

SPRING OFFENSIVE No. 37



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 stephen@spoff.demon.co.uk.
Price 4p per side (max 70p unwaged), £1.25 international.

DEADLINE = SATURDAY 14th OCTOBER 1995

Editorial

This issue has been a real struggle to put together, mainly because I have been ill - puking my guts up on more occasions than I care to remember. I blame Kate - since she was born I have had a constant round of bugs and viruses, and everyone I know who has kids says it gets even worse once they start going to school. The other problem is that I have had too much material for this issue - if I had printed all the letters I received, included Gihan's article on *Civilization* (which will now appear next issue) and included the variant game reports which I've put on flyers then this would have been a 38 page issue - and to be honest I can't afford to print a 38 page issue. So the editorial knife has been wielded with brutality to make this issue a reasonable length. Sincere apologies to those whose letters got chopped, and I will put some of them in the next issue if there not too out of date.

I have been taken to task by Ryk Downes for not plugging this year's Zine Poll to you all - with luck ballot papers should be included with this issue. Please find the time to fill a ballot in and send it on to Ryk - the Zine Poll is the oldest (and almost the only) hobby institution to stand the test of time and it would be nice to see it well supported. I am willing to forward ballot papers for you - just included them with your orders (and if you don't want me to see your vote, put it in a sealed envelope). The Zine Poll is really the only opportunity around for letting editors know that you appreciate their efforts (or alternatively for letting them know how little you appreciate their efforts...). Please give it your support (surgical or otherwise).

So far my comments on the PDGS have been greeted with a deafening silence. Now there are three possible explanations for this. (A) you all think this is a great idea, both obvious and simple, and feel it unnecessary to give it your enthusiastic support because it is such a good idea how could anyone in their right mind disagree with it; (B) you think it is an utter crap idea but don't want to come out of the closet and say so; or (C) you don't give a toss. Now, in the absence of any other evidence my natural inclination is to assume that the answer is (A). If you want to disabuse me of that notion you'd better let me know. I would like to discuss this idea at MidCon and I will copy and circulate to any such meeting any submissions I get from people who want to comment but can't get to the meeting. Talk to me. Or John Marsden. Or Chris Palm.

It can't have escaped your attention that in recent issues I have been including material relating to boardgames other than Diplomacy. Is this a welcome addition? Or do you consider it a waste of space? *Spring Offensive* is now 3 years old, what direction should I take it in now? What would you like to see more of? What do you want to see less of? I'm game for most things if there is demand, the only thing I can't do (for the time being) is take the zine back to a 4 weekly schedule (because of family commitments). But I really would value some positive feedback on what *Spring Offensive* should cover in the next 3 years (up to issue 74?).

One new idea that I would like to get off the ground is a Guest Editorial. Of you feel strongly about something, connected to the hobby or not, and feel you would like to bring your views to the attention of the entire readership, then you are invited to submit a Guest Editorial for publication. Ideally no more than 350 - 400 words, nothing will be rejected save that it should be legal and decent (we'll let honesty and truthfulness pass - 2 out of 4 ain't bad).

Just before I go, a plea. Come to MidCon! A flyer is enclosed. Read it and send Brian your money. There's nothing more fun than spending a weekend with good company, playing games and drinking intoxicating liquor into the early hours. It is always good to put faces to names. I'll probably be on the desk handing out name badges and bumpf, so hopefully I'll see many of you there. Even if you haven't qualified for the National Diplomacy Championships Final, don't despair. A last ditch qualifier will be run on the Friday night (start 4.00pm) and even if you don't qualify you can still play on the Saturday and/or Sunday, just you'll be competing for the MidCon Trophy against the other non-qualifiers and your odds of winning it are statistically much higher than you might think. Wouldn't it be nice to go home with something for the mantelpiece? (More than I've ever managed...).

Finally, **Games & Puzzles** has gone bust - so whatever you do, don't send off any subscriptions!

Time for bed said Zebedee...

Forthcoming UK Cons

London Diplomacy & Games Meet

Saturday 30th September at the Royal George pub, Evershot St., next to Euston tube. Starts 11.00am for 11.30. the pub serves food and we have part of the pub exclusively for our own use. This is a major qualifier for the National Diplomacy Championships, but other games are played as well. Contact Vick Hall (0171-700-2008) to reserve a place, just in case. Be there.

Midlands Diplomacy Qualifier

Saturday 14th October at 403 Camphill Road, Nuneaton, Warwickshire, CV10 0JU. This is being organised by Mark Golby - if you're interested, give Mark a ring on 01203-392317. Bring beer and sandwiches, other games will be around to play as well.

MidCon 95

10 - 12 November 1995 at the Royal Angus Thistle Hotel, Birmingham. Registration £8 (£10 after 1st September), rooms are £27 per person per night (sharing) and £34 per night (single). All rooms have en suite bathrooms, TVs etc. etc. Late bar and reasonably priced (and normally quite palatable) lunches. Special attractions this year include a Balti Buffet on the Saturday night and a Saturday late night Music Quiz designed to test the resources of even Mick Haytack. MidCon also hosts the National Diplomacy Championship (qualifier on the Friday night, starting 5pm) and the infamous MidCon quiz (late on Friday). Anyone who wants to enter the Diplomacy Championship was has not pre-qualified is welcome to join in and compete for the MidCon Trophy. Enjoy a friendly and comfortable Con before the trials and tribulations of Christmas. To register send your £8 to Brian Williams, 30 Rydding Lane, Millfields Estate, West Bromwich, West Midlands, B71 2HA. You pay for the hotel at the Con.

MASTERCON III

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. Enquiries to 313 Woodway Lane, Walsgrave, Coventry, CV2 2AP
UK Conventions

External GMs

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

Sandra Bond (GM Deluge and Diplomacy: The Gathering in her sub-zine *Swanee Whistle* - when it turns up!) 15 Buckler Road, Oxford, OX2 7TE. 01865-516367

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

Shaun Derrick (GM Colonial Diplomacy and Editor of sub-zine, *Globetrotter*.) 313 Woodway Lane, Walsgrave, Coventry, CV2 2AP

Neil Kendrick (GM Downfall) 63 Windmill Lane, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands, B66 3ES. Tel. 0121-555-5597.

Dave Tant (GM Arfle Sopwith) Dave Tant, 32 Nursery Avenue, Bexleyheath, Kent DA7 4JZ

Tom Tweedy (GM Sopwith) 29 Stanley Hill Avenue, Amersham, HP7 9BD.

Steve Watts (GM Railway Rivals): Lesh Lane Post Office, 124 Lesh Lane, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA13 9EQ. Tel. 01229-432797.

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

Pride of place must surely go to Richard Sharp's achievement of publishing 200 issues of Dolchstoß in a publishing career spanning 23 years. Richard did more than anyone else to create the postal Diplomacy hobby in the UK and the debt this hobby owes him is immense. Issue 200 wasn't a celebratory issue - indeed, after 200 issues what is there left to be said? - but it marks only the second time a UK zine has passed 200 (and I have real doubts that we should count Courier anyway as it was rarely more than a couple of game reports in it). As has been said many times before, it is a shame that Richard can't be coaxed out of his corner into commenting on the Diplomacy hobby in general, as I am sure Richard would liven things up considerably. As it is Dolchstoß is now a strangely introspective zine, but worth getting if only for the occasional Sharpism (a good example in issue 200: "loony left" is a tautology anyway"). Richard Sharp, Norton House, Whielden Street, Amersham, Bucks., HP7 0HU.

Haz confirms his transformation to Sandra Bond in issue 35 of Up Around The Bend and I have to say that given all the problems in her life recently (like losing her job, having nowhere to live and changing gender) it is a miracle that the zine is still with us. A thin issue but what do you expect with all that happening. One announcement that should be made is that Sandra is seeking nominations for the Pimley Award for meritorious service to the Diplomacy hobby in 1995. Well, I'll nominate Chris Tringham & John Dodds for Hobby News, Richard Sharp (for 200 issues of Dolchstoß), and Shaun Derrick for organising the UK's first EuroDipCon. That'll do for a start. Sandra Bond, 15 Buckler Road, Oxford, OX2 7TE.

Issue 6 of The Ides of March turned up with its usual level of efficiency, though there are signs that unless Chris Palm is careful he may replace Richard Sharp as the new right-wing establishment hate figure for the more liberal wing of the hobby. Chris's conservatism and his Catholicism make for an interesting exchange of views on such topics as sexuality. Included in this issue were the rules for Tritreme which have been developed by Steve Walton and seem to be a kind of PBM version of Buccaneer which looks appealing. One feature in TIM is the idea of readers debating a different topic each issue and this time the question is "which single person has contributed most to the postal Diplomacy hobby" to which the answer must be Richard Sharp. The answer is so obvious the question scarcely needs asking. With 9 games of regular Diplomacy and 2 gunboat after 6 issues, TIM is undoubtedly a success story. Chris Palm, 45 Cecil Avenue, Ardleigh Green, Hornchurch, Essex, Royal Mail11 2NA.

Three and a half months after the last issue Assassins Handbook No.16 has finally arrived. I'm sure John wouldn't mind me saying that AH is not one of the success stories of all time - launched a month after Spring Offensive it's managed quite a bit less than half the number of issues in the time since then, while Diplomacy in the zine has been pretty much a write-off (though Conquistador has been a success). AH does have the capacity to entertain, but lacks any real games-related content, zine reviews and (most important of all) regularity. Probably the central reason why AH hasn't set the world on fire is the fact that John Morgan appears to have a life other than Diplomacy. And good luck to him, at least that makes him substantially less "sad" than myself. As for issue 16, well there's some lettercol chat on John's election as a local councillor (and his spoof piece about the rituals of office) and a report from the Death of Fascism II mega-game, which made interesting reading. John Morgan, 22 Meadow Road, Sutton, Surrey, SM1 4NF.

A Little Original Sin No. 34 seems like a quite chunky issue. A bit of discussion on racism etc. in the letter column, but I was particularly intrigued by Jame Hardy's description of Spring Offensive as "impersonal, cold and lacking in character." Now I will happily acknowledge that I am not the best person to reflect on such a judgement, but I would be interested to hear what you all think - is James right? Elsewhere the lettercol starts to get a little personal with Alan Frost determined to needle Kim Head - I only hope Kim can resist the temptation to respond as Alan is a wind-up merchant first class and should always be ignored as a matter of course. Vick seems to be struggling with Stewart's adjudication program (which for some reason he can't get to print any Turkish orders (?)), but no doubt everything will be sorted in time for the next issue. Vick Hall, 115a Offord Road, Islington, London N1 1PQ (and don't forget the postcode).

If anything makes me feel nostalgic for the Diplomacy hobby of the 1970's it is the *smell* of Springboard. Although I don't know how to describe it, the odour of duplicating ink on absorbent paper is very

evocative. Not that I would want to go back to using a mimeo duplicator myself, but it would be nice to control the means of production. Anyway, issue 88 has a nice piece by Danny reflecting on the 50th anniversary of the dropping of the bomb and the annual reprint of the 5 page article on how Springboard is produced. Interesting to note that Springboard only has 71 subscribers which seems a bit on the low side for the Hobby's one and only novice zine, especially given its prominence through the Diplomacy box flyer. Are the newcomers all drying up? Unlike practically every other editor Danny does at least pass some comments on my proposals for a Postal Diplomacy Guarantee Scheme, which he seems to find acceptable. Danny Collman, 14 Westover Road, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham B20 1JG.

It looks like Mopsy 112 will be the last in the line, or at least the last as an independent zine - apparently after 12 years Mopsy (or Masters of the Prime to give it its full name) is going to become a sub-zine in Kim Head's Life's Rich Pageant (which I would review if I'd been sent a copy, but as I haven't I can't). I suppose Mopsy hasn't sparked for the last few years, it's always been a bit thin and it's only when Bryan is writing about his Viking adventures that the zine has come alive. Still 100+ issues is such a select club, Mopsy will be remembered.

Another zine biting the dust is The Brothers Grim (previously known as Argle Bargle). In issue 49 Simon Lindsay has announced that issue 50 will be the last as he feels he has achieved all he can with the format and wants a break. Although The Brothers Grim seemed to exist as a hobby in its own right, with no Diplomacy to speak of, I have always regarded the zine highly as an experience and I will miss it.

All these folding zines are just too depressing for words. Let's turn to another fresh-faced baby of a zine - how about issue 3 of One Man's Rubbish (must ask Mark why he picked that title), which has every indication of becoming the sort of solid respectable zine which we need as the backbone of the hobby. As a post-ManorCon issue, it dwells on that a little, but there's also a very good coverage of general hobby news issues. With the Zine Poll coming up Mark lists ten possible contenders for the top spot in this year's Zine Poll, but rather modestly omits his own zine, which I think could easily make the top ten. Features unique to OMR are a Diplomacy Analysis feature, which is a nice idea only slightly let down by the quality of the maps used, and regular articles about motor racing - this time an article on Fangio, by common consent the greatest racing driver ever, who died a few weeks ago. OMR looks as if it will successfully straddle the Diplomacy / multi-games zine line and any zine which can do that is welcome indeed. Mark Stretch, 2 Over Mill Drive, Selly Park, Birmingham, B29 7JL.

In his piece on possible contenders for the Zine Poll this year, Mark Stretch notes that The Cunning Plan has seemed a little less impressive recently and certainly recent issues have been thinner than usual. Issue 32 (help - he's catching up!) did have a decent selection of zine reviews, but for me the highlight was Neil's description of his first try at playing "Warhammer". Personally I will have nothing to do with Games Workshop, a company which has dubious practices when it comes to freeing itself of competition and which has done untold harm to both the figure wargaming hobby and the general games hobby, especially since they stopped distributing any games not made by themselves and helped put most independent games shops out of business. A curse on them. Neil Duncan, 25 Sarum Hill, Basingstoke, Hants, RG21 8SS.

Where Is My Mind? seems to have settled down to an irregular printing schedule, but compensation comes in the form of the most rambling, eclectic and lengthy letter column in the hobby (though down to a mere 25% of the zine in issue 7). Where else can you discuss Greenpeace, heroin, Ireland, Potato Head Blues, Rolf Harris, Duran Duran, Lily Savage, eating horses and live organ donations? Steve Howe's contributions are always entertaining and it's good to see that he is still contributing to the hobby although his zine (A Step Further Out) folded 3 years ago. Although David Oya's review of ManorCon was a laugh, personally I could do without reviews of five different Star Wars publications (no, I'm, not interested in the history of the planet Tatooine or blueprints of Hans Solo's Millennium Falcon Battleship), but hell, let's have something for everyone. David Oya, 24 Kingsway, Banbury, Oxon, OX16 9NY.

Here's a plug. Anyone who wants to play Dip in an efficient and regular multi-games environment should note that Mick Haytack still needs one player to complete his Diplomacy list in Bloodstock. Help him out. Mick Haytack, 43 Swanmore Road, Littleover, Derby, DE23 7SD

A REVIEW OF THE 1995 RUNESTONE TOP TEN

by David Hood

For the uninitiated, the Runestone Poll is the USA's postal Diplomacy hobby's answer to the Zine Poll in the UK. Zines are ranked from 0 to 10 by each voter, as are subzines and GMs. There are some technical rules about how the scoring is done and which zines are eligible, but you don't care about that, do you? I didn't think so.

Well, the top zine of 1995 is Maniac's Paradise, published by your very own DW editor Doug Kent (6151 Roylton Drive, Dallas TX 75230). This zine has been at or near the top of the zine rankings for several years now, and for good reason. This is really the only zine currently in the hobby with a heavy game load, lots of good reading material, and that comes out frequently and faithfully. Doug's commitment to timely issues borders on the insane, but it is a wonderful bonus to what is already an excellent zine. I have never played in MP, but I certainly enjoy the political and hobby discussions in there. Recently, Doug has included a fair amount of real life stuff about his move to Dallas and so forth which has been quite entertaining. Another bonus with this zine is Doug's monthly "Zinc Recap" feature where he reports on the contents of zines he subs to - an excellent way to keep your finger to the pulse of the hobby.

The second place finisher was also no surprise. Pete Gaughan's Pereleandra has shared the spotlight with MP for the past several years, with the two being head-and-shoulders above the rest of the field. The strength of Pereleandra has traditionally been its letter column, which since the demise of Benzene has been the best place for the hobby's political discussions. Pete (1236 Detroit Ave. #7, Concord CA 94520) is also an excellent writer on his own account, as the issues of the Zine Register under his editorship have shown. Pete also runs a variety of games, particularly of the non-Dip variety, that have been a big draw for subbers. The zine has fallen off in quality just slightly, which is why MP took top honours, but is still a wonderful read. The only minor quibble is the \$1.50 issue price, but that long-standing price is now becoming closer to the hobby norm than it once was.

Coming in third this-year was CDD Medical Journal, published by Tom Pasko. I have never seen this zine, but know that its primary focus is Avalon Hill's newly published Dip variant Colonial Diplomacy. Some have found the variant to be an exciting way to rediscover the pre-stalermate line fluidity that Diplomacy used to have, while others have complained of the variant's imbalance. I don't have an opinion on that, but at least the zine devoted to the game has proved popular.

The three most involved hobbyists right now are probably Doug Kent, Pete Gaughan and Andy York (PO Box 2307, Universal City TX 78148). It is no surprise, then, that Andy's zine Rambling Way took fourth place in the 1995 Runestone Poll. This zine has a very large circulation, and is reported to be an excellent place to play Dip and variants. I am myself playing a game of Acquire by flyers though that is not in the main zine. For reading material the zine is a little inconsistent. There have been some great subzine articles before, particularly by correspondents outside the US, but other times the non-game material is sparse. Andy's zine is very regular, though, which makes it a good place to sign up for a new game. He also has one of the most complete convention listings out there, and keeps it updated. The list also reflects Andy's interests in other areas, such as Star Trek.

Eric Ozog has been in the hobby for a very long time, as has his wife Cathy Ozog. When his fifth-place zine Ramblings by Moonlight first started, it was sort of a modest effort to run a couple of orphans from Cathy's defunct Cathy's Ramblings and maybe a new game or two. It has grown into a charming zine full of Eric/Cathy tales, environmental articles and general reading material, along with several games with VERY LEGIBLE MAPS. (I believe good maps and printing player addresses each issue are the marks of a good game report.) I have played here and can attest to the good GMing and timeliness that Eric puts into the games. Eric (PO Box 1138, Granite Falls WA 98252) used to publish Diplomacy by Moonlight back in the early 1980s, so it's no surprise he knows what he's doing now.

Jim Burgess (664 Smith St, Providence RI 02908) publishes what I believe to be the only three-weekly Diplomacy zine still out there. The Abyssinian Prince, which came in sixth this year, not only runs several Diplomacy games, it also serves as host to the hobby's only discussion column that is both by mail and Email. For a window on the mail world (that is fast eclipsing the traditional "snail mail" hobby), TAP is a very useful addition to the zine scene. Many of the issues discussed by Emailers are the same ones that used to be discussed in postal zines, from crossgaming to the ethics of letter-passing. Jim also features a lot of music chat and a fannish style that is not as prevalent as it used to be in the hobby. Heck, Jim is an outright dinosaur with his three-weekly deadlines - that is a holdover from the hobby of ten or twenty years ago.

I've lost count how many times Conrad von Metzke has published, ceased publishing, and again started publishing the seventh-place zine Costaguana. Conrad (4374 Donald Avenue, San Diego CA 92117) has been doing it for about as long as the hobby has been around. He is truly one of the hobby's most distinguished old-timers, and his zine is usually the source of good reading material and decent games service. At one point Conrad was running games of Railway Rivals separately, but I believe all that has now been consolidated into Costaguana. (Have you noticed that the two big sub hobbies of the early 90s, United and Rail games, have both started disappearing from the postal scene?) I have not received Costaguana for some time, but that is something I need to remedy. It was always a good zine to get, and I'm sure it still is.

One of the freshest zines of the 1990s has been Tom Howell's off-the-shelf. The zine, which finished eighth, is primarily a place to read about Tom's life in the woodlands of Washington state, and to read about his interests, from dancing to geography. Tom is an excellent writer, and when I was playing out a standby position, was a good GM as well. I have not seen this zine in a few issues, but it is worth a look.

Coming in ninth was the only Canadian offering in the top ten, Making Love in a Canoe. For years editor Brent McKee (901 Ave. T North, Saskatoon Sask. S9L 3B9) was a frequent and prolific contributor to other zines, and his talent for writing has been carried over to his zine. It is a wonderful place to read about Canadian events, much as Paschendaele and Northern Flame used to be. Brent also writes on naval history and hobby matters, so it is quite a read when it arrives. He has had some trouble on the GMing end, as he himself has admitted in times past. But this one is truly worth getting for the reading material alone (although the digest format and poor reproduction sometimes makes it difficult to read).

Rounding out the top ten is a zine I am particularly fond of, Dave Wang's Metamorphosis. One reason I like it is the tremendous amount of Star trek discussion (the same thing which makes Doug Kent gag I am happy to announce). It is full of good writing, on this and other subjects, together with games galore. Dave (PO Box 1325, Summit NJ 07902) has had some problems with regularity in the past, though, so don't expect the slavish attention to deadlines that you would get in MP or Carolina Command and Commentary.

