	466	-200	200	+200	600	-200	200	+134	534	-200	200
Steve Watts	0	400	0	400	0	400	0	400	0	400	0	400	0	400
Totals	-17		+699		-1500		+685		-917		+867		+233	
\$ Value	0.99		1.06		0.85		1.06		0.91		1.08		1.02	

The Troubleshooters

Steve Bibby: TS(Swi)-Mun = -1% (\$9,990) = Mk 9,424 (Mk 3,141 per unit)
 Nic Chilton: TS(Swi)Std. = 0% = \$10,000
 Paul Cockayne: TS(Swi)-Mar = -1% (\$9,990) = Fr 11,752 (Fr 3,917 per unit)
 Bill Eaton: TS(Swi)-Pie = -1% = \$9,990
 Patrick Finglass TS(Swi)-Bur-Par = -2% (\$9,980) = Fr 11,741 (Fr 3,913 per unit)
 Colin Smith: TS(Swi)-Mun = -1% = \$9,990
 Alan Stagg: TS(Swi)-Tyr = -1% = \$9,990
 Mark Stretch: TS(Swi)-Mar = -1% (\$9,990) = Fr 11,752 (Fr 3,917 per unit)
 Mick Haytack: TS(Swi)-Mar = -1% (\$9,990) = Fr 11,752 (Fr 3,917 per unit)
 Steve Watts: TS(Swi)-Bur = -1% = \$9,990

Those who have not yet invested in a country would be advised to do do this move!



Sin Bin

The following players have Yellow Cards for submitting late orders:

Keir Sanderson (No.30 - 3 days late)
 Dave Allen (No. 31 - 2 Days late)
 Chris Latimer (No. 31 - 3 days late).
 Geoff Norwood (No.32 - 1 day late).
 Rob Tesh (No.32 - 2 days late).
 Tim Deacon (No.32 - 2 days late).
 Aidan Slattery (No.33 - 3 days late).
 Jonathan Barber (No.33 - 3 days late).
 Mark Walker (No.33 - 3 days late).
 James Emony (No.34 - 3 days late).
 Gerwyn Michael (No.34 - 3 days late).
 Keiron Quirke (No.35 - 4 days late).

The Yellow Card expires after six issues. Players with Yellow Cards will not have late orders accepted.

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War of the Ring	See insert
Xerxes	Page 30

The answers to the Anagram Challenge will be published next time - I've decided to offer a copy of **Diplomacy World** No.1 to the winner - a real piece of history.

COA's

Jason Asker, 59 Northfield Park, Soham, Cambridgeshire, CB7 5UZ
 Alan Laird, 37 Thompson Drive, Airdrie, Scotland.
 Calum Macinnes, 28 Duthie Road, Gourrock, Scotland, PA19 1XS
 Neil Newman, 87 Portview Road, Avonmouth, Bristol, BS11 9JG

Mike Pollard, 39 Norman Road, London, SW19 1BW

Waiting Lists

Regular Diplomacy. £3 Gamefee (unwaged can always have one game in progress free). 7 wanted. Paul Reeves, David Teakle, Paul Dowden, Steve Mellors, Roy Britash, David Evans* [* = no pref. list on file]. Only 1 needed. Can we get this one started next time please? If someone comes forward in the next week I'll issue an interim Gamestart.

Downfall of the Lord of the Rings; Free. To be GM'd by Neil Kendrick. This may well be full. Mike Pollard, Bob Wills, Donald Scarr, Mark Golby, Steve Walton-Benoni, Colin Smith, Jed Stone. Details have been forwarded to Neil Kendrick to organise a gamestart. Hopefully Neil will get in touch direct (but this may take a little time as Neil has had a few problems recently).

Gunboat Stab! Hidden movement anonymous Diplomacy. 4 wanted.

Storm from the East II. No gamefee. This is the second version of **Storm** which is an eight-player Mongols and Crusaders variant set in the early 13th century. Rules in the last issue of **Diplomacy World**. To be GM'd by Edmund Morgan. Five wanted. Calum Macinnes, Colin Smith, Ludger Wilmott, Gihan Bandanaraikie Any more?

Hitch-hiker Diplomacy. No gamefee, rules inside. A silly variant which Haz Bond wants to GM, being loosely based on the Douglas Adams stories of the same name. Rules in issue 34. Rosie Sexton, Jed Stone, Colin Smith, Mike Pollard. Five wanted. I'll close this list next time if there's no more interest.

Machiavelli. Colin Smith wants to run a game of Machiavelli, so all those interested please let me know. Maps and rules will be supplied. Ian Coleman, Gihan Bandanaraikie, Mike Lay, Mike Pollard, Calum Macinnes, Patrick Finglass (?), Donald Scarr (?), Paul Hunter (?). Could you send me some rules and a map Colin and I'll send them out.

Colonial Diplomacy. To be GM'd by Shaun Derrick. Steve Walton, Colin Smith, Steve Walton-"Benko", Chris Latimer and Vick Hall. The two Steve Waltons are different people (I think). 2 wanted. It's best to apply to Shaun.

Balkan Wars IV. Rules inside. 7 wanted. GM'd by me.



MAIN DEADLINE

SATURDAY
5th AUGUST
1995

Haz's games: Saturday 29th July

Diplomacy World No.74

Hot off the presses! Highlights include:

- David Smith on Diplomacy in School
- Brian Cannon on Strategy
- Diplomacy creator Allan Calhmer on the Rulebook
- Stephen Agar on Fantasy Variants
- Rules and the map to Storm From the East II variant
- Larry Peery on World DipCon IV
- Foolhardy No.17 discussion column
- ...and lots more!

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ClaCon NDC Qualifiers

The following players qualified:

Colin Smith (90 Points), Don Smith (61 Points), Paul Spurgeon (43 Points). The others scored: Chris Palm (28 Points), Michele Duncan (20 Points), Mark Underhay (7 Points) and Paul Dowden (5 Points).

Colin was conceded an outright win by the other players, as he was on 16 centres after 1908. Many thanks to Mick Dunnett for doing the organising.

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Personally, I can't see you getting the next issue...

A top up would be nice...

NEXT ISSUE ???

Ancient Variants
Is Colonial Diplomacy Balanced?
Germany and Russia - The Odd Couple.
Review of ManorCon
History of the Zine Poll (Pt.4)
The Postal Diplomacy Hobby - Where Next?

...and all the usual stuff