Well, those are my thoughts on the top ten zines. I can't let this article go without commenting on the devastating losses suffered in the zine ranks over the past couple of years. When I saw the full list of only thirty zines in the poll results, I could hardly believe it. It wasn't that long ago that thirty would simply have been the top half of the listing. There is no question that the postal side of the hobby is ebbing, and the zines are one bellweather of that change. The big challenge facing our hobby is not the perennial fight over who is going to hold Dip Con, or how World Dip Con is going to rotate around the world, but instead how to attract Diplomacy enthusiasts, postal or not, to our conventions in general, and how to get them involved in the hobby's lettercols and other events. Let's put our heads together on this one.

[Reprinted from Diplomacy World No.75]

NAMING THE MOST POPULAR OPENINGS

by Mark Nelson

I'm writing a program to generate opening frequencies for email games and I'm comparing the names of the openings in your article in Spring Offensive No.35 to the ones in the *Diplomacy A-Z* to see if I missed any out. Here's some comments on your nomenclature. Most of the differences are fairly minor and could just be due to Richard changing his mind as to what to call different openings.

F(Tri)H, A(Bud)-Ser, A(Vie)-Gal Southern Hedgehog, Houseboat variation.

Since the defining characteristic of the Hedgehog is F(Tri)-Ven it makes more sense to call this opening the Houseboat Opening (Southern Hedgehog variation).

F(Tri)H, A(Bud)-Ser, A(Vie)-Bud Hungarian Hedgehog

I call this one the Houseboat Opening (Hungarian Variation). F(Tri)H being the defining characteristic of the Houseboat Opening, F(Tri)-Ven being the defining characteristic of the Hedgehog.

F(Tri)-Alb, A(Bud)-Gal, A(Vie)-Tri Squashed Hedgehog

Richard Sharp calls this opening the Galician Gambit. The order F(Tri)-Alb is not consistent with the defining characteristic of the Hedgehog.

F(Tri)-Ven, A(Bud)-Ser, A(Vie)-Tyr Italian Attack

I would call this the Tyrolian Variation of the Hedgehog. The Italian Attack is F(Tri)-ADR, A(Bud)-Tri, A(Vie)-Tyr, known as Von Metzke's Opening in the States.

F(Edi)-NTH, F(Lon)-ENC, A(Lpt)-Wal French Attack

I would call this the Wales Variation of the Southern Opening. Richard calls the Italian Opening A(Ven)-Pie, A(Rom)-Tus and F(Nap)-TYS the French Attack.

F(Bre)-ENC, A(Mar)-Spa, A(Par)-Gas English defence, Gascony Variation.

F(Bre)-ENC, A(Mar)-Spa, A(Par)-Bur English defence, Burgundy Variation.

Richard calls the first one of these just the English Defence and I don't have a name for the second. Your nomenclature makes more sense. I suppose we should F(Bre)-ENC, A(Mar)-Spa, A(Par)-Bre the Brest Variation of the English Defence... (has it ever been played?)

Would it make more sense to rename the English Attack as the English Defence, Picardy Variation?

F(Bre)-MAO, A(Mar)-Spa, A(Par)-Pic Picardy Opening

F(Bre)-MAO, A(Mar)H, A(Par)-Pic Picardy Opening, Marseilles Variation

Richard hasn't named the second variation, but your nomenclature makes sense. What would you call F(Bre)-MAO, A(Mar)-Bur, A(Par)-Pic? Richard calls this the Belgian Gambit, but it's now consistent to call this the Burgundy Variation of the Picardy Opening. Similarly Richard calls F(Bre)-MAO, A(Mar)-Gas, A(Par)-Pic the Gaspic Opening, the Gascony Variation of the Picardy Opening is systematic.

The Burgundy Opening. You seem to have called any opening which involves either A(Par)-Bur or A(Mar)-Bur which doesn't otherwise have a name the Burgundy Opening. It works, but in my opinion a stem for any opening should involve two orders... So I'll have to disagree with you here! I'd prefer to take F(Bre)-MAO and a unit to Bur as the stem for the Burgundy Opening. This takes care of all the openings you have called the Burgundy Opening except for F(Bre)-Pic, A(Par)-Bur and A(Mar)-Spa. I don't have a name for this! Then the Vineyard Opening and Inverted Vineyard should be called Burgundy Openings (Vineyard Variation) and Burgundy Opening (Inverted Vineyard Variation).

F(Kie)-Den, A(Ber)-Kie, A(Mun)-Bur Anschluss, Danish Variation

This should be Anschluss, Burgundy Variation. F(Kie)-Den is an integral part of the Anschluss strategy, in fact it's a defining characteristic of the opening together with the aim of leaving A(Mun) after Spring 1901.

Blah Blah Blah Holland Variation.

Richard generally uses Holland Variation. However if you call F(Kie)-Den the Danish Variation it seems to me that you should call F(Kie)-Hol the Dutch Variation!

F(Kie)-Hol, A(Ber)-Kie, A(Mun)-Bur Anschluss, Holland Variation

This is NOT an Anschluss because there is no F(Kie)-Den! Richard calls it the Burgundy Variation of the Holland Opening.

(Kie)-Den, A(Ber)-Sil, A(Mun)-Tyr Polish Blitzkrieg

Richard doesn't seem to have named this opening. An American fan called the stem A(Ber)-Sil and A(Mun)-Tyr the Frederick Opening which is what I use, with appropriately named variations.

A(Ven) H, A(Rom)-Apu, F(Nap)-ION Lepanto.

Also known as the Classical Lepanto.

A(Ven)-Tyr, A(Rom)-Apu, F(Nap)-ION. Lepanto System (Tyrolian Variation).

Since Richard calls the A(Ven)H, A(Rom)-Nap opening the Naples Lepanto it seems systematic to call this the Tyrolian Lepanto.

A(Ven)-Apu, A(Rom)-Ven, F(Nap)-ION Lepanto System, Venice Variation

Richard calls this the Anti-Hedgehog Lepanto. Mark Berch calls it the Rotational Lepanto.

A(Ven)-Tyr, A(Rom)-Ven, F(Nap)-TYS Tyrolian Attack, Tyrrhenian Variation

Richard calls this McGivern's Opening.

A(Ven)H, A(Rom)-Tus, F(Nap)-ION. Tuscan Folly

Following the Naples Lepanto this is systematically the Tuscany Lepanto. [SA: I disagree. This opening prevents the convoy to Tun which is the Lepanto's essential ingredient!]

A(Ven)-Tri, A(Rom)-Nap, F(Rom)-ION. Stab Lepanto, Neapolitan Variation

I don't like calling this the Neapolitan Variation of the Stab Lepanto because the stem of the Stab Lepanto is A(Ven)-Tri *and* A(Rom)-Ven. The Key Lepanto (Naples Variation) is probable more accurate.

The systematic naming of Russian Openings... deserves an entire article! Here are some handy hints to follow from the *Diplomacy A-Z*.

Russia has more possible opening moves than any other power. In order to produce a rationalised system for naming Russian Openings Richard Sharp introduced the following plan (expanded by myself to include 6-7): (1) F(StP)sc-Fin is considered to be a move to GoB. (2) F(StP)sc H openings are known as the Northern Houseboat Opening. (3) F(StP)sc-Lvn is known as the Kronstadt Opening. (4) Misordered units are considered to have been ordered to hold. (5) Openings are named after the order of A(Mos). There are six systems: The Inertia System, the Livonian System, the Northern System, the Southern System, the Ukraine System, and the Warsaw System. (6) Where the alternatives F(Sev)-BLA / Rum / Arm / Holds are possible these are known as the BLA/Rum/Noah's Ark/Southern Houseboat variation. (7) The combination of orders A(War)-Ukr and F(Sev)-BLA is known as the Turkish Attack Variation rather than the Ukraine and Black Sea Variation.

A(Con)-Bul, F(Ank)H, A(Smy)-Con Houseboat Opening, Constantinople Variation

Richard has called this the Boston Strangler, although your name is more systematic.



IT WAS TWENTY YEARS AGO TODAY

Dolchstoß

July-October 1975

Issue 32 (July 1975)

For the twelve months starting in July 1975 any recipient of Dolchstoß would also have found in the envelope a copy of Victor Ludorum which was the House Zine of the National Games Club edited by John Piggott. This meant that much of the NGC housekeeping was taken out of Dolchstoß which became rather slimmer. Victor Ludorum (or, as Richard Sharp affectionately referred to it, Toad) is worth an article to itself, so this piece will concentrate on Dolchstoß alone.

Much of the material in this issue referred to DesConTent, a major con organised by the NGC and held under canvas in a field in Henley-on-Thames the previous month. It is perhaps a sign of how close the Diplomacy community was twenty years ago that Richard estimates that he could name 90 of the 110 or so people that were there - nowadays I'd guess that only the most seasoned con-goers could manage more than 25%. The organisation of the Diplomacy Championship (sponsored by Philmar - the then UK manufacturers of Diplomacy - and Games & Puzzles) was interesting. Basically people organised their own games throughout the Friday and the Saturday (playing in as many as they liked) and on the Sunday morning the people with the best performance for each country fought it out in a Final. In a way this quite appeals to me as a departure from the heavy organisation at ManorCon and MidCon, but I feel it may be just a little too anarchic to work - still it may be worth at least reconsidering how we run our Diplomacy Tournaments and considering whether or not there are other ways of going about it. Back in 1975 it was Richard Walkerdine who walked away with the honours.

Part of Richard's editorial was taken up with condemning Mick Bullock's observation that the majority of the hobby was on the left wing of the Tory Party. Richard believed that the truth was that your average sensible hobby member was far more right wing than that (citing radical hobby members who have long since gone) and even denouncing Pete Birks as a bourgeois reactionary. Nice to see that Richard's politics haven't changed in the past twenty years - in his editorial he advocates "outlawing communism, shooting one coal miner in ten, disbanding parliament and playing Test cricket against South Africa." On the other hand Richard did not have his vociferous views on the use of standbys in Diplomacy games in those days (today he refuses to play in games which use them) as in issue 32 there is a call for more standbys to join the Dolchstoß standby list. Some things do change then.

Issue 33 (August 1975)

Richard's dislike of miner's was popular with his readership (the three day week still being fresh in the mind). Ian Moseley noted "Shooting one miner in ten is quite unnecessary. You should merely cut the lift ropes while they are down there, and only send food down when they send cal up." Richard agreed, "Yes, I'm a reasonable man and that seems a humane alternative, as well as saving valuable ammunition which will soon be needed elsewhere, no doubt."

Despite congratulating Mick Bullock for producing 50 issues of 1901 and all that and also congratulating Richard Walkerdine for 3 years publishing Mad Policy, the main thrust of issue 33 was an attack on Richard Walkerdine and Mick Bullock for their habit of ending games as 17-17 draws. Dolchstoß 33 had the endgame statements for BDC 21D in which the WalkerBullock carved the game up between them and neither tried for the outright win. This philosophy of how to play Diplomacy was abhorrent to Richard and his comments almost amounted to an article in their own right. In essence Richard's view was:

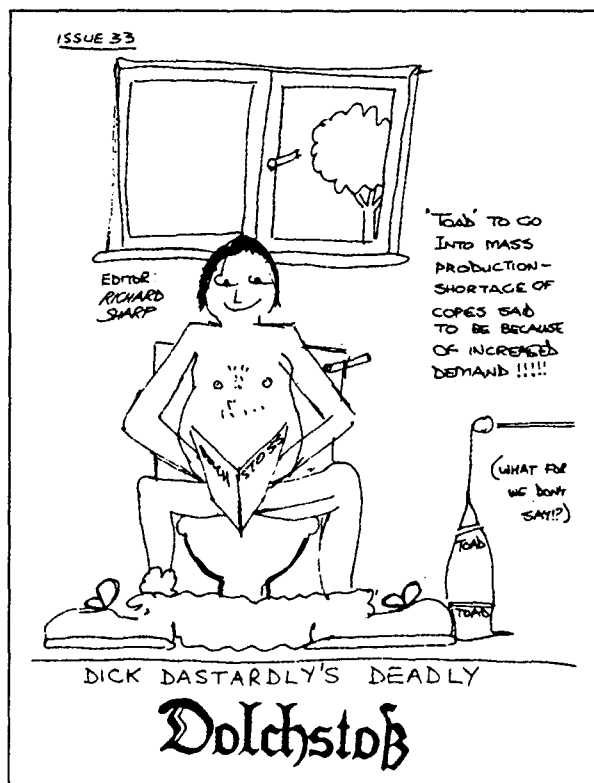
"I think this two-way draw thing is absolutely disgraceful, and nothing to do with what the game is "all about". Diplomacy, like any other decent game, is about winning: writing letters and so on are an important part, but not the object. And don't talk to me about "joint wins": 17 - 17 is a

draw. It is my view that if you go into a game without intending to win it, or if you abandon the attempt to win while there is still a reasonable chance of doing so, you are not merely running the game for other people, but you are wasting your own time. A well-generated Grand Alliance can hardly fail to prevail (granted perhaps a modicum of luck in the first year), so why not just claim the game from the start and sign on to ruin another one? In the present case, most of the game need not have been played - there was no point whatever to it... If it were possible, which alas it isn't, I would like to see game-long alliances and predestined draws outlawed. I have even thought of requiring players in Dolchstoß to undertake to try and win as a condition of playing, but again it's unenforceable... To me, one point is paramount: in a game full of uncertainty I have the right to assume players are trying to win and will move accordingly. Anything else is meaningless."

Issue 34 (September 1975)

Of course, Mick Bullock replied to Richard's attack. "I quite agree with you re game-long alliances. After all, 5 don't stand a chance against 2, do they?" to which Richard replied "You're damn right the 5 don't stand a chance against 2... when the 2 are cheating."

But for the time being, the WalkerBullock controversy was forgotten. Instead issue 34 was dominated by the sort of issue which looks ridiculous twenty years on, indeed it is precisely the sort of issue which hardened a lot of people into refusing to have anything to do with hobby organisations such as the NGC. To understand the dispute you need to know how the hobby operated in 1975. Essentially, there were two camps - NGC zines which carried Diplomacy games which were "NGC games" - namely the gamefee went to the NGC with a portion paid to the GM for running the game and independent zines which functioned more or less as they do now. The theory was that the NGC retained control of the NGC games and would re-house them if the quality of service declined or the zine folded.



However in the summer of 1975 Phil Stutt indicated that he wanted to run independent games in his NGC zine Japhidrew. Richard, together with the entire NGC Committee (Piggott, Birks, Allen, Holt, Doubleday, Dean and Palmer - most of whom you would normally think of as reasonable people) would not tolerate it at all. There could be no independent games in a NGC zine. If Phil wanted to run independent games he would have to fold Japhidrew, have the NGC games rehoused and start again! Now, while I am sure we will all agree that this was all nonsense of the most silly and devise type, in the context of 1975 it was hobby establishment policy. Richard said that he had received "a rather ridiculous circular from Phil which I don't think anyone bothered to answer, though several (including myself) were somewhat irritated by it. The main point it made, a dubious one, was that Japhidrew was Phil's property, not the club's, and that he therefore could do what he wished with it." Of course, today Phil's position looks far more reasonable than it probably did in 1975, but it is easy to see why the relationship between the NGC sector and the independent zines could be so tense at times.

Spring Offensive's Peter Berlin (who must have been a mere child in 1975) had a letter in this issue taking Richard to task for saying the hobby was made up mainly of extreme right-wingers. I only mention this because Richard's reply is classic: "It is my genuine belief, which I agree that I cannot prove, that a left-wing mentality argues a weakness of reasoning and an inability to see the obvious which are quite incompatible with the playing of games." Great stuff.

I've probably commented before that the early 1970's seem to have been one long round of housecons with ScotDipCon (care of Wink and Linda Thompson) and Martinscon (at Martin Hammon's) both being on the horizon. All were of course attended by a hard core of 8-10 players who came to be known as the Hard Core of the hobby for years to come (most of whom still subscribe to Dolchstoss but whose Diplomacy days are all long over).

October 1975 (Issue 35)

One of the stated merits of the NGC was that it rehoused games when they went into limbo. In this issue Richard discusses the arrangements for dealing with the games in Les Pimley's Shelob's Lair which had ran into trouble due to Les's illness. Although Les Pimley's zines (Shelob's Lair, Black Spot and The Ultimate Chaotic Act) are really only of interest to archivists, Les's name lives on in the shape of the annual Pimley Award for services to the Diplomacy hobby which was instituted when Les died shortly after at a tragically early age.

The NGC vs. Independent war heated up a bit. Although the Japhidrew problem was quietly solved with Phil starting independent games in sub-zine so as not to contaminate the purity of an NGC zine, the controversy gave Will Haven (editor of Bellicus) and some of the other editors of independent zines the opportunity to circulate a flyer to all and sundry advertising the delights of independent zines as opposed to the trials and tribulations of the NGC. Haven's flyer was cruelly parodied by Richard:

"Yoo-hoo schoolboys! My name's Will Craven, and I'm spending lots of money (made out of other idiots like you) on this circular attacking the extravagance of the NGC and advertising myself and my zine, Jealicious. I do hope we're going to be close friends.

I'll talk about myself first... and second... and last. I'm one of the old-stagers of British Diplomacy, faithfully keeping alive the good old values of sloth, lateness, inefficiency and illiteracy in the face of NGC sabotage. What a lot of autocritical hypocrats they are with their sham democracy. Look at what Jealicious offers you - compare it with what the NGC offers - and decide for yourselves!

FREE GAMES! Yes, Jealicious postal games are entirely free, and worth every penny. All you pay is £1 deposit, and you don't actually lose that until you drop out, which can take you as long as three seasons. Jealicious games are free in every sense - free of NGC influence, free of interest, and usually free of moves as well.

CHEAP ZINES! Do you realise that some NGC zines force you to buy as many as 17 issues a year? Subscribe to Jealicious and I guarantee you won't have to buy more than three or four - Jealicious is a regular 4-weekly zine appearing on 29 February each year, or whenever there is a total eclipse of the sun.

LONG GAMES! Yes, your FREE game in Jealicious can give you up to five years of sheer ecstatic tedium such as no other zine can

offer. And the NGC rushes through games in little more than a year. Well, really.

MORE PLAYERS PER GAME! Some NGC games never have more than 7 players. Jealicious games offer you a guaranteed minimum of 25, rising to even 40 or 50. Tributes from satisfied clients include: "I never wrote to the same player twice" - R.S., Amersham. "I never wrote to anyone, period" - A.H., Kidsbury.

FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE! I never attended the so-called DipCons with their highly charged atmosphere of hate, malice and suspicion. I make my friends through Jealicious - in fact, large areas of each issue are devoted to attacking friends who have done something I don't agree with, like helping to expand the hobby.

VARIED CONTENT! NGC zines have boring things like games, letters, articles, even editorials. Jealicious offers you instead page after page of vague mauling about things I don't understand; endless sagas of inaction-packed, illiterate fantasy by one of Manchester's most under-rated teenagers, illustrated with revealing Rohrschach blots each headed "map"; rules for unplayable variants; opinions for you to learn by heart and repeat in your own zines (many customers use this service); and a hilarious pot-pourri of typos, grammatical howlers and unintentional humour.

What more need I say? This circular also covers three other zines, to help cover costs, but it's really about Jealicious. There you'll find all the famous names you've heard of - Herd, Walsh, Pink, and many, many more blacklistees, dropouts and assorted rejects who are always dropping in or out (mainly out). SAND ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TODAY - YOU'LL NEVER REGRET IT!"

Of course, Richard was over-egging the pudding. Beyond doubt Will Haven was the most out-spoken of the independent editors, prone to emotional outbursts and not always able to offer the high standards of zine production to which he aspired - but he was an easy target. The under-lying tension in the hobby at the time was neatly side-stepped as Richard avoided confronting the fact that the services offered by the independent sector were becoming comparable to that of the NGC and that the NGC was becoming increasingly remote from the hobby all the time. Richard won the battle of words (as he usually does), but in time it could be said that Will Haven and his ilk won the war of ideas and I believe that to an extent we are now suffering because such an aggressively anti-centralist eventually prevailed.

To the extent that even today people complain that there are too many feuds in the hobby, all I can say is that any disagreements we have today are as nothing compared to the vicious rows of the past. That probably explains why I enjoy 1970's zines so much - we are all a bunch of Teddy Bears today (unfortunately).

ACQUIRE

The Special Powers Variation

by Sid Sackson

This expansion set of Acquire was designed by Sid Sackson for the German market. Avalon Hill has expressed no interest in publishing it in the USA,

At the start of the game, each player gets a set of the 5 cards described, each of which can be used only once per game. A player can play any card at any of his turns, but only one card can be played on a turn.

- ◆ You may buy up to 5 blocks of stock this turn.
- ◆ Take 5 tiles at the beginning of this turn, bringing you up to 11. Do not take another tile until down to 5 at the end of a turn.
- ◆ The 3 blocks of stock you take this turn are free.
- ◆ Trade 2 blocks of stock you own for one from the Stock Market. May do this up to three times. All blocks traded must be from active chains. (3 blocks may also be bought in usual manner.)
- ◆ Place up to 4 tiles this turn. If a tile causes a merger, it is acted upon before the next tile is played.

AVALONCON 1995

(August 2nd-6th, Hunt Valley MD)

By Paul Barker

This was my second Avaloncon, this time tacked on to the end of my holiday in the North eastern United States. After a lot of driving and sightseeing Katrina was ready to read, shop and bask by the pool while I dipped in and out of the convention. As before Avaloncon is a large and intense gathering in a good Marriott near Baltimore and is organised by TAHGC who produce the American edition of Diplomacy. DIPCON XXVIII was one of the featured events. There seemed to be about seven or so boards in each of the three rounds, but I wasn't counting! Colonial Diplomacy had also acquired a fairly strong following, although Fred Davis was pretty scathing about this variant as he pointed out some glitches to me that he disagreed with over the heads of a group of players. As before I found other things to do than play Diplomacy (something I shall have to remedy one day... but there are so many other things to do), but did find time to talk to some of the organisers about DIPCON. I think that I remember one of them saying that agreed draws were only acceptable if they were between four or fewer players. Play seemed pretty intense.

I entered the *We The People* tournament again, but came unstuck in the draw against Geoff Barnum who was my nemesis last time. My special pleading is that his Americans had the Declaration of Independence card in the first year, but to be honest the guy has an amazingly effective analytical approach and a particular way of stymying the British that I haven't worked out an effective counter to. Check out this game if you haven't already.

I also tried out the *Stonewall Jackson's Way* tournament to explore this system. My play was much better here, but I have learnt a couple of lessons about being the strength of flanking bonuses! It was interesting to see the designer Jo Balkoski move from being the object of veneration by his system's followers to serving behind the sales counter. In a corner (a large corner) was a demonstration linking all four games in the series and covering a fair old whack of the Eastern Theatre. Thankfully the next one due is the Peninsular Campaign which will not be contiguous with these, thus campaign freaks won't have to invest in arm extensions to place a counter in the middle of the maps, just a table tennis table or maybe a new house.

Machiavelli players may be interested to know that Avalon Hill are bringing out the boardgame again. A demonstration was put on using a large map. Other recent games available at the convention included Richard Berg's *Geronimo* and a *Solitaire* ASL offering. I have played the former, but not enough to feel really able to offer a verdict. The production of the latter is rather baffling to me and I can only wonder WHY? - but then ASL does have a large following - there were some 150 or so players in the ASL tournament. Berg also had another monster Gettysburg game on display (published by GMT, I think, but I cannot remember the name). It looked like it could take half a summer to play.

The most interesting offerings were perhaps the current and forthcoming computer games. *Advanced Civilization*, *Blackbeard*, *Beyond Squad Leader*, *7th Fleet*, *WS&IM*, *Third Reich PC* and *D-Day: America Invades* are on the horizon and half were there in pre-release form. *Advanced Civilization* is the boardgame realised for the computer (not an update of the Microprose game). It looked good. So to (with knobs on) did the *Third Reich PC*, which I spent some time trying out "blind", but with just a vague recollection of the boardgame from long long ago to guide me. Both should be out on disc and CD-Rom before too long. So too should *D-Day: America Invades* which seems to an improved expansion of an older V for Victory game using developments made to that system in *Operation Crusader* and *Stalingrad* by Avalon Hill's partners at Atomic.

The most worrying aspect was confirmation that Monarch, TAHGC's parent company, is in difficulty and is probably looking to sell a division. This obviously puts Avalon Hill's future position in some doubt. Next year's Avaloncon, however, is booked for July 31st - August 4th at the same venue (and there are heavy penalties to pay if the booking isn't fulfilled), so hopefully its future is secure.

If Avaloncon does run next year, you might want to give it a try. Murray Cowies knew that one other player from the UK was there, but that may well have been it. The general standards are very high and make ManorCon feel like a camping expedition: but then maybe I am growing too old for the "hall of residence experience". Katrina was so taken by the restaurant fare that she would go back there even if the convention didn't run. I shall let Stephen have any further information when it comes through.

GAMES SEEN AT CONS

Elfenroads

Review by Bob Rossney

Game designed by Alan Moon and published by White Wind. *Elfenroads* is for three to six players. The board is a network of 24 towns connected by roads and, in some places, rivers. The roads run through fields, forests, deserts, and mountains. The object of the game is for players to move their pawn through as many of the 24 towns as they can before the end of the game's eighth turn.

There are eight different modes of transportation in the game— elfcycle, magic cloud, troll-wagon, etc. Each player has a hand of cards that allow him to use one or another of these, and a supply of money.

Each turn, a number of transportation counters become available and are auctioned off. The players then take turns placing the counters on roads (with at most one counter per road). Finally, the players move in turn, playing cards from their hand for each counter they are using, and removing the counter from the board as they pass.

What makes the game work is that each mode of transportation has different characteristics. Giant pigs, for instance, can move easily through fields and forests, but can go nowhere else. It only requires one unicorn card to use a unicorn to cross a desert, but two if you're using the unicorn to move through the mountains.

Playing the game well involves planning a route through the board that optimizes the cards that are in your hand and the counters that you have bought, while doing what you can to harry your opponents (by putting expensive counters on routes that they need to take). Because each player's move consumes the counters that have been played on the board, the person who moves first in a given turn has a significantly different set of objectives than the player who moves last.

The game continually presents you with decisions. Should you try and outbid opponents for a counter that you think you need? Should you build up routes you want to take, or make it harder on your opponents? Should you collect money, which will help you buy counters, or cards, which will help you use the counters you already have? A lot depends on what your opponents are planning to do, and while it's possible to make educated guesses, you can never tell for sure what counters and cards they have secreted away.

The components are beautiful. The game was designed for sale in the German market, the pawns and markers are wooden, the money consists of plastic coins in various denominations, and the marker that indicates who's the first player each turn is a big wooden dragon (the same one that was in Moon's earlier *Elfengold*). The illustrations on the board and cards, by Doris Matthaus (who has done Moon's earlier games and Hexagames's *Vendetta*) are whimsical without being cute.

Every group I've played this with has wanted to play it again. I haven't yet played it with more than four people; I have a suspicion that parts of the game, like the auction, will tend to drag in a six-player game. (Moon claims it's best with four to six.) With three and four, it's an engrossing and hugely entertaining game.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS

By Larry Peery

1995 DIPCON (Baltimore, Maryland)

Last August's event attracted some seventy Diplomacy players out of a total number of 1,500 or so participants. The winner of the Diplomacy Tournament has been variously reported to me as being a Canadian, a French-Canadian, and French. Nobody seems to know his full name at the moment. One thing all sources agree on is that he was not from the United States! The event has received generally good reviews. The DIPCON Society meeting decided that the 1996 DIPCON would be held in Columbus, Ohio, United States in conjunction with ORIGINS, over the 4th-7th of July, 1996. The DIPCON Administration Committee will consist of Bruce Reiff, as chair, and members Dan Mathias and Steve Cooley.

1995 WORLD DIPCON (Paris, France)

The French Diplomacy hobby has given Xavier Blanchot a deadline for producing a communique with full particulars on the status of this event, or face being removed as the person in charge. That deadline has passed and further developments can be expected at any moment. In any case, the French Diplomacy hobby is committed to hosting a successful event, comparable to the 1993 EURO DIPCON 1, with or without Blanchot's participation. The dates remain the end of November, first weekend of December. The probable venue is the same as for EDC 1. If details are not announced sooner, participants in the next WDO/WDC Internet meeting will have a chance to question Rivasseau, who has agreed to participate.

1996 ORIGINS, DIPCON (Columbus, Ohio, United States)

ORIGINS is one of America's oldest gaming events and brings game manufacturers and players together for a four day event. The 1995 event was held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and attracted some 7,000 participants. Past combined ORIGINS/DIPCON events have a mixed track record, some good, some not so good. ORIGINS will be providing a venue and host event for next year's DIPCON, as well as some publicity. The rest will be up to the DIPCON committee and hobby.

The civic convention centre will be the venue and the adjacent Hyatt Hotel will be the headquarters. Room rates will be in the \$90 range, registration will be \$35-\$40. In general housing and food costs will be about 50% less than they will be in Paris, even less if the dollar continues to fall. In addition I think foreigners will find they get more for their dollar in value than they do at home.

Preliminary plans include three rounds of regular Diplomacy (one per day) and a variant Diplomacy tournament. Rounds, other than Sunday, will be without pre-determined time or game length limits. A special "pre-Fourth of July entertainment" is planned for the 3rd of July.

Both the City of Columbus and ORIGINS have expressed an interest in having the 1996 WORLD DIPCON held in conjunction with DIPCON. The DIPCON administration committee is very interested in hosting WDC as part of DIPCON. They have asked me to convey that interest to the international hobby. In addition, they have asked me to act as their liaison and international point of contact for their effort to bring the 1996 WDC to Columbus, and encourage members of the international Diplomacy hobby to attend ORIGINS/DIPCON in 1996. Subject to the reservations below I have agreed to do this.

1996 WORLD DIPCON (To Be Determined)

There is much about the 1995 WORLD DIPCON remains uncertain. However, I have sufficient faith in the French hobby's good intentions and ability to pull dots out of hats, to encourage anyone who can to go to Paris. There is also much that is uncertain about the future of WORLD DIPCON, but the French have expressed a strong desire to assure the continuity of the event. That means, I assume, that they will present a proposed Charter for a WORLD DIPCON ORGANIZATION in Paris. It also means, I assume, that they will have a means in place for selecting the site for a 1996 WORLD DIPCON.

HYBORIAN AGE II

by Burt Labelle

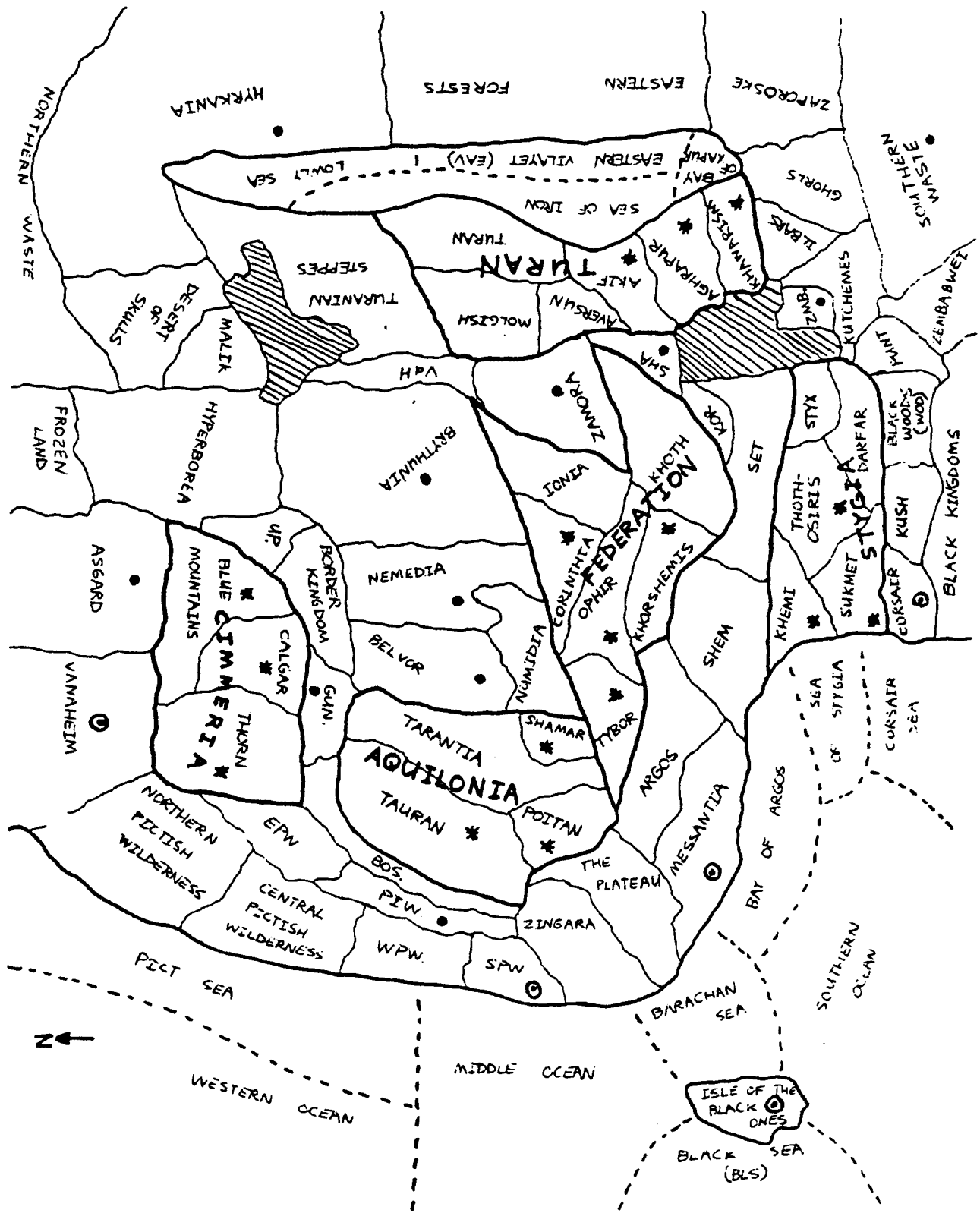
HYBORIAN AGE II is loosely based on the HYBORIAN AGE DIPLOMACY by Gary Gyax which in turn had its basis in the map of the Hyborian World which appears in most Robert Howard Conan books.

- All the usual rules of Diplomacy apply save where amended below.
- There are five "major powers" in HAI. They are Cimmeria, which has risen to great heights under Conan and the mercenary army he has with him wherever he goes, Aquilonia, which a while back had none other than Conan as its King, Turan, which has been expanding aggressively (and unchecked) for some time, The Federation, made up of Ophir, Corinthia, and Koth, with direction of the group presently under Corinthia, and last, Stygia, allied with the Corsair and Black Kingdoms, in a last effort to regain its former glory.
- Initial deployment:
 CIMMERIA: A Thorn, A Calgar, A Blue Mountains;
 AQUILONIA: A Tauran, A Poitan, A Shamar;
 THE FEDERATION: A Tybor, A Ophir, A Corinthia, A Khorshemis;
 TURAN: A Akif, A Aghrapur, F Khawarism;
 STYGIA: A Khemi, A Thoth-Osiris, F Sukmet.
- One might suspect that Cimmeria, Aquilonia, and The Federation are landlocked by their supposed inability to build fleets. Not so. Besides the home supply centres (stars) and the neutral supply centres (dots), you will note five unusual neutral supply centres (circled dots). They are: Vanaheim, Southern Pictish Wilderness, Isle of the Black Ones, Messantia, and Corsair. In these supply centres, any nation may build fleets in a fall turn. The only prerequisite is that the nation control the supply centre (i.e., occupy it). In the first Fall occupation it is of course impossible to build in these centres, as the unit occupying it is already there; but in Fall immediately following, fleets may be built. Armies may NOT be built in these provinces; only in a major power's homeland.
- No power may build more than one Fleet per year.
- Lined areas are desert and/or mountains, impassable.
- Victory criterion is 17 units on the board.
- Abbreviations listed:
 WPW-Western Pictish Wilderness UP-Upper Hold
 SPW-Southern Pictish Wilderness GUN-Gunderland
 EPW-Eastern Pictish Wilderness KOR-Koraja
 PIW-Pictish Waste SHA-Shadigar
 BOS-Bossonian Marches VaH-Valley of Hangmar
 ZMB-Zamboula
- Spring moves take place in the year 3700.

(Original publication July 1973)

A PLUG

Issue 75 of Diplomacy World is extremely good with a whole range of features related to Diplomacy, with contributions from Larry Peery, Jim Burgess, Brent McKee, Tom Hoyt, Tom Pasko, Eric Brosius and yours truly to name but a few. With features on the Runestone Poll, the Cult of Personality, Japanese Strategy in Colonial Dip, Malicious Support, variants and even a Railway Rivals Demo Game (?) DW is a must-see for Dip fans everywhere. Anyone wanting to sub to DW can do so through me at £7 for 4 issues.



HYBORIAN AGE II

by Burt Labelle

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

John Wilman

My only niece (15) was recently picked up by the police for travelling in a stolen car. I don't condone what she did, but she didn't deserve to be shot! Fortunately she wasn't.

Chris Hardy

Well, someone has to defend you - even if they are a commie pinko social worker like myself (or commie pinko social worker to be anyway).

Private Clegg - or if he were anything but a member of the forces "Clegg" - given his age, gender, reputation for violence etc. - is an unfortunate victim of politics, not as unfortunate as the poor girl he killed, but unfortunate nonetheless. He was sent down for murder to prove the law is even-handed regardless of which side the criminal is on. It should have been personslaughter, scared men with guns fire them and they don't stop firing them until they stop being scared - I think there was a case in the States in the last five years where a (White) man successfully pleaded self-defence when he shot a would be (black) mugger, didn't kill him, so walked up to him and put another five bullets into his heart.

Nevertheless, Clegg was sent down for murder and despite the process of appeal, murder it stayed. Only now he's been released so the whole point behind having given him life in the first place (proving the even-handedness of the law) has been rather spoilt.

As for Mr Ridout... listen to yourself. "I have nothing against Gays, but the Armed Forces is not the place for them." What is the place for them? The death camps? I'd rather have someone who fancied me guarding my back than someone who was liable to panic, forget the rules of engagement and fire wildly at civilians. You're either a patronising homophobe or you haven't thought about this.

Mr Collins is a little less offensive - although "locked in their closet where they belong" is only a charismatic dictator away from "behind the barbed wire where they belong." Have you never heard of the Theban Sacred Band? One of the finest military units ever to take the field because of, not despite, their love of each other. It took Philip's Companions (also all queer as nine drachmae notes) to defeat them. I might make a comment about our defence minister, but I won't. There aren't any accurate figures for the number of gay people slaughtered by the Nazis, but it was the attitude that they weren't fit to be part of society that caused it to happen.

However, since I'm a social worker I know that my opinion isn't valid, even if I know more about something than you do, so you can safely ignore it.

SA *I think I made my position clear last time. Now the Government has announced a review into gays in the armed forces (because they'll lose the case before the European Court of Human Rights anyway and hope to save something from the discredited policy).*

Gerwyn Michael

This month it seems I finally find time to read the letters section of your anorak publication. To my delight I discover a sprinkling of right-wing viewpoints, but unfortunately nothing extreme enough to satisfy my appetite in the criminal justice department.

What I had in mind goes something like this:

1. Stick Gerry Adams and his pack of American-backed, mange ridden dogs in a hotel in Sarajevo. Self-catering with an enormous neon sign saying "Fuck you Serbia" on the roof. (Gerry Adams is an anagram of "spineless turd", nearly.)
2. Employ Pte. Clegg in the anti-tank platoon, that way the prat wouldn't have to shoot anyone in the back and the thieving bastard joy-riders would get what they deserve.
3. Close prisons - I don't see why I should pay to feed a bunch of morally destitute, inept scum. I propose a crucifix every 100 yards from Glasgow to London, to be paid for by the relatives of

perpetrators and heads of privatised utilities (thieves on a grand scale).

4. Seeing as the pig-ignorant yanks arm the provos in Ireland, it was quite refreshing to see one of their own buildings go up in smoke - maybe they'll get the message eventually.
5. Remember the Thebans: the bravest, most efficient fighting force the world has ever known - and all as bent as Julian Clary! Sexuality is just another continuum, it sounds as if some of your readers must have enjoyed a little fudge-nudge as young boys and have felt guilty homophobes ever since!

SA *No one could ever accuse Spring Offensive of not having a cosmopolitan readership with a wide range of views.*

Donal O'Nuallain

As a fair minded person I have to agree with you about the release of Pte Clegg. It annoys, but does not surprise, me to hear that Clegg will be allowed to resume his career as a soldier in the British Army. It doesn't surprise me because all he did was to do his job i.e. kill people! The question as to why he was out on the streets of Ireland is a wholly different question.

Middle class Tory England doesn't care about Ireland- in fact I am a bit surprised that they don't mind paying £2 billion each year to maintain the first and last piece of the Empire.

Northern Ireland is an artificial creation which was the subject of a very bloody civil war when it was invented. It is artificial because it creates a Unionist majority but has no other geographical or historical reason to exist. It is not even Ulster - three counties of Ulster were omitted from Northern Ireland to preserve the 2/3 Unionist majority. The folly in all this is that the problem has never been solved. The Tories and Labour do not have the political will to solve the problem.

In 1963 the then South African Prime Minister wished for the Special Powers entrusted to Stormont. Nowadays, the fanatics on either side are the only ones who can gain from the continuation of the present impasse. England needs to make up its mind!!! I find it hard at times to be unbiased as I come from a long line of nationalists, my ancestor John Dooley having been hung by the British in 1798! He was 18! However, having never supported violence, I do wish for a new future.

SA *The problem with the current negotiations are that Sinn Fein are not playing the game - they have not made a single concession since the cease-fire started and seem only preoccupied by progressing to doomed multi-party talks, rather than establishing the necessary compromises on all sides needed to make such talks possible.*

Brad Martin

I was surprised at the Conservatism and pro-militarism of your readers over the Private Clegg affair. Arguments that they were only doing their duty or just following orders were the same as those used by the Nazis such as Eichmann who organised the "Final Solution". Every individual must take full responsibility for their own actions. If an order is morally unjust then there is no compulsion for the individual to obey. I have to admit that I would have been far less tolerant than you. Those letters would have been thrown in the rubbish bin where they belong. I hope those people who wrote in only represent a small vocal red-neck clique within the readership.

SA *Well, I like a healthy debate, though I think after this issue the Clegg discussions must stop.*

Jeremy Tullett

Thank you for clarifying the legal niceties of the Guildford and Birmingham cases. I was unaware of the Denning libel case, but I'm sure that, just as the innocent are sometimes jailed, the guilty sometimes

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

go free, and I'm not aware that the police are looking for anybody else in connection with either Birmingham or Guildford. What are the RUC doing about the Clegg incident?

SA *Nothing. They prosecuted someone and he was found guilty and the conviction was upheld on appeal. Only the politicians decided to release him. The IRA gang captured at Balcombe Street claimed responsibility for Guildford years ago, while at least one TV documentary has purported to interview the IRA men responsible for Birmingham in the Republic. Both cases are officially still open.*

Colin Hobbs

You are not all alone on the issue of Lee Clegg. What seems to be forgotten is that it took local outrage and a campaign leading up to a Panorama programme before Clegg was brought to trial in the first place. The programme suggested that not only was there a cover up, but that this was no regular checkpoint but an ambush, and that the patrol had deliberately set out to "get" a joy-rider. The patrol should all have been done for conspiracy and Clegg should have also been convicted of murder of the driver.

Mike Collins suggests that soldiers have a duty to fire at cars rushing a checkpoint. If this is so then it is an outrage in itself. This must be one of the worst examples of the Government overturning the decision of the courts. All appeals are exhausted, but he's released anyway.

The tabloid campaign was odious. It is frightening that such newspapers, together with army top brass and back benchers (and the sort of nutters who think that joy-riders should be shot on sight in this country as well) can cause a man to get away with murder. To cap it all the man is straight back in the army. A case of contempt of court if ever there was one.

I don't agree with you about the mandatory life sentence for murder. Murder is a crime unique in its enormity. If you were to end its special status you might as well do away with it altogether. Manslaughter can already cover the complete spectrum of sentences from 18 months to life.

SA *Actually manslaughter could (in theory) go from an absolute discharge to life - there is no minimum sentence. The essential problem is one of definition. How would you define murder? And having defined it, what exceptions would you permit (insanity, self-defence, provocation, diminished responsibility) and how would you define those? And with every possible set of facts then having to forced into one of these legal definitions, you end up with situations which if it fell on the manslaughter side of the line it would be a suspended sentence, but on the murder side it is life imprisonment. That in turn leads to miscarriages of justice (in the sense that the public think that the punishment is too excessive for the crime) which in turn brings the criminal law into disrepute. It's all very silly.*

On to a more pleasant subject: game fees. OK, not that pleasant. I would actively avoid zines which seriously imposed game fees whether I was playing in them or not. They are wrong in principle. They are as iniquitous as toll-roads and water metering.

SA *I don't see why. I think it is wrong for amateur GMs to make vast profits, but if an editor chooses to have gamefees to ensure a degree of commitment from the players) and then use the gamefees to cross-subsidise the zine price, that would seem fine by me.*

There is one good thing to be said for the ban on gay people in the military; if conscription or national service were ever brought back it is a simple way of avoiding it. Bruce Springsteen was one of many Americans to cite the gay ban to get out of the Vietnam War.

Bob Wills

I would like to comment on the correspondence regarding religious fundamentalism. It seems to me that the attraction of fundamentalism is a settled world view which cannot be assailed by inconvenient facts, and ability to fit into an ordered community or culture. The loss of intellectual integrity and inability to learn new things is a heavy price to pay. Thus far, I expect all readers will agree with me. But wait: fundamentalism is not confined to religion. There are Fundamentalist Atheists too. There are even Fundamental Agnostics who are certain that certainty about God is impossible.

The only approach which does not sacrifice intellectual integrity is to look at all the evidence with an open mind. We all have our own ideas on what constitutes evidence, but I suggest that careful reading of the Bible is included. With this, I find the evidence that Jesus rose from the dead very compelling, and when this is taken into account the things he is recorded as saying about himself, about God and about us need careful consideration.

I would say that rejecting a conclusion because the evidence is insufficient is illogical, but rejecting it because it is inconvenient is a manifestation of Fundamentalism.

I won't go much further, as even I wouldn't want this to become a Theology zine. However, that old chestnut Genesis has already been mentioned. It is true that Genesis contains more than one account of creation (maybe more than three), but when I read it I see no obvious contradiction between them.

Dave Thomas

Yes, I can let you borrow issue 1 to 8 of **The Church Mouse**. The first few issues were for a local readership only, and were mainly concerned with the "burgess Games" these were games being played at the company I used to work for. Basically the circulation was only about 20 and included friends, a relative or tow, working colleagues and some who answered an advert I put in a shop in Newcastle called The Games Gallery. The zine didn't really start to go national until about issue 9. I must admit to being embarrassed by those early issues, they were really garbage - many would say they were all garbage. I remember Tom Tweedy's zine (**Dib Dib Dib**) being described as **The Sun** of the hobby. I think **TCM** was viewed as **The Beano**, particularly to the other zine editors. Anyway, it did okay and got up to a circulation of over 100 and included foreign subscribers.

Nice to see many of the old arguments still going on in the letter column. You do know that Richard Sharp deliberately bates people with his right-wing comments just to get a response. But I bet he's not anywhere near as right-wing as he makes himself sound.

SA *Oh yes he is!*

Still talking about hobby organisations! This PDGS thing sounds a bit stuffy and elitist, you sure the whole thing doesn't work better mainly in free-fall? Aren't you in danger of having a two-tier hobby?

SA *We've had "free fall" for over 15 years now and in recent years it hasn't worked. Every single aspect of the postal Diplomacy hobby is in decline and has been since the 80's. I think it's now or never.*

Ludger Wilmott

Enclosed is a cheque for £5. I would hate Esme and your daughter to starve as a result of my neglect - but this concern does not extend to you, since I hear you are overweight (in fact by your own admission) and could lose a few pounds... Returning to Esme, perhaps my concern is misplaced since she thinks I am a member of the happy band of anoraks, train spotters, and wankers summed up by the all encompassing term "Diplomacy player."

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

I must admit to having lost a little of my initial enthusiasm for the hobby (reflected in my poor play recently; D82 in Dolchstoß and Augustus in TIM). I am not suggesting my performance would have been better had I been champing at the bit, but I do admit after three years to a feeling of "Diplomacy weariness" and I think I would benefit from a period away from the hobby. Naturally, this only applies to Diplomacy and not the variants. At least I do stick with my games to the end. Unlike David Rowbotham.

SA *By all means take a break - but maintain contact with the hobby somehow. A couple of years without subbing to a zine and it can be difficult to find the hobby again.*

There is one fundamental difference between you, I or possibly 99% of diplomacy players dropping out of a game. You admit to having dropped out occasionally, whereas David drops out of every game. For that reason I do not think that David should be allowed to join future waiting lists since he will almost be guaranteed to spoil the game for other players. As for me, should I ever see his name on a waiting list I would definitely avoid joining that game. Still the final decision does rest with the GM.

SA *Back in the 70's a blacklist system used to operate, so that GMs didn't get offenders joining their games without them being aware of their past history. Given I see more or less every Diplomacy zine in the country I could publish an on-going list of dropouts if there is sufficient demand. It is common for people to drop out of several games at once if because of some event in their lives they drop out of all postal gaming all of a sudden. That's what happened to me in 1980. However, what is very rare is for someone to do it twice. Those people who drop out in their youth, often make reliable players / editors second time around (having learnt from their mistakes).*

Graham Smith

I was quite interested in the article on Diplomacy on the Internet, but it left out one important factor which I hope will be covered later. How much does it all cost?

SA *Well, there are three options. An Internet provider like Demon charges a set up fee (about £15) and then £10 per month. After that the only charge is the cost of the telephone calls - but they have local numbers for most of the country and are opening up more all the time. Another alternative is CompuServe, which is far more structured than an Internet service provider, they charge a monthly membership fee of \$9.95 (US dollars) for five hours of access to virtually all of CompuServe's services, including forums, CompuServe Mail and the Internet. Additional hours will be billed at only \$2.95. Alternatively, you can pay \$24.95 per month for 20 hours per month and additional hours at \$1.95 each. CompuServe does offer many extras over and above a basic Internet service. Both let you loose in a fast library, but with CompuServe everything is in a logical order and indexed, while on the basic Internet finding things can be very difficult. With CompuServe you can access the Internet, but not vice versa. The third option is the Microsoft Network but it costs more and offers less than the other two alternatives. As for hardware you need at least a 14.4 modem (costs about £140) but a 28.8 modem (for about £200) is worth the extra dosh if you can afford it.*

I was impressed by your list of Things to Remember on the back page. I think it's a list which could apply to most of us. I've got a wife who is most annoyed when anyone telephones me about a Dip game in progress. Unlike Esme though, Anne tends to call me insulting names rather than the caller.

SA *Wives. Will they never understand us?*

Chris Palm

While I'm with you on Clegg, your reporting of my comments about Greenpeace needs further explanation. The "Greens" traditionally have supported the extreme left in European politics and personally I have found most "Greens" to be inherently left-wing. Their tacit, and

sometimes explicit, support for the failed experiments of socialism and communism which have blighted large swathes of this continent ensures they lose my support per se - and makes me difficult to take them at all seriously, even when their campaigns have merit (e.g. French nuclear testing). I lump Greenpeace and the Greens together in the same bracket - they are the same stock.

I suspect being anti-left wing makes me a Nazi / Fascist in the eyes of many. Funny how extremists themselves are so ready to bracket someone with moderate views who laughs in the face of political correctness with the likes of Hitler and Mussolini.

SA *I have always thought of some greens as being extremely right-wing, because they want to pursue authoritarian policies to control the activities of the many, even down to the question of how many children we can have. But the old truism that if you go sufficiently far left you reach the far right probably applies.*

James Hardy

Thanks for the great review. I don't care if some do see it as bad press - I loved it! I really must sub to MALOC one day. When I saw Zine Register about 1½ years ago that was the zine which grabbed my attention; instead I went for Maniac's Paradise. Sheesh! Do you now think MP is what a zine I produced would look like?

SA *Nope. You manage to make Doug look quite normal.*

I thought the Russians did fight for the Germans in World War I, y'awl (cough). I remember a newspaper article about American High School kids that gave the results of 100% recognising a pic of Beavis and Butthead, but only 20% or so recognised Bush and Quayle.

SA *They may look different, but I doubt if their politics differ much.*

Peter Dunnett

I felt I should write a bit in defence of Danny Colman. I feel from Spring Offensive No. 36 you give the impression that he and Springboard do little to help newcomers. I entered the hobby through Springboard in 1990 and was well looked after by Danny. He phoned once when my orders got lost and put me right on several occasions. I subbed to Realpolitik, Arfle and U-Bend through Springboard and am still addicted to Diplomacy. In my game we lost one player through NMRs and two when they were nearly out anyway, but a standby kept the game reasonably fair for all.

SA *Ah, so you mean you had three dropouts. Spring Offensive has never had as many as three dropouts in one game. I am quite prepared to admit that Danny is a helpful person, as am I. I merely maintain that (a) because of Springboard fewer people reply to the initial introduction they are sent then would otherwise be the case and (b) fewer people enter the mainstream hobby and stay then would be the case if Springboard did not exist. I don't like the idea of novice zines anyway. But don't get me wrong - Danny and I are the best of friends, we have just agreed to differ.*

Consider the fate of one Springboard game, Hannah (1992BV), which ended this month. Russia dropped out in S05, France and Austria dropped out in S07, Italy dropped out in A09, and England, Germany and Turkey dropped out in A1911. When the game ended, none of the original players were left!!! The game was "won" by Calum Macinnes (the Italian standby) from Steve Harridge (the Austrian standby). I wonder how RS will rate that one?

As it happens I don't like the idea of using standbys (although I did for a while in the 1970's), but that's another story...

The main thing about Springboard was that it enabled me to see if I liked the postal game, needless to say I did. It was pointed out in the Introduction that we would lose players and I didn't feel upset when we did. I have been around long enough now to see lots of dropouts in other games I've been in. Comparing dropout rates is meaningless if there

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

was no Springboard all those newcomers would drop out of mainstream zines. A zine for new players will be its very nature lose more players.

SA But where we differ is that I maintain that potential reliable players (middle aged and middle class) are put off from joining the Hobby by the patronising nature of the Introduction (while school-age and probably less reliable players are more likely to respond) and that in any event novices in Springboard are substantially more likely to drop out than novices in other zines or the novices we used to get before Springboard ever existed. Interestingly, the average player is more likely to drop out of his second game than his first - and this was true of novices in the pre-Springboard world, though it is no longer true of players in Springboard. I don't want to argue this ad infinitum, but I think Danny legitimises and almost encourages dropouts in Springboard, whereas the rest of us don't.

Ian Willey

I know I am relatively new to the hobby and as such should stay in my little box but I found your views on the decline of the hobby interesting.

SA Now hang on a minute, the idea of newcomers being consigned to ghettos is a Springboard-type concept, which I have fought against ever since I started Spring Offensive. There should be no boxes (or even closets) for anyone.

The hobby is not dying it is simply shrinking. We may well grow again in the future, but the best way of expanding in my mind is not to place adverts but to write articles on the subjects of tactics, alliance forming and other related subjects that are already in abundance and just need chrome adding to them. These should be sold to the professional hobby mags with contact addresses of some of the better zines where the GM is prepared to take on these new recruits.

SA I don't think you are living in the real world. I know of no professional games magazines which would carry tactics articles relating to a geriatric boardgame, and they certainly won't buy them. Even the revamped Games & Puzzles has gone bust this month. I maintain that the people it is easiest to recruit are those that already know the game - I have brought in about 40 people through advertising and very very few have dropped out (maybe 2 or 3).

You will not agree with me here, but I do think Springboard is the place for most of the novices, after all lots of novices do drop out and I for one would prefer that they did it in special new player games than when playing against mostly old sweats.

SA You're right, I don't agree with you. You may want to put novices in their little boxes, but I do not. You are correct that novices are far more likely to drop out when playing in Springboard, but what evidence do you have to suggest that as many would drop out in the general hobby? I repeat again, I think that novices playing in a novice zine like Springboard are more likely to drop out than if they were in the mainstream from the beginning. Furthermore, even if what you say is true, I would rather the odd novice dropped out of a mainstream zine, than lots of novices get pissed off and drop out when their first game in Springboard starts to fall apart. Dropouts breed dropouts.

Mark Stretch

I must comment on your answer to Pete Duxon's letter last issue. Your comments about statistics and dropout rates mean nothing. E.g. assume 100 join Springboard with a dropout rate of 20% and 80 would join if Springboard didn't exist with a dropout rate of 5% The dropout rate is 4 times as high in Springboard, yet more people join the hobby. Those sort of statistics are useless so don't bother mentioning them.

SA Well, your sort of statistics are undoubtedly useless, because they're based on a false premise. I think it is more accurate to say

that (using your example) 140 would join the hobby if Springboard didn't exist and in general that Springboard attracts fewer players and loses more of them. A double whammy. I know for a fact that I have a substantial better follow up on the Introductions that I send out than Danny does on his. But of course, I can't expect anyone who has come in through the Springboard route to agree with me, because by definition they were the sort of people who could cope with Danny anyway.

Mark Golby

The article by Richard Egan made interesting reading. Your accompanying piece listed the reasons for the decline in the postal Dip hobby. To your list I would add the proliferation of Dip type games. Although I agree this has led to these games in turn having a "postal life" I would argue that more non-postal players who want a boardgame are moving to the more counter-crazy games like Civilisation, rather than the perceived old-fashioned style of Diplomacy. Of course, they are missing the point because Dip, like Chess, is easy enough to learn the rules, but usually takes some time to master adequately.

SA I agree there is a cross-over. In fact, there's an article on Civilisation in this issue...

I fervently hope that you continue with the advertising drive. Surely the thought of missing such gems of wit and wisdom like Steve Walton-Nob and his ilk would be a tragic consequence of not advertising. Despite his obvious unhinged nature, Mr Walton is, as all his correspondents will attest, good for a laugh. However, this unwarranted swipe at me for worshipping James Hardy is the lowest he has sunk so far.

Truth is Mr Walton is just unable to accept the recent loss of one of his most treasured possessions. A burglary of course is a traumatic experience for anyone but Mr Walton's folio edition of "Cuckoo Waltz" scripts, hand signed by the author, James Hardy himself, was the finest piece in Steve's comedy collection. Can you imagine the utter horror any such loss would be to a sane person? To make matters worse for Steve, I have the only other existing copy, a fact he finds hard to handle. We can only hope that with the correct medication and psychiatric therapy Steve's terrible condition can be improved.

SA I'm not sure I understood all that...

Kevin Rolph

No. 36 makes interesting reading, especially the commentary about the zines and cons. I too was a little thrown by Stuart Dagger's comments on MidCon in Sumo. I'm yet to try Furry/Bay con but hope to do so next year.

I have to say though that I do think there is a "problem" with newcomers and Cons. A newbie on their own has to surmount a significant threshold to get involved, breaking into the circles of friends and cliques that seem to exist - not to mention being in the right time and place to get into a game.

Once you've broken in everyone's very friendly - there's no problem there - but I still think many occasional visitors, and tentative newcomers can be easily put off unless the Con is organised to handle them proactively.

SA I tend to agree with you. Hope you can make it to MidCon.

Paul Cockayne

I am finding it difficult to sort out my feelings about writing zine reviews. On the one hand, I feel I ought to be honest; on the other, I wonder - who am I to criticise - especially as this is an amateur hobby. So I sort of end up reviewing other zines out of a sense of duty, and sticking to factual reviews, as far as possible. I never seem to get the time to sit down and read zines, anyway.

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

SA *It is difficult. However, if you give a crap zine a good review, then you may well encourage one of your subscribers to subscribe to it - so you do owe a duty to the people who read your reviews. I try to be honest - but it doesn't win you any friends in the end. Some people say they hate bitchiness in zines and they presumably would prefer all zine reviews to be anodyne - but I think they are in a minority.*

Pete Duxon

With regard to the PDGS. How about all members use the same abbreviations in Diplomacy, so as not to confuse the hell out of the players?

SA *Good idea, but I fear many would think it a little "Big Brother-ish". I'm sympathetic though, provided everyone else adopts my abbreviations...*

Gerwyn Michael

I have developed a game by the name of **Ransom** (Games & Puzzles May 1995 Game of the Month). I am taking it to Essen in October and would appreciate a mailing list of gamers you know who would be interested in a money-grabbing back-stabbing 6 player building game.

SA *Why not send me an article about Ransom for next issue? Best of luck with it.*

Jeremy Tullett

Nice to see a **The Queen's Lane Advertiser** get a mention. The major problem was that a clutch of new zines hit the streets at about the same time, and, although we were well received, we never got the subscribers. It was particularly galling when the competition included such offerings as **Ferkin**. "Lucifer" is still lurking on the periphery of the Hobby, under his real name of course.

My first zine on joining the Hobby was **The Tinamou**, where an En Garde! Game was started by Dave Waring. On the fold of **The Tinamou** the En Garde! Game moved to Rip Gooch's **Ripping Yarns** where I took up the mantle of Diplomacy GM. In due course Dave Waring's mantle got passed to Derek Wilson and **Cut 7 Thrust** was born, so I can claim a long pedigree in the Hobby, if not as high profile as many zine editors.

SA *Of course I think you should start a zine now. It would be a success, believe me.*

Nick Kinzett

Zine names. **Outbreak of Heresy** is an event from **Empires of the Middle Ages** rather than **Civilisation** (could your wretched computer note the correct spelling here?), although the latter's **Iconoclasm and Heresy** would certainly had been my next choice of title had the other (as I originally suspected) already been in use as a zine name.

Arfle Barfle Gloop is indeed derived from a computer game, none other than the legendary **Leather Goddesses of Phobos** if memory serves. This has the distinction of being the only computer game I've played in the last ten years. Of course, being 99% resistant to the damn things usually means that I snap when explaining to innocent outsiders that the kind of games we're into here are "proper" games...

SA *Arfle barfle gloop!*

Richard Williams

One thing I forgot to mention from issue 35 is the apparent changes to improve **Axis and Allies**. I read it in disbelief. The Axis start with a huge advantage, so why on earth give them more help? Provided the

Germans don't get horrendous dice rolls and Japan doesn't give USA a free ride, the Axis should walk the game every time, if played properly.

SA *I am not in a position to disagree with you, as I've only played it twice. However, on the Internet there is a large group of dedicated fanatical A&A players (they play nothing else and spend their time talking A&A strategy) and the consensus their is that the Allies should always win. The following is a quote from the A&A FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions file):*

"Is the game imbalanced?"

The general consensus is yes, in favour of the Allies. If you do not agree with this, you will find plenty of people who would be willing to on rec.games.board. Put "A&A: Axis always win" or something similar in your subject line, and watch for postings telling you that the Allied player must be an amateur! See the section "How do I balance the game?" ahead in this FAQ for the Milton Bradley answer to the game not being balanced.

How do I balance the game?

This is a touchy subject. Milton Bradley has acknowledged the fact that the game is imbalanced by introducing three rules options that weigh a victory towards the Axis (summarised from the Second Edition Rules):

Weapons Development Benefits: *The German player starts with Jet Power, and the Japan player starts with Super Subs.*

Restricted Attack: *The USSR player is not allowed to attack until the second turn.*

No New Complexes: *No new industrial complexes can be bought or placed. Only original complexes can be used.*

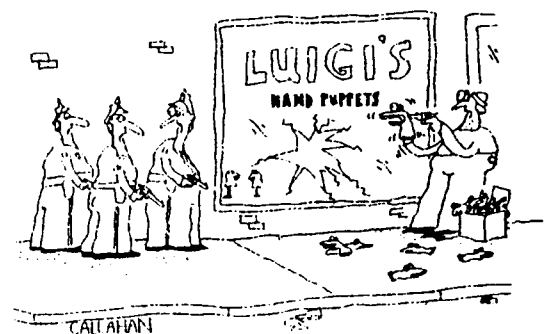
The second optional rule, Restricted Attack, has been used very successfully at some game conventions, and many experienced players swear by it. Of course it depends on the calibre of the players, but for an even field it can give the Axis enough of a breathing space to make some headway before the awesome crushing power of the Allied production advantage takes hold.

The No New Complexes is very controversial. William Jockusch notes that "it keeps the Japanese from building complexes in mainland Asia, which they need to do." Japan suffers far more than the Allies from this rule."

Allan Gordon

Spring Offensive is still far and away the best zine around, but don't you think there's a danger that it's beginning to take itself too seriously? Whatever happened to laffs? Apart from the cover, where have all the promised cartoons gone? And worst of all, the lettercol is starting to get seriously draggy. My God! - what do these guys do for jollies? - play Russian Roulette?! Lighten up - life's too damn short.

SA *I agree, and there's probably too much despondency this issue too. But at least the cartoons are back!*



DIPLOMACY II
BEDLAM (Autumn 1908)

Austria-Hungary (KEIR SANDERSON - NMR!) A(Boh) Stands

England (IVAN WOODWARD) F(Fin) - GoB; F(Swe) s F(Fin) - GoB; F(NTH) - Den (FAILED); F(GoL) s A(Mar) - Pie; F(Spa) sc - NAF; F(WMS) s F(Spa) sc - NAF; A(Mar) - Pie; A(Bur) s AUSTRIAN A(Boh) - Mun (MISORDER); A(Pic) - Bel (FAILED); A(Pru) - Ber (FAILED); A(War) - Sil (FAILED); A(StP) s A(Mos); A(Mos) s A(StP) (CUT); F(Bel) - Hol (FAILED)

Germany (PAUL RIDOUT) F(GoB) - BAL; F(Den) - NTH (FAILED); F(Pie) s F(Rom)* (CUT, DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRO); F(Rom) s F(Pie)* (CUT, DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRO); A(Ven) - Tri (FAILED); A(Tyr) - Mun; A(Vie) s A(Ven) - Tri; A(Sil) - Ber (FAILED); A(Ruh) - Hol (FAILED)

Turkey (DAVID APLIN) A(NAf) - Spa* (FAILED, DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRO); F(Tun) - TYS; F(Lib) - Tun; F(Nap) s A(Apu) - Rom; A(Bud) - Tri (FAILED); A(Ser) s A(Bud) - Tri; A(Rum) - Bud (FAILED); A(Sev) s A(Sib) - Mos; A(Sib) - Mos (FAILED); F(BLA) - Con; F(ION) - ADS; A(Apu) - Rom

Autumn 1908 Adjustments:

A: -Vie = 0; Loses 1. GM removes A(Boh).

E: +Swe, War, StP, Mos, Bel, Mar, Par, Spa, Nwy, Lon, Bre, Por, Ice, Edi, Lpl = 15; Gains 1. Builds F(Nwy).

G: Den, Mun, +Vie, Tri, Kie, Mil, Hol, Ber -Swe, -Rom = 8; Loses 1. Builds A(Kie).

T: Tun, Nap, Bud, Ser, Rum, Sev, Con, +Rom, Gre, Bul, Egy, Ank, Smy = 13; Gains 1. Builds A(Gre), A(Bul).

Press:

Pravda: Continued activity on the diplomatic front has failed to call a halt to the Anglo-German campaign. Little progress seems to be being made and German hopes now lie with an alliance with the Turk.

DIPLOMACY II
ITHACA (Spring 1907)

Austria-Hungary (John Boocock) A(Tyr) - Mil; A(Gal) - Ukr; A(Vie) - Bud; A(Ser) s A(Vie) - Bud; F(Gre) - AEG (FAILED)

England (John Etherington) A(Bre) - Par (FAILED); F(ENG) s F(MAO); F(MAO) s FRENCH F(Por) (CUT); F(NTH) - Nwy (FAILED); A(Nwy) - Fin (FAILED); F(MAO) s F(MAO)

France (Anarchy - Billy Stephen) F(Por) Stands; A(Gas) Stands

Germany (Aidan Slattery) F(BAL) - Lvn; A(Mun) s A(Bel) - Bur; A(Pru) s A(Sil) - War; A(Bel) - Bur (FAILED); A(Sil) - War; A(Swe) - Fin (FAILED); A(Kie) s A(Mun)

Italy (Dave Aplin) F(Spa) sc s F(NAf) - MAO; F(NAf) - MAO (FAILED); F(ION) c TURKISH A(Lib) - Alb; A(Mar) - Bur (FAILED); A(Bur) - Par (FAILED); A(War) s AUSTRIAN A(Gal) - Sil (MISORDER, DISLODGED TO Gal); A(Swi) s A(Mar) - Bur

Russia (Jed Stone) F(StP) nc Stands* (MISORDER, DISLODGED - DISBANDED)

Turkey (Allan Stagg) F(WMS) s ITALIAN F(NAf) - MAO; A(Lvn) - StP; A(Mos) s A(Lvn) - StP; A(Sib) s A(Lvn) - StP; F(Con) - AEG (FAILED); F(Bul) ec - Con (FAILED); A(Rum) - Bud (FAILED); A(Lib) - Alb

Press:

Austria-All: Strained and disbelieving silence.

Dave John B: I hope you didn't see that coming. Sorry to do this but it is hard to remain allies in this situation. Sorry Again.

Turkey-Russia: Consider this as euthanasia. Goodbye.

Italy-England & Germany: Man Utd. For the treble this year? Then again...

Russia-England: Bye! It's been nice to know you.

DOWNFALL OF THE LORD OF THE RINGS AND THE RETURN OF THE RING

GM: Neil Kendrick

Turn: AfterYule I

Miller No: ????

Dawrvs: (Mike Pollard): A(Iro)-Crm, A(Ere)-Esg, A(Blu)-For.

Elves: (Donald Scar): F(GHa)-Fld, A(lml)-Rhu, A(Lor)-And, A(EKH)-NMi.

Gandalf: (Jed Stone): R(-), Fe(-), Ga(-)

Gondor: (Colin Smith): A(Lam)-Anf, A(Mti)-Ano, A(Bel)-Leb, A(Leb)-Los, Faramir(-).

Mordor: (Mark Golby): A(Easterlings)-Nurn, A(Easterlings)-NRh, A(Easterlings)-ELi, A(DGu)-And, 2A(Nur)-Kha, A(SRh)-S A(Easterlings)-NRh, 2A(Bar)-Oroduin, 2A(Udu)-Nit, 2A(MMo)-SIT, Nazgul(-), Sauron(Bar)-Gor

Rohan: (Bob Wills): A(HDe)-Gap, C(Edo)-WEem-Fan, C(Eas)-Ent-EEem, H(Eas)-St.,

Saruman: (Steve W'n-Benoj): A(lse)-Gap, A(Dun)-Cardolan(No Such Area), A(KDm), Hol, Saruman(-),

Umbar: (Stephen Agar): A/F(Cit)-SOU, A(Hrd)-SGo, A(Hav)-Hrd

PRESS

Gandalf-All: Will anyone finding the Ring please let me know. I am not strong enough to do anything about it but it would save me having to waste energy looking for it and I may help you do something useful with it.

Gondor-All: Ring sighted in the West. Where is that bloody Hobbit when you want him??

Sauron-Umbar: I believe they call this a pre-emptive strike.

Red Eye-White Hand: Did you by any chance rifle Isildar's corpse?

Badass Orthanc Boyz-GreyKnob: Come and have a go if you think you are hard enough.

GM-All: As some of you maybe aware I am a Pratchett fan and will go under the date line of *RINCEWIND*.

Rincewind-All: I am not perfect. If you spot an error in the adjudication let me know ASAP. Also NONE of you included provisional RETREAT orders. This could be CRITICAL for some players. With regards to the RETREATS, the RING and PERSONALITY UNITS I will accept *CONDITIONAL ORDERS* - however the more complex they are the more room there is for misinterpretation and errors. So please think CAREFULLY about your orders.

Also for my EASE of filing please DATE EVERY SET of orders you send as I will use the latest DATED set that I receive if multiple sets as I did this time. FINALLY I would prefer that your ORDERS are sent on A4 paper as this is easier for my filing system and there is likelihood of orders going missing.

Sick... But True

A woman was sentenced to 15 years in prison Monday for allowing her quadriplegic husband to die of decay. A judge recounted testimony from medical workers who described Scott Mickler's condition at his wife's trial: an overpowering stench as he lay in a bed covered with flesh and body wastes, gangrene so severe that his toes and heels were falling off. Cheryl Mickler was convicted of abuse or neglect of a disabled adult. A quadriplegic since a 1978 auto accident, her husband had won a \$3.5 million settlement and she ended up with it after he died. Circuit Judge Thomas Reese also ordered Mrs. Mickler to pay \$68,120, including Glades County investigative and court costs, and more than \$11,000 to the State crime victim's compensation fund.

Emergency medical workers called to the Mickler house in 1990 found the 31 year-old Mickler so badly decayed his blood pressure and pulse could not be taken, though he was still alive. His flesh fell away when they touched it. Mickler died of massive infection a few hours later in a hospital emergency room.

Crisis 14-18

A new short and chaotic rule change variant set in the World War I era.

By Paul Barker

0. Key features are special rules for mobilisations and alliances, the short game length, use of victory points plus two extra players - the Americans and the Bolsheviks. All rules and conventions of Regular Diplomacy as assumed to apply, except as hereinafter amended.

1. Starting forces for the nine players: England F+(Edi), Germany A+(Kie), Russia A+(Mos), Turkey A+(Con), Austria A+(Bud), Italy F+(Nap), France A+(Par), America A(USA), Bolshevik C(StP). The + signifies professional troops that remain loyal during revolutions, while C stands for a communist cell.

2. Turns. The game starts in Spring 1914 and ends in Autumn 1918 (ten turns). The very low initial unit density should make a double deadline at gamestart unnecessary. Turns are comprised of the following steps:

- a. Bolshevik cell placement
- b. Mobilisations (starting Autumn 1914)
- c. Moves
- d. Retreats
- e. Alliances
- f. Builds / Removals (in Autumn turns)
- g. Revolution (once per game, not Autumn 1918).

3. The Bolshevik player is very much the wild card, representing various Communist movements in Europe. Each turn the Bolshevik may place a cell (C) in preparation for a revolution in any supply centre on the board that does not contain an army or a fleet. Cells may never move and are unaffected by armies and fleets moving into their spaces. They may never be placed in USA.

4. The Americans are an increasingly interventionist and initially off-board entity trying to both sustain neutrals and boost their power in Europe through conquest and quasi-economic means. They start with just the isolated A(USA) which isn't going to move in a hurry.

USA is an Off Board Box adjacent to both NAO and MAO which may hold an unlimited number of American units. Only American units may enter and exit this box. Fleets in USA may support into NAO and MAO. Armies require a convoy to reach Europe. To ease confusion in convoying or supporting movement from USA when there are multiple units of the same type there each is given a unique designation (e.g. A1(USA), A2(USA), F1(USA) and so on.

In Spring 1914 USA contains one home SC. Every Autumn prior to the start of the builds step this increases by one, to a maximum of four SCs in 1916.

5. Mobilisation must occur before a European Great Power may build any units. Mobilisations occur in step b of any turn except Spring 1914. A mobilising power may immediately 'build' in any unoccupied home SCs to reach their SC capacity. Players are free to allocate armies and fleets as they see fit.

Mobilisation is a one-way process. The Americans are not subject to mobilisation.

Mobilisation may be either conditional or unconditional, but each power may only submit one set of mobilisation 'builds' per turn. There are two sub-steps during step b when mobilisations are considered:

- i. First any eligible power may unconditionally mobilise, placing new units up to its SC limit.
- ii. Second any eligible power may conditionally mobilise. The triggering condition(s) may only be unconditional mobilisations in step b (e.g. "Turkey mobilises with F(Ank) and F(Smy) if either Russia or Austria unconditionally mobilise"). Mutually conditional mobilisations in this step do not take place.

In Autumn 1918 surviving players earn VPs up to the square of the number of full turns prior to their mobilisation: this is limited by a ceiling equal to the number of VPs gained for controlling SCs. The Bolsheviks split potential mobilisation VPs 50-50 with their target.

6. Moves and retreats follow the rules of regular Diplomacy and the house rules. Moves may be made conditional upon Bolshevik cell placement and mobilisations. Retreats may similarly be made conditional upon the results of all earlier steps.

7. Alliances may be unenforceable as in regular Diplomacy and/or formalised using the following rules. Each turn a player may designate one other player as their potential ally. This may be conditional upon the results of all earlier steps. If the other player reciprocates that turn an irrevocable alliance is formed. All attempts, whether successful or unsuccessful, are reported. An alliance makes members' units friendly to each other. The 'no self-dislodgement' provision is extended to all allies. Supports involving conflict between American allies that are not themselves allied are void. Additionally allied units are 'transparent' so far as control of SCs is concerned (a unit moving into an ally's SC does not wrest control... ever). Allies may still fall out, but any subsequent hostile moves will be somewhat toothless.

As time passes a mosaic of alliances may develop, but all are considered to be bilateral (e.g. Germany may ally with both England and Russia, but the latter two, despite possibly co-operating, would only be formally allied if they designate each other as such in an alliance step).

The Bolshevik may never trigger a revolution against an ally and may never subsequently form an alliance with their opponent in a revolution.

8. American loans. Every Autumn the American has at his disposal a number of Loan Centres (LCs) equal to the number of unconquered neutrals, to a maximum of four and a minimum of one. The American may award LCs to mobilised Powers in the builds step (after SC control is judged, but before units are removed or built). Any other Power that has mobilised may receive LCs, regardless of alliance status, but no power may receive more than two LCs. These LCs count as additional full SCs for the build phase they are received (only) and allow additional units to be built. LC allocation may be conditional upon earlier actions.

9. Builds and Removals are virtually the same as in regular Diplomacy. However, captured neutrals (not home SCs) only count as half a SC for build purposes, (they are a whole SC for VPs). Odd halves are ignored in the builds step.

Additionally there are modifications in the mobilisation and LC rules. Players should remember that they might receive up to two additional LCs from the Americans each year.

10. The Revolution may only take place once per game. The Bolshevik indicates which of the mobilised European Great Powers is the target in step g of the chosen turn. There are three major effects:

- i. All SCs owned by the target power which contain cells immediately become full strength Bolshevik home SCs (even if they contain combat units, were previously neutral, or were the home SCs of other powers). Original owners of home SCs may still build units in them if they are recaptured.
- ii. Half of the target power's units are replaced by equivalent Bolshevik units (round up halves). These units are chosen randomly by the GM with the exception that a loyal starting unit never becomes Bolshevik.
- iii. The following turn units not belonging to either the Bolshevik or the target power that are in or adjacent to any province containing a cell are shaken by mutiny and may neither move and neither give or receive support. Loyal units are again exempt from this effect. The Bolshevik does get to place a final cell at the start of this turn. All cells are removed at the end of the moves step and no further cell placements ever take place.

The Bolsheviks may receive LCs after the revolution turn.

11. NMRs can blight any game. The following rules are in addition to any house rules and attempt to limit the effects of American and Bolshevik NMRs. On any pre-revolution turn that a Bolshevik NMRs the GM randomly places one cell. If the Bolshevik NMRs on the following turn the GM places another cell and carries out a revolution against the mobilised European Great Power with the most cells (choosing randomly between equally viable Powers).

Should the Americans NMR on an Autumn turn, the GM randomly assigns LCs to the mobilised Powers, regardless of alliance status, but no eligible Power will receive a second LC until all have received one.

12. Victory is assessed at the end of Autumn 1918 and involves the comparison of Victory Point (VP) totals. All players gain 1 VP per SC they control on the game board (this therefore excludes the USA box and LCs). Surviving non-American Powers gain additional VPs for turns prior to mobilisation as per the mobilisation rules while the American gains 1 VP per surviving ally. The American gains 1 additional VP and

surviving American allies half a VP per unconquered neutral (if there are any). Both the Bolshevik and their revolutionary target can gain 3 additional VPs if they control all of the original home SCs of their country.

The winner is the player with the most VPs. Ties are possible between players with the same VP total. Other players are ranked according to their VP totals, but in the case of a single winner or ties between mutually allied powers all allies of the winner(s) are ranked by VP total above non-allies.

Millennium 1895

Paul Barker, 30 Kelston Road, Worle, Weston - super - Mare, BS22 0FD. 01934 512500

Well, well, well an NMR means that...

Invaders thrown out of Moscow, GM scuttles off to reread automove rules.

DIP PHASE

DCA: 2 Dips that James Hardy is Captain Nemo (fails, sadly).

Now some SOTs.

France-All: I must say I disapprove of a "no draw" ruling. The whole historical period consisted of the major powers putting more effort into preserving the status quo i.e. a balance of power i.e. a draw than they did in trying to "win". In addition I don't think anyone left in the game deserves to "lose". Is it just you don't like draws? The advantage of running your own game is you don't have to do the things you don't like.

PGB: Point taken, see GEPs later on. The design intention was to avoid the dreaded Diplomacy draw by setting a relatively low win threshold plus a time limit (when the player in the lead would be declared the winner). I won't go into my reasons for disliking draws in depth as this is a long running general hobby debate that you are all aware of. Interestingly though my last nine postal and FTF game finishes have all ended up as draws, with me included in them! No doubt this run will end, but it is very much like county cricket. As for the historical balance of power argument, I'll buy that up to a point but counter that late Victorian British policy might have been to preserve a general balance of power, but so long as red was the main colour on the map of the world. All this is reminding me of the Pax Britannica game - I picked up the Costikyan - Sacks postal rules in the States - now that really could drive GM and players to distraction.

France-Turkey: It's great having 4 DIPs again. Wonder how long it will last?

MOVES

Britain (James Hardy-revealed): F(Lpl)-Irish Sea, F(Dub) S F(Lpl)-Irish Sea, F(North Atlantic)-G. of St. Lawrence, F(Caribbean) S Japanese A(Nic)-Ver, F(Cub)-Gulf of Mexico, A(Pers) S Russian A(Arm)-Bag, A(Oma) S Russian A(Arm)-Bag, A(Hyd)-Bom, F(Bay of Bengal)-KoS, F(Cal)-South Pacific Ocean-North Pacific Ocean [BOM], A(NOr)-Tex, F(Wel)-Indian Ocean.

France (Chris Hardy-revealed): F(Java Sea)-KoS*, F(KoS)-South China Sea, F(North Pacific Ocean)-Mnl, F(Sai) S F(KoS)-South China Sea, A(Eth)-Sud, A(Cha) S Spanish A(Bug), A(Dou) goes paddling in the Atlantic, A(Gld) builds sandcastles, A(Dak)-Vol, F(Western Approaches)-Norwegian Sea, F(North Atlantic Ocean) S Spanish F(Str. of Gibraltar)-Biscay, A(Bor)-Bur, A(Par)-Bel, A(Frk) S A(Par)-Bel, A(Swi) S A(Frk), A(Tur) S A(Swi), A(Egy)-Trp, F(Alg)-Western Mediterranean, F(Mar)-Ligurian Sea.

Spain (Chris Hardy): A(Est)-Lis, A(Bug) S French A(Eth)-Sud, F(Str. of Gibraltar)-Biscay, F(Biscay)-Bri, F(Cad)-Str. of Gibraltar-North Atlantic Ocean [BOM].

Netherlands (??): F(Sunda Sea) S F(Jav)-Java Sea, F(Jav)-Java Sea, F(Syd) S F(Sunda Sea), F(Solomon Sea)-Pap, F(Ton)-South Pacific Ocean-South Atlantic Ocean [BOM], A(Vnz) stands.

Russia (Neil Kendrick): A(Eka) S A(Arc)-Mos, A(StP) S A(Arc)-Mos, A(Arc)-Mos, A(Sto)-Den, A(Kor) stands, F(North Sea)-Norwegian Sea,

A(Arm)-Bag, A(Bel)-Par*, F(Bahamas)-NOr, A(Via)-Sib.

Austria (Jim Stewart): NMR. A(Sue), F(Adriatic), F(Ionian Sea), F(Eastern Mediterranean), A(Bag)*, A(Smy), A(Ang), A(Cau), A(Ode), A(Mos)*, A(Kon), A(Ber), A(Pol), A(Ven), A(Vie) & A(Tri) all stand.

Turkey (??): A(Ade) stands.

Japan (James Hardy): F(Barkley Sound)-SFr, F(Gulf of California)-Maz, F(Mex) S F(Gulf of California)-Maz, F(Haw) stands, F(South China Sea) S A(Chu)-Ann*, A(Chu)-Ann, F(South Pacific Ocean)-North Pacific Ocean, A(Nic)-Ver, F(Sea of Japan)-Bonin Islands, F(Tok ec) S F(Sea of Japan)-Bonin Islands

Mexico (??): F(Bom) stands, F(Arabian Sea) S F(Bom), F(Sap) stands, F(Mon)-G. of St. Lawrence, A(Car) stands, A(Tex) stands, A(Ver) stands*.

Brazil (Allan Stagg): F(Mer)-C.Delgado, A(Lua)-Gab, F(Sao Tome) S A(Lua)-Gab, F(Gulf of Guinea) S A(Lua)-Gab, A(Ora)-Mtb, A(Cap) stands, A(Tan) S A(Cng), A(Cng) S A(Tan), A(San) stands, A(And) S A(San), A(Bol) stands, F(Sao)-Rio De La Plata-South Atlantic Ocean [BOM], F(Abrolhos Bank) S F(Cape Orange), F(Cape Orange) stands, F(Indian Ocean)-Maldives, F(South Pacific Ocean)-Coral Sea.

RETREATS

The six units facing retreat are asterisked. Retreating are French F(Java Sea)-Mol, Russian A(Bel)-Ams and Mexican A(Ver)-Son. Disbanding are Austrian A(Bag) & A(Mos) and Japanese F(South China Sea).

BOM All BOMs succeed.

CONVERSIONS None. Not a popular option this!

GAME END PROPOSALS

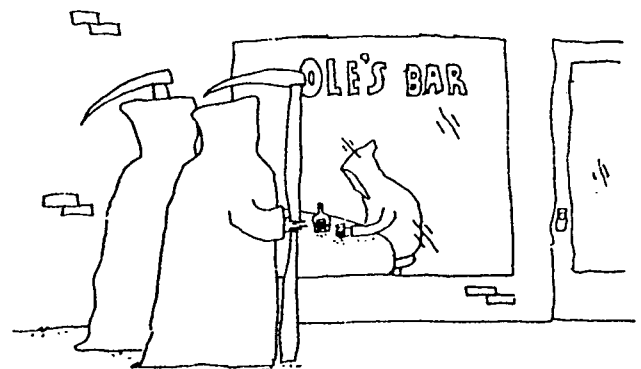
The vote was 1 For, 1 Against, 3 Abstentions. This therefore fails and is not reproped. Following representations and discussions, I shall allow a wider range of proposals - after all if you don't agree with one, you can sink it by voting against. Sadly Neil, I shall not allow a vote on declaring the GM the winner, although you are right that my work is cut out sorting the moves on this one out. Then so are the players faced with a real brainstorm every month!

Two new proposals have been suggested, to which I have added the rider about NMRing. The difference between a and b is that the former would end the game before adjudicating any moves. A) Draw between all players submitting orders for 1896 with player in the lead having the honour of being "first among equals", or B) Draw judged at end of 1896 between all players submitting orders with player in lead having the honour of being "first among equals".

NEXT TURN

The Dip situation is still: Britain 2, France 4, Spain 2, Netherlands 2, Russia 2, Austria 4, Turkey 1, Japan 2, Mexico 2, Brazil 4. In answer to a query, yes I have been checking the IPFs/ISUs very carefully.

DEADLINE : WEDNESDAY 11th OCTOBER 1995



CALLAHAN

"He just hasn't been the same since he botched that Elvis job"

AMERICA LATINA 1822

GM: Paul Barker

Spring 1823: Moves.

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

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

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

Brazil (Jean VI / COLIN SMITH): A(Prgy)-Plat, A(Bahi)-Bele, A(Bele)-Amaz, F(RMad) S A(Bele)-Amaz*, F(Aleg)-EBC, F(EBC)-NAO, F(Cuba) S F(EBC)-NAO.

Chile (O'Higgins / DOUG KENT): NMR. F(CHW) Stands*.

Britain (Cochrane / JOHN BOOCOOCK): F(Chil) S F(MAG)-PTS, F(MAG)-PTS, F(CPat pc)-Chub pc, F(Falk)-GSJ, F(SGeo)-SAO, F(DGui)-NAO, F(BHon)-CAS, F(LAS) S F(BHon)-CAS, F(BGui) S F(LAS), A(Jama) stands, A(Guat)-Hond.

Retreats.

Brazilian F(RMad)-Acre, Chilean F(CHW) disbands [NRO].

Press.

Cochrane - Pax Latina: Now come on! I haven't invaded ANYONE yet, unlike you! Talk about pots and kettles calling each other black!! I'm just trying to keep you nice and orderly.

Latina Doctrine: All centres to freeze after Spr 23 adjudications. Pax Latina to stand / stand off while jointly repulsing Anglo dogs. Write press if agreed.

Cochrane - American trying hard: Sorry, but you need centuries of correct breeding to succeed in colonial squabbles. If we'd sent our best generals to you in 1775 you'd still be British!! So don't feel too badly about how you're not doing in this game, you're just not born to appreciate the delicacy of the situation.

Argentina - Peru: I'll be in touch soon.

PGB: I hope that we can move this game along now after the hold-over. Doug seems to have given up on this position, which is now reduced to one (non home) centre and no units anyway. Now we are five then. Two of you reached high standards of illegibility in your press, which I have transcribed as best I can. You know who you are!

DEADLINE : WEDNESDAY 11th OCTOBER 1995

AXIS & ALLIES DIPLOMACY

by Reo H. Maynard III

Easy.

1. Infantry are your Armies (one per province, for each province you are allowed to place armour or infantry).
2. Battleships are your Fleets. They can move 2 spaces and can convoy also.
3. Industrial Complexes are your Supply Centres.

The rest of the pieces are not used.

I think it'll work?

RAILWAY RIVALS - MIDDLE EARTH

ACTIVE - ROUND 1

GM: Steve Watts

Thank you all for getting your orders in early. I neglected to give you a deadline last time, so for future reference can you send in your orders to arrive no later than 1 week before Stephen's published Spring Offensive Deadline.

Peter Berlin - BLACK (PETERS) Pyrotechnic Ents Trunk Express Rail Service

Richard Bairstow - RED (MERDE) Middle Earth Railway Development Enterprise

Dave Gittins - GREEN (IDRIS) I Don't Read Idiotic Stories

Allan Stagg - BROWN (MENTAL) Middle Earth Network Trains And Locomotives

John Boocock - BLUE (GCR) Gandalf's Celebrated Rolertracks

BUILDS

PETERS (Minas Tirith) - N50

MERDE (Minas Tirith) - N50

IDRIS (Hobbiton) - I100 - THARBAD. (Hobbiton) - D141

MENTAL (Rivendell) - C102 - C100 - MORIA - F97 - F95

GCR (Hobbiton) - I100 - THARBAD. (Hobbiton) - B143 - C144

ACCOUNTS

START + BUILDS - TOWNS TOTAL

PETERS 20 20

MERDE 20 20

IDRIS 20 3 23

MENTAL 20 6 26

GCR 20 3 23

And your build allowance for round 2 is - 13 (3,6,4)

NB. You can carry over part or all of your build allowance from one dice roll to add to the next dice roll in order to build a hex of expensive track provided that the build is completed within that round. And yes, Press is welcome.

PRESS

MERDE to PETERS: Are you trying to copy me? Whatever happened to originality?

MERDE to IDRIS and GCR: Are you going to build along the route of Frodo's travels - It will make my life easier if you do.

MERDE to GCR: Any relation to the GCR.

MERDE to MENTAL: Hi, see you in Isengard.

MY BIT

There seems to be quite a bit of uncertainty regarding the rules. So to ensure that we all are playing to the same rules, I will send out to each player a copy of the rules I shall be using when adjudicating. These should be read in conjunction with the postal rules already supplied to you by Stephen.

Merit Marks this time go to Allan for the clearest set of orders and to Peter for yet another colourful postcard. Sue the postlady has taken to having hushed consortations with my wife, giving the occasional sympathetic glance in my direction.

Dave mentions that he was listening to the new Black Grape album. (Is that the name of the Album, Group or both?). No Dave, I've never heard of it/them. Are they anything like the Beatles or the Inkspots. Now they don't make music like that anymore. As I type this I'm listening to my latest Capercaille CD. I'm not quite sure how you categorise their music, (Sort of Gaelic Folk/ Rock/New Age ???) but I'm getting addicted to it. Karen Matheson, their singer, has a superb voice, and whilst there are many female singers I enjoy listening to, there are few I would describe as superb. Barbara Dickson, Maddy Prior and one or two others perhaps.

To Allan's question is the town he is heading for named after the great railway baron, Isengard Kingdom Brunel. I can only quote the immortal words of Captain Mainwaring, "Silly Boy".

TOM'S BIT

TOMCAT *Sopwith (T206EM)* **Turn 11**
 GM: Tom Tweedy

Pilot	Start	Move1	Move2	Move3	End	AM:DG:PT
2 GINGER (John Miller) [ACE]	N12/SE	1 *fA	I	RS	N11/SE	06:08:38
5 WEE ARCHIE (Nick White)	K14/NE	A	A	A	K17/NE	12:03:06
6 BIGEND (Pete Mason)	O13/SW	[RS]	& Dies		DEAD	03:00:21

Clouds moved - West [] Aircraft was hit * Aircraft scored a hit
 Clouds : 1 : H3-H4-I4 2 : J9-I7-I8 3 : M12-N13-N12 5 : R12-R13-S13 6 : Q8
 Move 1: AC 6 (BIGEND) was hit by AC 2 (GINGER) suffering 5 points of damage - BIGEND DIES!
 Move 2 & 3: Nothing of interest happened.

LUTON AIRPORT - All: As there was only a non-player left and no way for our Ace to catch him before he crashed, I ran the last turn of the game without orders. As you can see from the map John wins again.

Game - Tomcat Turn - 12

Pilot	Start	Move1	Move2	Move3	End	AM:DG:PT
2 GINGER (John Miller) [ACE]	N11/SE	0	0	0	Q11/SE	06:07:41
5 WEE ARCHIE (Nick White)	K17/NE	0	0	0	CRASHED	12:00:01

GINGER - LUTON AIRPORT: All these Immelmen are making me dizzy! ((Didn't affect yer trigger finger though I see!))

- TOMCAT ENDGAME STATS -

T NUMBER: T206EM ZINE: ELECRTIC MONK
 GAME: TOMCAT GM: TOM TWEEDY

PLAYERS	PTS	KILL	RESULT
A: Ludger Wilmott	-5	0.00	s.d. by B
B: John Miller	41	3.00	WON
C: Simon Cutforth	-5	0.00	s.d. by B
D: James Millington	-5	0.00	s.d. by F
E: Nick White	1	0.00	crashed
F: Pete Mason	21	1.00	s.d. by B

STARTED: 01/08/93; FINISHED: 09/09/95

As a matter of interest this is how the players of Tomcat stand overall at the moment in the Stats. In no particular order... (PTS = total points; KILL = total kills; G = total games played; WIN = total wins.) Pete Mason is now an ACE!

PLAYER	PTS	KILL	G	WINS
James Millington	1	0.00	2	0.00
John Miller	134	7.00	5	3.00
Ludger Wilmott	-5	0.00	1	0.00
Nick White	9	1.00	2	0.00
Pete Mason	64	2.50	3	1.00
Simon Cutforth	2	1.00	2	0.00

TOM'S SMALL LETTERBIT

John Miller: "I've started getting Dave Tant's Sopwith Stats but I still miss the old Flight Recorder! No chance of a re-launch? One odd thing for me about the scoring system is that there is no points penalty for crashing your plane. You may not win the game, but you can carry forward more points than the winner (as in T198EM 'Intruder'). In a real war a crash is as much a lost plane as one shot down, surely, and I don't think the Station Commander would be particularly pleased about it!"

((I can see your point John. The short answer is, which you've probably used before yourself, is that these games are *not* real life, but merely simulations. My answer is that these rules, although they seem to have worked fine all these years, they're not carved in stone. If enough people

wanted to change a particular rule to make for better gameplay I'm all for it. It couldn't be allowed to change the stats as they now stand though.

Sorry - I only started *The Flight Recorder* because at that time no Sopwith stats had been seen for a couple of years. Now that Dave is back printing them, there's really no need for both of us to do them. I keep my stats up to date though so if anyone wanted to see a full Aces list etc, just let me know. It only takes a few seconds to run a list off.))

That's it for me then. Unless the waiting list fills it looks like I'll be taking a holiday. Maybe I'll see you all again soon. Hopefully the new games, if any, won't be chasing new zines all over the hobby! Bye for now...

True Stories from the USA

Toni Tenner does not deny that her body committed adultery, says Stanley Spees, the lawyer for ex-husband Mark Tenner, told the Kentucky Supreme Court. But Spees said Mrs. Tenner, who is appealing the amount of alimony she gets, could control the switching of her personalities. She came home and bragged to her husband, Spees said, more or less rubbing his nose in it. It was a game to her. According to court records, Mrs. Tenner's psychiatrist said she has 13 personalities and the one known as Andrea had the extramarital affair that Mark Tenner blames for the break-up.

Mrs. Tenner's lawyer, Charles Brien, said the critical issue was not Andrea but whether the mental disability should be taken into account when determining alimony. The personality that considered herself married had been 100 percent faithful to the marriage. Brien said. She had sex with another man, but there's also proof that when she did it, she didn't know she was breaking her marital vows. Kentucky law allows marital conduct to be considered in determining alimony. As the case made its way to the Supreme Court, Kentucky's Court of Appeals sided with Mrs. Tenner and said alimony payments should be increased because her mental illness excused the affair. But in a dissenting opinion, appeals court Judge Anthony Wilhoit criticised what he said was a new legal standard for fault more in keeping with the psycho babble prevalent on television talk shows.

In the second quarter, I started off with an invasion of Canada assisted by Japanese help from a lone A/F in the northwest Pacific. This invasion came off perfectly while Canada was tied up with British forces around Ice. But elsewhere, Plan B was coming off the rails. To the south, Argentina had been asking advice as to where to go. This was a bit tricky, since I didn't want to indicate that I had a very strong alliance with Brazil. So I told him that he had three options, to attack (a) Australia, (b) South Africa, or (c) Brazil; furthermore, I strongly hinted that if he attacked Brazil he would get no assistance from the USA, and tried to point him in the direction of South Africa. Unfortunately, Andrew decided to attack Brazil, and invited me to join him. My response was emphatic: I turned him down, and started working on Australia and South Africa (Simon Appleyard) to attack him instead. Calum was interested, but South Africa did not seem keen since some of Richard's (Brazil's) diplomacy had apparently upset him. Fortunately, in the end, South Africa did join in, and slowly but surely, Argentina was worn down despite the fact that he was occupying half of Brazil's homeland. It took until October 1920 before Argentine forces were finally expelled from Brazilian home soil.

Elsewhere, lots of things were happening. Russia (John Todd) had become the largest power on the board by September 1920, and had even made incursions into the north-west of North America. I was giving lots of advice to Britain and India, and it looked like a reasonable anti-Russian front was building up. Plan B had dictated that Britain should be my next target, but the Russian threat suggested that this might not be wise. In addition to this, I had doubts about my French ally because he had apparently informed Britain that I was gunning for him. As a consequence, Plan C was starting to look a possibility, where I sided with Britain against France instead. I attempted to keep my options open by advising Britain to attack France in order to gain some vital builds against Russia. In addition to this, my worries about Russia were increasing by the hour in the north Pacific where Japan was leaving himself wide open to Russian attack whilst making totally inept

*In the end,
I had to resort
to Plan H
to get a result*

attacks on China. And it was not helping matters that he had three fleets out in the Pacific and was making worrying diplomatic noises. All of these developments culminated in a climactic Nov/Dec 1920 turn. It was clear to me that this was going to be a crunch turn because quite fundamental decisions had to be made about allies and directions of expansion. The trouble was that I had too many options, many of which appeared to conflict with each other. In the

Atlantic, I had a choice of firmly allying with either France, Britain, or (surprisingly) Russia. In the Pacific, I had a choice of firmly allying with either Japan, Australia, India, or (again) Russia. That little lot had something like half a dozen different Plans contained therein. It was giving me headaches trying to think through the consequences of each choice. I agonised long and hard over what to do in the Atlantic and Pacific, and the more I looked at it, the more it looked as if both areas were inextricably intertwined. In the end, it dawned on me that Russia was the best choice as ally in this extremely complex position simply because we both needed each other: he needed me to get Britain off his back, and I needed him to remove the increasingly erratic Japan. So I contacted John, and he readily agreed to join with me in joint attacks on Britain and Japan. Elsewhere, this left me with the flexibility of maintaining friendly relations with France, Australia and India.

In hindsight, it transpired that I had made the correct decision because the Nov/Dec 1920 adjudication contained a shock: Brazil, who I had looked upon as a firm ally, had attacked me in a one-centre stab. And, in addition, he had done the same to France and Austria. There will be lots of arguments about the pros and cons of Richard's decision, but I contend that he made a fundamental strategic mistake in attacking all three of his (strong) northern neighbours. The inevitable result was a temporary joint alliance between the three of us as we launched coordinated counter-attacks against Brazil's strung-out forces. If Richard had attacked only two of us, he would probably have gotten away with it because the third one would, in all probability, have left him alone to get on with it. However, he chose to bite off more than he could chew and doomed his chances in the game; which was a shame, because all the hard work had been done in throwing off the Argentine attack.

Elsewhere, Russia and I very quickly overwhelmed Britain and Japan, propelling us well in front of the following pack and making us good contenders for the winner's stables. The size of the following pack (containing Australia, Austria, France, India and South Africa) implied that it was unlikely that a two-way win was on the cards. It therefore only remained to find a third partner. Of the contenders, France and Australia looked the best bets, with India as a dark horse. So, I made separate approaches to all three, and received favourable responses from Keith and Calum. Allan chose to view his conflict with Russia as irreconcilable, and effectively withdrew from the race. This left it as a straight race between France and Australia as to who would get to 28 centres first. I did what I could to remove what obstacles I had control over from their way.

As it was, it proved quite tight, but when the July 1921 adjudication came out, it was clear that Keith didn't have a chance of making it, and I reckoned there was a 95%+ chance of Calum making it to 28 centres in August. However, the 95 centre grand total required John and I to stab Keith in that final turn (sorry Keith). In the end, it turned out that I had to resort to Plan H to get a result, but this only goes to show that maintaining a flexible diplomatic posture is the correct way to win at Mercator. I have no regrets about the win claim, and don't look upon the theoretical 2-way win as a missed opportunity, because I KNOW that playing for a 3-way win is the optimal way of getting a positive result. Hell, if you want to be argumentative, I could just as easily have gone for a solo win in the last turn, and got it; but that is not my playing style.

I would like to offer my own congratulations to John and Calum for well-deserved wins, and to thank all the other players for an excellent game. I would also like to apologise to the various people I had to stab during the course of the game, especially Fred, Andrew, Stewart, Steve E. and Keith. There were a lot of novices in this game, and I would like to say that I was impressed with the play of several: Calum, Tony, Allan and Simon. Mercator is a complex game, and it is not easy to pick up everything on one's first outing, and I just hope that you will all give it another go if the opportunity presents itself. And last, but not least, many thanks to Steve Cox, who took on an almost impossible job of running a very big and complex game without ever having played it, and did it very well under the circumstances.

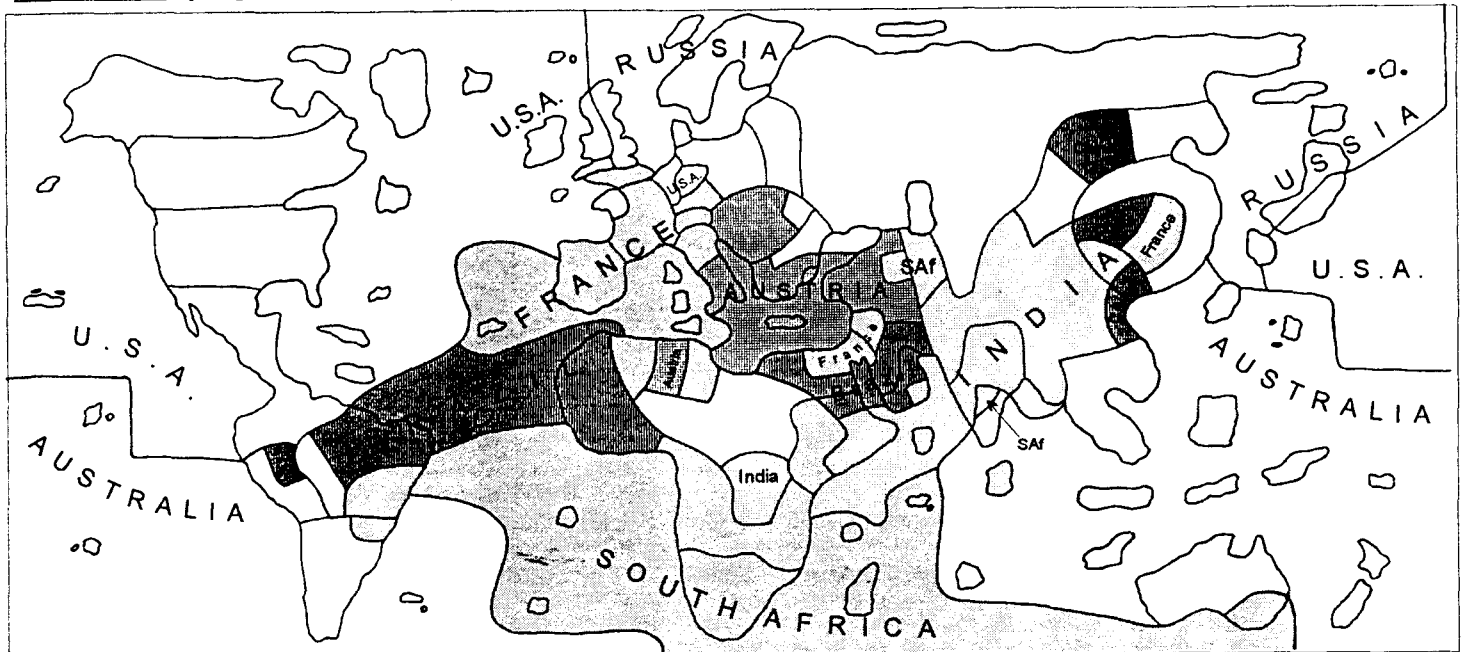
RULES SUMMARY

1. Normal seasons are divided into three Time Scales, TS1 to TS3. Some units can move in all three TS's, but orders for one TS cannot be conditional on the outcome of previous TS's.
2. In TS1 armies may Board fleets, or Land from them. A landing may be supported by the carrying fleet and it will then always be successful unless opposed by another supported landing. Supporting fleets cannot move or support in TS2.
3. In TS2, normal Diplomacy moves occur.
4. In TS3 armies may Embark on fleets or Disembark into land spaces. Fleets that gain or lose an army may then attempt to move to sea spaces. Supports are not allowed.
5. A/F's cannot exist in land spaces other than canal provinces, or support units on land.
6. Mixed nationality A/F's are allowed. Both players must order their formation, but only the owner of the army need order any landing/disembarkation.
7. The Key rule states that a unit that receives a valid order to move but fails will be dislodged by any attack on its space that is not stood off from elsewhere.
8. Retreats occur after TS3 and may in some circumstances be made to spaces where a standoff occurred.
9. Each Power has two special non-supply centre provinces remote from its home country where it can always build at a cost of one build point. No country may own or build in another's special provinces.
10. Builds may be taken in any owned province or supply centre. However, builds outside a player's home country (premium builds) cost two build points, except in special provinces.
11. Control of non-supply centre provinces passes as soon as they are entered by a foreign unit.
12. There are 177 supply centres on the map, and control of 40 is required for a solo win. However, 'joint wins' are also allowed, provided the partners each achieve a qualifying minimum number of supply centres.

AVOGADRO – MERCATOR XIV

Game started: *Spring Offensive* No.20 (Feb 1994)

Game finished: *Spring Offensive* No.34 (June 1995)



Joint winners:

- Steve Jones - U.S.A.
- Calum Macinnes - Australia
- John Todd - Russia

Joint losers:

- Simon Appleyard - South Africa
- Edward Board - Italy
- Iain Bowen - Uganda
- Steve Edington - Britain
- Frederick Fall - Canada
- Andrew Feather - Argentina
- Tony Hyland - Austria
- Keith Loveys - France
- Gary Marshall - Turkey
- Steven Slater - Germany
- Allan Stagg - India
- Stewart Whyte - Japan
- Richard Williams - Brazil
- John Wilman - China

Steve Jones (U.S.A.) Joint Winner

This was a game characterised by several major changes of plan, along with a few minor ones. Plan A involved avoiding a counter-productive war with Brazil for control of the Caribbean area; far too many Mercator games have seen Brazil and USA become embroiled in a struggle which does neither any good. So I proposed an alliance to Brazil (Richard Williams) where the Caribbean area would be split equitably between us, leaving us both free to expand in other directions; as a sweetener, I also suggested the combined use of our North African specials in a joint Mediterranean campaign. Richard replied with enthusiasm, but with one condition that I was happy to agree to: CAR had to be a DMZ. Shortly afterwards, this original plan had to be modified (Plan B) when France (Keith Loveys) joined us to make it a 3-way alliance.

Elsewhere, I also achieved excellent relations in the first quarter with Argentina (Andrew Feather), Australia (Calum Macinnes), Japan (Stewart Whyte), and slightly further afield, with Britain (Steve Edington) and India (Allan Stagg). The one early worry was Canada (Fred Fall), as Fred did not immediately reply to my initial letter. However, I did finally hear from him about a week before the adjudication, more or less agreeing to my suggested split of the local neutrals; the one possible early bone of contention looked to be Nfi.

From these early exchanges, I was already planning peaceful coexistence in the Pacific while I expanded in the Atlantic. Japan had already indicated a willingness to attack Canada later in the game, which fitted in with my preferred plan. The opening moves confirmed this, with Canada sending A/F's into BES and DKS while Britain opened to ROC. This enabled me to take Nfi without Canada's say-so. and to put the frighteners on Britain over Canadian "expansion in the North Atlantic". Elsewhere, France had attacked Italy and Japan had attacked China, both of which fitted into my intentions very nicely even though I had nothing to do with either.

	Build season	Argentina	Australia	Austria	Brazil	Britain	Canada	China	France	Germany	India	Italy	Japan	Russia	S.Africa	Turkey	Uganda	USA
1920	Pre-Jan	4	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	6*	5	5	5	8*	4	5	4	5
	Mar	8	8	9	8	8	9	9	10	9*	10	8	8	13*	8	10	8	10
	Jun	10	11	10	9	10	6	11	12	10*	13	6	8	18*	9	8	11	14
	Sep	7	13	13	12	12	[2]	10	12	(7)	15	2	8	20	11	4	10	17
	Dec	2	16	16	19	12	10	10	13	[3]	18	1	7	20	14	10	5	21
1921	Mar	1	21	18	18	6	-	8	17	2	17	10	2	25	15	-	1	26
	Jun	0	23	(15)	12	1	-	8	21	0	17	-	0	31	19	-	1	29
	Sep	-	28	15"	11	0	-	2	18	-	14	-	-	36	16	-	0	37
Final Position		12	=1	6	8	=10	=16	9	4	=13	7	15	=13	=1	5	=16	=10	=1

* For the first six movement seasons in Mercator, Germany and Russia have one more unit than supply centres

" For the last two seasons, the Austrian units were ordered by India

KEY: (n) = NMR in 'Spring'; [n] = NMR in 'Autumn'; □ = dropped out (after 2 NMR's)

The shaded portions of the columns indicate the period during which each country was increasing its centre count.

Notice that no country succeeded in reversing a decline once it had begun.

Calum Macinnes (Australia) Joint Winner

As told Australia was a difficult country to play when I started this, my first game of Mercator. I found the rules hard at first but throughout the game received excellent help from Steve Jones.

Initially, Argentina was a concern, especially since he seemed to be involved in false press about India. This made me doubt his trustworthiness. We soon came to blows and it was his excellent stab on Brazil that led to his downfall as I, Richard and S.Africa squashed him. Brazil made a very skilful comeback but had overstretched himself early on.

Although I was friendly with Japan, he was suffering and soon collapsed thanks to Steve. I had no choice but to join in. Sorry Stewart. That was the first blow to my "Scottish Alliance" although I worked well with Simon, until near the end (sorry again Simon). China was always a thorn in my side but again I was guided by the master, Mr. Jones.

My main threat was India and indeed at one point he seemed poised to dominate the Indian Ocean and reach me. However, one of the main reasons I chose Australia was to use the seas as my shields. Also the unexpected dropout of Uganda left India without his main ally. S.Africa and myself could stalemate and then push India back until we reached his homelands. I was surprised how little India wrote. He fought hard but his lack of letters especially early on cost him dearly. I think it was easy to portray him as the silent aggressor.

USA had offered me a 3-way win in the midgame and I was happy to agree. I had been suspicious early on especially since Steve was the victim of much negative diplomacy. At first, I thought Austria or France would be the joint win partners, but since Steve never attacked me and I continued to grow, I made it.

My other concern was that Russia and USA would go for a joint win or even go for a head to head with each other. Steve assured me that was unlikely and I must say he was honorable throughout the whole game to me. I'm not naive and I realise that by being taken under S. Jones' wing, much of my 'win' goes down to his tactical advice. However, I do think I timed my stabs quite well and I was lucky, especially with the Ugandan drop-out.

Thanks go to all who played in the game. I enjoyed all the letters. It must have been a daunting task to GM Mercator for the first time, but Steve Cox did a great job.

Allan Stagg (India) 7th

Well, it's over. From half-way through the game it was fairly inevitable that Russia and USA were going to win, although it was a surprise that Australia joined them. This is probably due to the lack of any successful anti-Superpower alliance, and the healthy awe that most of us had for Steve Jones. It is difficult to move against someone who can regularly come up with better moves for your units than you can yourself.

My progress petered out once the Australia/South Africa alliance firmed up. If the game had gone on, they would have taken me apart. My thanks to those who corresponded throughout the game - especially Steve J, for his helpful advice, and Richard. Lastly, my thanks to Steve C for GM-ing the game. I found the maps essential, but if next time you could use a colour printer...

Richard Williams (Brazil) 8th

For me, this was a game of three distinct phases. A horrendous start after being clobbered by Argentina, was followed by some of my best play, where I fought back to respectability, only to throw it all away with what proved to be a catastrophic disorder, which left me hanging on.

After the Argentinian stab at the beginning, I expected a very early bath. I sent begging letters to Australia, South Africa and U.S.A., promising them all the earth, just to get Argentina off my back. Not only did I recover, but I began to flourish in North Africa.

I then had a major problem. I had been allied with U.S.A. and France to my north and Australia and South Africa to the south. Steve Jones (U.S.A.) was already talking about a three way win with France, but as far as I was concerned the sums didn't add up. He had a massive centre advantage, but they were both writing. My alliance with my southern neighbours was based virtually on telepathy, but our centre count was similar.

In my wisdom I decided to stab Austria, France and U.S.A. all in the same turn. Had it not been for one disastrous disorder I believe I would have got away with it. Instead of having a rock solid defence, one false move meant my whole African position was

A Glimpse Into History

"...there is (or was) a rule in the Mercator variant that Country A could convoy an army of country B, but once the army had boarded it was under the control of country A, who could dump it anywhere including the Antarctic (or was it Arctic?). This rule was my idea, sold to Mercator designer Doug Wakefield over numerous pints in the Lamb one day back in 1977, but last I heard it was still in force."

(Richard Sharp in *Dolchstoß* 145, p.13)

hopeless. Steve Jones keeps telling me it was a silly stab. With the disorder I couldn't agree more, but had I got it right, I still believe it was the correct option. Unfortunately for me, we will never know.

U.S.A. told me to rejoin him, but I had a Catch 22 problem. My whole northern flank was in tatters and involved other countries.

To make matters worse South Africa decided to lie as much as he possibly could and attack me. When he did that I told him if he didn't pull back I would throw the game to the U.S.A. and France. He didn't pull back and I threw the game, although France was also ditched.

In Mercator there are only 3 outcomes. You win, you survive, you get knocked out. Unlike the regular game, a stalemate line is not a possibility, something that Simon (South Africa) seemed to fail to grasp, either that or he was being bloody minded. The moment I was stabbed by South Africa a win for me was out of the question. As far as I am concerned, surviving is better than a knockout. I promptly sent everything I had south in the hope that the northern powers would get enough centres to win. When I started this, I expected it to be France, Russia and U.S.A. But as I had predicted U.S.A. was too far ahead of France. Had my stab worked I think that is proof I made the right choice.

U.S.A. had said he had dumped France, which Russia agreed with. What U.S.A. did not admit to - nor Australia for that matter - is that Russia informed me that the three of them were going for glory. I have a feeling John (Russia) wasn't supposed to inform me about Australia, as some of the centres Australia required were ones I had said I was not prepared to give up and U.S.A. was helping him get. I was mighty relieved when the win was agreed. I may not have survived another quarter. A surrounded power base in East Africa and the Gulf did not look like surviving and I very much doubt I could have held anything elsewhere. My 11 centres were spread from Brazil to Kuwait.

As for the players, let's start with victors. About the only correspondence I got from John (Russia) was when he was at my house. At least by getting on his boat I managed to gain Fun!

Calum (Australia) was excellent early on when I needed him to clobber Argentina. He then went quiet and at the end lied like crazy when he needed my centres.

Steve (U.S.A.) was as usual the number one communicator. We will have to beg to differ on my stab, but he played faultlessly and I always knew where I stood with him. Congratulations to all three on the win.

What of the others. Of those that were active, Allan (India) and Keith (France) were both regular and friendly correspondents, even though I spent as much time fighting them as helping them.

Simon (south Africa) was excellent early on, but his attack on me was a very silly brainstorm, and greatly speeded up the end of the game.

Andrew (Argentina) I know admits he was wrong to attack me. It was his first game and having made the same error myself in my first Mercator game, I know how he felt. I hope he learns for next time and I almost managed to fully recover my position.

Edward (Italy) was too inexperienced. I convinced him to attack France, while I jumped into all the Italian held African centres.

Tony (Austria) when he was ordering his own bits (*sic*). I never hit it off with him, but he did at least communicate.

The rest were generally pretty quiet, so it is hardly surprising they were all stuffed.

Lastly, thanks to Steve for GM'ing the game. I know he made a few errors, but considering he had never played the game himself before, did a remarkably good job. He even phoned to apologise for my terrible disorder, which he hadn't spotted. Nor had I for that matter. Why he should apologise, when I was the fool to do the disorder I am not too sure. A shame Mr. Jones was so eagle eyed. Nothing like rubbing salt into the wounds.

Simon Appleyard (South Africa) 5th

This was my first game of Mercator and I chose South Africa as I had hoped it might be out of the way enough to allow me to watch developments while trying to figure out some sort of strategy. This worked to an extent, but only having four centres - and therefore four units - at the start was, I think, a bigger disadvantage than I had anticipated. Nevertheless, my game opened reasonably well, although I was certainly helped by the Ugandan dropout, which I should probably have exploited to a greater extent than I did. The early stab against Argentina finished off one potential opponent and left me with Brazil as an ally. Somehow, though, I never felt I could fully trust Brazil (sorry Richard) and his constant claims to African territory were a source of some tension between us. My closest ally was undoubtedly Australia who had interests in both the Indian Ocean and South America, and until the last turn stab (I'd guessed it was coming but there wasn't much I could do about it) we were working pretty well. I always had a feeling, however, that I was playing for the minor placings and I couldn't see much opportunity for catching up on U.S.A. or Russia who seemed totally dominant. There is no doubt that reading Steve Jones' letters gave me a lesson in how to play the game, informative, interesting and always as aware of your situation as he was of his. For too much of the game I was concentrating on myself and not on the other players, although that to some extent was simply due to lack of time on my part.

Congratulations to the winners, thanks to everyone for making the game so enjoyable, particularly Steve (U.S.A.), Calum (Australia), Richard (Brazil), Andrew (Argentina) and Stewart (Japan) who all kept in regular contact (even when I didn't!), and, of course, to Steve for his excellent GM'ing and for being prepared to take constant last minute telephone orders from me.

Steve Cox - GM

There wasn't room on the first page to provide a key for the map, so I hope it made sense by itself.

Except for the Sahara desert, the areas left white are those that were controlled at the end by the winners, whilst the losers' empires are indicated by different levels of shading (if they reproduced OK). The only boundaries shown are those between land and sea, between one empire and another, and the outlines of the 17 home countries. The white areas include 101 of the 177 centres on the map.

It's a measure of the speed at which Mercator plays that five players were on 18 centres or more by March 1921 - the equivalent of 1905 in regular Dip - with two more on 17. However, I can't help thinking that the end was too sudden. The game had not yet fully resolved itself into a struggle between US-Russia-Australia and the rest by September 1921, and it would only have taken one stab and a little diplomacy to rearrange the alliances as, say, US-S.Africa v. Australia-Brazil v. Austria-India v. Russia-France, which would have kept things bubbling along nicely well into 1922. Without a statement from John, we don't know whether he actually did consider a stab in July 1921 when Russia was a couple of centres up on the US, but if he did, I suspect it was only partly the prospect of having to outwrite Steve in the diplomatic battle for new allies that put him off, and that the main discouragement was provided by the rules on victory claims.

Unlike regular Diplomacy, no player in Mercator has a veto over the draw - sorry, joint win - so before a player in a winning alliance risks a stab, he must be very confident that he can get to the 40 centres required for a solo win within a couple of seasons or he is likely to find himself consigned to the losers heap when his erstwhile partner teams up with someone else instead. The stabber could do the same himself, it's true, but as the stronger player of the two (if his stab was effective) and also, clearly, the less trustworthy one, he would have a hard time finding a new ally; and besides, if he's prepared to share his win there would be no point inflicting the stab in the first place.

As for three-way alliances, these are even harder to break, as the innocent party in the stab will already have a ready made partner for his 2-way win claim. In fact, I suspect it is this, rather than the added weight, that makes 3-ways the optimum route to avoiding defeat, as Steve said in his report.

In the absence of the occasional spectacular stab, then, what else is there in Mercator to provide excitement for a shiny new GM, eagerly anticipating a ringside seat at the mother of all battles? One centre - Daw, just north of Canada - changed hands five times and

had four different owners, but disappointingly it was entered unopposed each time. The Key rule looks promising (see Rules Summary, item 7) but it is more useful to defenders than attackers and seemed in this game to make the latter more cautious, at least in TS2. Attacks are best carried out in TS1, when there is usually no defence against a supported landing from an A/F. However, the only interest they hold for the GM is working out where the dislodged units might be able to retreat to, and since their effect is often to render the orders for larger TS2 battles invalid, I couldn't help wishing they required a little more ingenuity to mount.

Perhaps as a result of these features, most players seemed rather tentative in their foreign campaigns, taking care not to leave their units on coasts where A/F's might appear, and maintaining as many A/F's of their own at sea as they could, even though this reduced the units available to occupy supply centres. One exception to this was Argentina, but his early stab on Brazil proved to be a rash gamble founded only on inexperience. Another was India, who dared to launch a lone invasion of Russia when it seemed that John might be able to get a solo win simply by walking into centres that had belonged to dropouts, but Allan's other neighbours did not appreciate his crusading attitude and his units bogged down through lack of support.

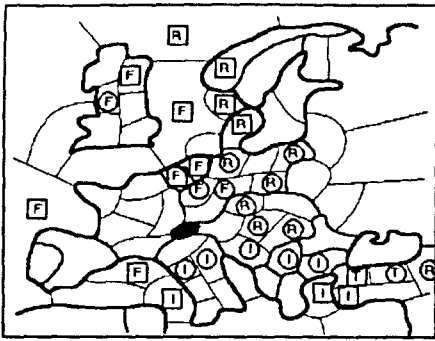
And finally there was man-of-the-match Richard Williams. While everyone else oozed their way forwards, he sent his units scurrying into the gaps between their empires so quickly that at the end of the second movement season not one of them was adjacent to a Brazilian home space. Even when he was stabbed by Argentina, he continued to advance along the southern shores of the Mediterranean and then, having regained his homeland by a combination of military prowess and desperate diplomacy, he launched, not one, but three stabs of his own, including amongst his targets the strongest power on the board. Unfortunately for him, his sterling efforts failed to incite others to follow his example and his empire, like India's, went into decline, although there were signs at the end that he might be able to win Australia to his cause.

For the record, the disorder to which Richard attributes his undoing was simply to misread the name of one of the seldom visited Saharan provinces. Since the maps that I sent the players each season did not have the province names marked, I usually corrected such errors when I spotted them, but this one slipped past the guards and would have made good its escape had it not strayed into the field of view of a Steve Jones made extra vigilant by Richard's simultaneous stab on him. In the same season, I also mistakenly allowed an illegal order of Richard's that gave him an extra centre at Steve's expense, so when this was also pointed out to me I thought I should ring Richard in advance of the readjudication to save him wasting too much time on plans for next season that he would not be able to carry out.

Except when I had to put out such readjudications, I think I did enjoy GM'ing Avogadro. Although it seemed to take up a whole weekend each month, much of the time was spent on the mini-subzine for *Spring Offensive*, with its promise of fame and fortune to follow, or, at the beginning, on probing the loopholes and inconsistencies in what were presented to me as a set of rules perfected by years of playtesting and the logical brain of a Professor of Mathematics. The hours spent in front of the PC screen also provided an excellent opportunity to rediscover some of the gems in my record collection (eg. The Vapors *New Clear Days*, or the Purple Hearts *Beat That!*), and I will always associate the music of Kikta, Schnittke and Kancheli with the chore of copytyping orders.

THE DOUBLE NEWS Six CLUB

Sally Field's last contribution to the gaming scene was to arrange for me to run a new outpost of the Double Six Club at The Crown in Horsham, and to attend the opening night there on May 11th, so that's where you'll find me every Tuesday night now, chatting up the girls. The Brighton club staggers on, denuded of all its decent games, but the atmosphere in Horsham is much more to my liking (brighter lights, bigger tables, quieter noise) and there are even some regulars among the 50 or so players each week, so pop in if you're passing. Dress code is provocative, so far.



1994BT COCHISE (Spring 1909)

FRANCE (Jonathan Barber) F(Edi) s F(ENG) - NTH; F(MAO) - NAO (FAILED); A(Yor) - Lpl; F(NTH) - Hol; F(Bel) s F(NTH) - Hol; F(GoL) Stands; A(Bur) - Ruh; A(Tyr) - Mun; F(ENG) - NTH

GERMANY (Alan Laird - NMR2!) A(Hol) Stands* (DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRO); A(Boh) Stands* (DISLODGED - DISBANDED BY GM); A(Sil) Stands* (DISLODGED - DISBANDED BY GM)

ITALY (Mark Walker) F(EMS) - Smy; F(AEG) s F(EMS) - Smy; A(Bul) - Con (FAILED); A(Gre) - Ser; A(Ven) s A(Tri); F(TYS) Stands; A(Tus) Stands; A(Tri) s RUSSIAN A(Vie)

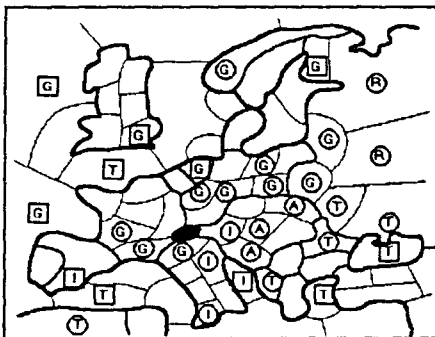
RUSSIA (Roy Burnett) F(StP) nc - Nwy; F(Nwy) - SKA; F(HEL) - Den; F(NWG) - NAO (FAILED); A(Ber) - Kie; A(Pru) s A(War) - Sil; A(Vie) s A(Gal) - Boh; A(Bud) s A(Vie); A(Sev) - Arm; A(Gal) - Boh; A(War) - Sil

TURKEY (Paul Ridout) A(Ank) s F(Con); A(Smy) s F(Con)* (CUT, DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRO); F(Con) s A(Smy) (CUT)

Wilfred: With the second NMR Germany is now in Anarchy.

Press:

France-Germany: Sorry but your position looks hopeless.



1993DD DUCATI (Spring 1909)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Anthony Coogan) A(Gal) s TURKISH A(Rum) - Ukr (CUT); A(Vie) s A(Gal); A(Tyr) - Tri

GERMANY (Peter Dunnett) F(NWG) - NAO; F(NTH) - Lon; A(Nwy) - StP (FAILED); F(GoB) - Fin; A(Lvn) s A(Nwy) - StP; A(War) s A(Sil) - Gal; F(ENG) - MAO; A(Bre) - Gas; A(Ber) - Sil (FAILED); A(Sil) - Gal (FAILED); A(Mun) s ITALIAN A(Ven) - Tyr; F(Kie) - Hol; A(Ruh) s A(Mun); A(Bur) - Mar; A(Mar) - Pie

ITALY (Paul Humphreys) F(Spa) sc s GERMAN F(ENG) - MAO; A(Rom) - Ven;

A(Ven) - Tyr; F(ADS) - Tri (FAILED); A(Nap) Stands

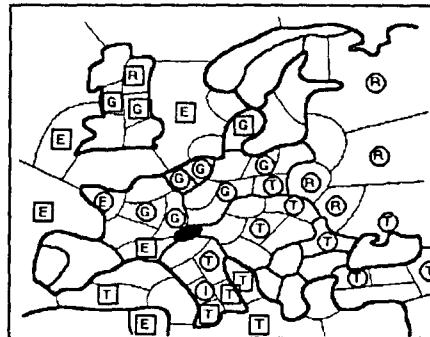
RUSSIA (Rob Moore) A(Mos) s A(StP); A(StP) s A(Mos) (CUT)

TURKEY (Steve Turner) A(Sev) s RUSSIAN A(Mos); A(Rum) - Ukr; A(Con) - Rum; F(BLA) c A(Con) - Rum; A(Alb) s AUSTRIAN A(Tyr) - Tri; F(ION) - AEG; F(WMS) - MAO (FAILED); A(Naf) Stands; F(IRI) - ENG

Press:

Turkey(Govt.)-Russia / Austria / Italy: Are we going to work together to stop Germany winning?

Die Deutsche Zeitung: A(Mun)-Boh (FAILED) isn't lesser only A(Mun) BSC BOMBAY (FAILED)!



1992DG EURYMEDON (Autumn 1917)

ENGLAND (Paul Ridout) F(NTH) - Lon (FAILED); F(ENG) - IRI; F(MAO) Stands; F(Mar) Stands; F(Tun) Stands; A(Bre) s A(Pic) - Par; A(Pic) - Par (FAILED)

GERMANY (Tim Deacon) A(Par) Stands; A(Bur) s A(Par); A(Bel) Stands; A(Hol) s A(Par) (MISORDER); A(Mun) - Ber (FAILED); F(Cly) - Lpl; F(Yor) - Lon (FAILED); F(Den) - NTH (FAILED)

ITALY (Andy Bassett) A(Rom) - Ven (FAILED); F(Nap) Stands* (DISLODGED - DISBANDED BY GM)

RUSSIA (Chris Stone) F(NWG) - Edi; A(Ukr) s A(Mos) - Sev (CUT); A(War) s A(Ukr); A(Mos) - Sev (FAILED)

TURKEY (James Emony) A(Arm) s A(Sev); A(Sev) s A(Rum) - Ukr (CUT); A(Rum) - Ukr (FAILED); A(Bud) - Gal; A(Vie) s A(Bud) - Gal; A(Sil) - Ber (FAILED); A(Ven) - Rom (FAILED); F(Apu) s F(ION) - Nap; F(ION) - Nap; F(ADS) s F(EMS) - ION; F(Naf) - WMS; F(EMS) - ION

Autumn 1917 Adjustments:

E: Mar, Tun, Bre, Lon, Por, Spa -Bel, -Lpl = 6; Loses 2. Removes A(Pic).
G: Par, +Bel, Hol, Mun, +Lpl, Den, Ber, Kie, Swe, -Edi = 9; Gains 1. Builds A(Ber).
I: Rom -Nap = 1; Loses 1.
R: +Edi, War, Mos, Nwy, StP = 5; Gains 1. Builds A(StP).
T: Sev, Rum, Vie, Ven, +Nap, Ank, Bud, Bul, Con, Gre, Ser, Smy, Tri = 13; Gains 1. Builds A(Con).

Wilfred: I hereby declare this game to be over, the endgame proposal of 1st T, =2nd E & G, 4th R, 5th I was accepted 4 yes, 1 abstention = yes. Endgame statements for this marathon

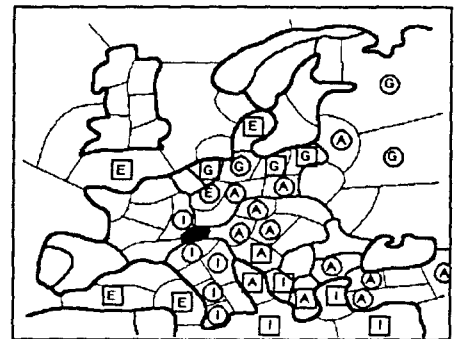
game would be very welcome and I hope some of you come back for another game.

Press:

Russia-World: I'll agree to anything where Turkey comes last.

Italian Government-Russian Politburo: Welcome my Communist friends, glory to the Soviet Government (there you go Mr Stewart Whyte - well it is Fall 1917 and probably the only chance I will get to use the correct political terms).

Turkish Trade Department: The unique blend of camel dung and cheap tobacco is now available from your local Berlin cornershop (we hope!).



1991DB FIFO (Autumn 1916)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Phil Rutter) A(Con) - Bul; A(Ank) - Con; A(Arm) s A(Smy); A(Smy) s A(Ank) - Con; A(Mos) - StP* (FAILED, DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRO); A(War) - Lvn; A(Tyr) - Ven (FAILED); F(Tri) s A(Tyr) - Ven; F(ION) - ADS; A(Vie) - Tyr (FAILED); A(Boh) s A(Vie) - Tyr; A(Sil) s A(Mun); A(Mun) Stands; F(Gre) - ION (FAILED)

ENGLAND (Ray Ince) F(Swe) - Den; F(NTH) - ENG; F(MAO) - WMS; F(TYS) s ITALIAN F(Tun) - ION; A(Ruh) - Mun (FAILED)

GERMANY (Peter Hawkins) F(Kie) - Hol; F(Pru) s F(Ber); A(Lvn) - Mos; A(StP) s A(Lvn) - Mos; F(Ber) s F(Pru)

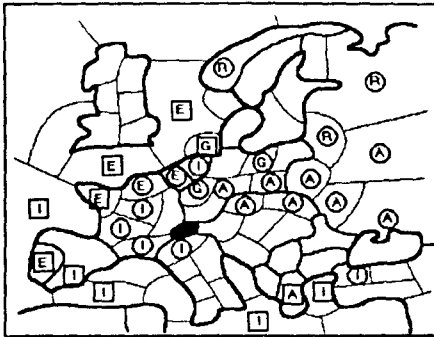
ITALY (Alasdair Barden) A(Bur) s ENGLISH A(Ruh) - Mun; A(Ven) - Tri (FAILED); A(Pie) s A(Rom) - Ven; A(Rom) - Ven (FAILED); A(Nap) Stands; F(Tun) - ION; F(AEG) s AUSTRIAN F(Gre) - Bul sc (MISORDER); F(EMS) s F(Tun) - ION; F(ADS) - Alb

Autumn 1916 Adjustments:

A: Bul, Con, +Smy, Tri, Vie, Mun, Gre, Ank, Bud, Rum, Ser, Sev, War, -Mos, -Ber = 13; Loses 1.
E: +Den, Bel, Edi, Lpl, Lon, -Hol = 5; No change.
G: +Hol, +Mos, StP, +Ber, Kie, Nwy, Swe -Den = 7; Gains 2. Builds A(Kie), 1 short.
I: Ven, Rom, Nap, Bre, Mar, Par, Por, Spa, Tun, -Smy = 9; Loses 1.

Press:

F(ENG)-The Bosses: What was the ferry time for the 3 way Xmas VA celebrations? Or is that the VS celebrations?



1994DA FOGHAT (Spring 1908)

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

ENGLAND (Chris Stone) F(Por) s FRENCH A(Spa) (CUT); F(ENG) c A(Lon) - Pic; F(NTH) s GERMAN F(HEL) - Hol (MISORDER); A(Bel) s GERMAN F(HEL) - Hol (MISORDER); F(Pic) - Bre; A(Lon) - Pic

FRANCE (Anarchy - Deborah Lloyd) A(Spa) Stands* (DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRO)

GERMANY (Rob Tesh - NMR!) F(HEL) Stands; A(Ruh) Stands; A(Ber) Stands; A(Mun) Stands (DISLODGED - DISBANDED BY GM)

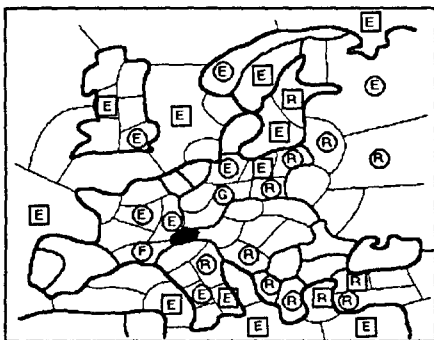
ITALY (Steve Watts) F(MAO) - Por (FAILED); F(WMS) s F(GoL) - Spa sc; A(Mar) - Gas; A(Pie) - Mar; A(Bur) - Par; A(Hol) - Ruh (FAILED); F(Con) - AEG; F(AEG) - ION; A(Ank) - Con; A(Ven) - Pie; F(GoL) - Spa sc

RUSSIA (Bob Kendrick) A(StP) - Nwy; A(Lvn) - StP; A(Pru) - Lvn

Wilfred: A disappointing NMR from Rob. Pity he's not as efficient as Rosie.

Press:

Russian(Govt.)-World: The true government is now back in control and is ready to listen to any proposals.



1992DV GREER (Autumn 1911)

ENGLAND (Richard Williams) F(EMS) s F(Nap) - ION; F(Tun) - TYS; F(Apu) - Ven (FAILED); F(NAO) - MAO; F(ENG) - NTH; F(Ber) Stands; F(BAR) s A(StP); F(Swe) s F(Den) - BAL; A(Kie) s F(Ber); A(Bur) Stands; A(Pic) - Par; A(Nwy) s A(StP); A(StP) Stands; A(Rom) s F(Apu) - Ven; F(Nap) - ION; F(Den) - BAL

FRANCE (Anarchy) A(Mar) Stands

GERMANY (Anarchy) A(Mun) Stands; A(Ruh) Stands

RUSSIA (Jason Asker) A(Gre) s A(Alb); A(Smy) Stands; A(Alb) s A(Tri); F(AEG) - ION (FAILED); A(Tri) s A(Ven); A(Ven) s A(Tri) (CUT); F(GoB) - BAL (FAILED); A(Sil) s GERMAN A(Mun); A(Pru) - Ber (FAILED); A(Mos) s A(Lvn) - StP; A(Lvn) - StP (FAILED); F(BLA) - Con

TURKEY (Anarchy) F(ADS) Stands

Autumn 1911 Adjustments:

E: Ber, Swe, Kie, +Par, Nwy, +StP, Rom, Bel, Bre, Den, Edi, Hol, Lpl, Lon, Por, Spa, Tun, Nap = 18; Gains 2. Builds A(Lon), F(Lpl).

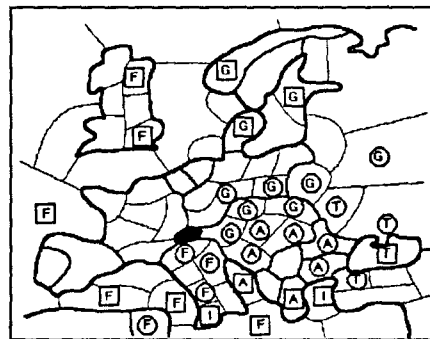
F: Mar = 1; No change.

G: Mun, -Par = 1; Loses 1. GM Removes A(Ruh).

R: Gre, +Smy, Tri, Ven, Mos, Con, Bud, Bul, Rum, Ser, Sev, Vie, War, Ank, -StP = 14; No change. No builds ordered, 2 short.

T: -Smy = 0; Loses 1. GM removes F(ADS).

Wilfred: Well, it's all over. Congratulations to Richard for a determined win, though assisted by dropouts and thank you to Jason for making Richard work for it. Endgame statements would be nice, but I'll need a SC chart from someone.



1994DH HANNIBAL (Spring 1907)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Shaun Derrick) A(Tyr) - Vie; A(Bud) s A(Tyr) - Vie; F(Tri) - ADS; A(Ser) - Tri; F(Bul) sc - Gre; A(Rum) - Bul; A(Ukr) s TURKISH A(Sev) - Mos* (MISORDER, DISLODGED TO Rum)

FRANCE (Simon Scott) F(Edi) Stands; F(Lon) Stands; F(Bre) - MAO; F(Tun) - ION; F(TYS) s F(Tun) - ION; F(WMS) Stands; A(NAf) - Tun; A(Tus) - Rom; A(Ven) s A(Tus) - Rom; A(Mar) - Pie

GERMANY (Mike Sykes) F(Nwy) Stands; F(Den) Stands; F(StP) sc - GoB; A(Lvn) - Mos; A(War) s A(Lvn) - Mos; A(Kie) - Mun; A(Ber) - Sil; A(Mun) - Tyr; A(Boh) s A(Mun) - Tyr; A(Vie) s A(Sil) - Gal* (CUT, DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRO); A(Sil) - Gal

ITALY (Mark Stretch) F(Nap) - ION (FAILED); F(ION) - AEG

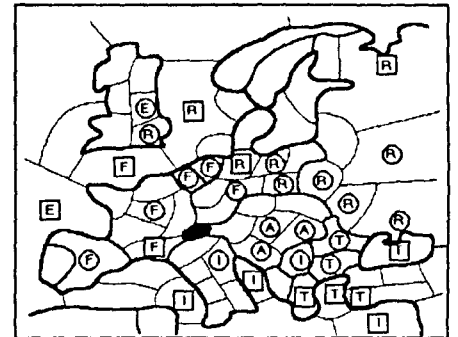
TURKEY (Steven Slater) A(Gal) - Ukr; F(BLA) s A(Sev); A(Con) Stands; A(Sev) s A(Gal) - Ukr

Wilfred: We have an endgame proposal of =1st France 7 Germany, 3rd Austria, =4th Italy & Turkey. Votes please, unanimity required, abstentions = NO, NMRs = YES.

Press:

Austria-"Hannibal": This is the turning point or the death; or both!!

Germany-Turkey: You owe me a SAE! Can I have it back - you could put a letter in it.



1994DK JIGSAW (Autumn 1906)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Dave Allen) A(Vie) s A(Ser) - Tri; A(Bud) s A(Ser) - Tri; A(Ser) - Tri; A(Rum) - Ser* (FAILED, DISLODGED TO Gal)

ENGLAND (Keith Ashbolt) A(Edi) - Yor; F(NAO) - MAO

FRANCE (Gerwyn Michael) F(ENG) - Bre (FAILED); A(Bur) - Par; A(Spa) - Gas (FAILED); F(Mar) Stands; A(Bel) s A(Hol); A(Hol) s RUSSIAN F(Den) - Kie; A(Mun) s RUSSIAN F(Den) - Kie

GERMANY (Steve Bibby) A(Gas) - Bre (FAILED); F(Kie) Stands* (DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRO); A(Ruh) Stands

ITALY (Richard Williams) F(ION) - TYS; F(EMS) - ION (FAILED); F(ADS) s A(Ven) - Tri; A(Ven) - Tri (FAILED); A(Alb) - Ser

RUSSIA (Chris Palm) A(Ber) s F(Den) - Kie; F(Den) - Kie; F(NTH) c A(Nwy) - Lon; A(Mos) - Sev; A(Ukr) s A(Mos) - Sev; A(War) - Sil; A(Nwy) - Lon

TURKEY (David Horton) A(Sev) - Rum; F(BLA) s A(Sev) - Rum; F(Gre) s A(Bul); A(Bul) s ITALIAN A(Alb) - Ser; F(AEG) - ION (FAILED); F(Smy) - AEG (FAILED)

Autumn 1906 Adjustments:

A: Vie, Bud, +Tri, -Ser, -Rum = 3; Loses 1. GM removes A(Gal).

E: Edi, Lpl = 2; No change.

F: Par, Spa, Mar, Bel, +Hol, Mun, Bre, Por = 8; Gains 1. 1 short, no builds ordered!

G: -Hol, -Kie, -Lon = 0; Loses 3. GM removes A(Gas), A(Ruh). OUT!

I: Ven, +Ser, Nap, Rom, Tun, -Tri = 5; No change.

R: Ber, +Kie, +Sev, +Lon, Mos, StP, War, Den, Nwy, Swe = 10; Gains 3. Builds F(StP)nc, A(Mos), A(War).

T: +Rum, Gre, Bul, Smy, Ank, Con, -Sev = 6; No change.

Press:

Jigsaw-Jigsaw: Tch - typical - no one remembered our birthday last ish.

France-England: For want of some ink, the pen was lost; for want of a pen, the letter was lost; for want of a letter, the ally was lost; for want of an ally, the battle was lost; for want of the battle, the kingdom was lost; and all for the want of a drop of ink.

All-Ber: It's been fun - no hard feelings we hope.

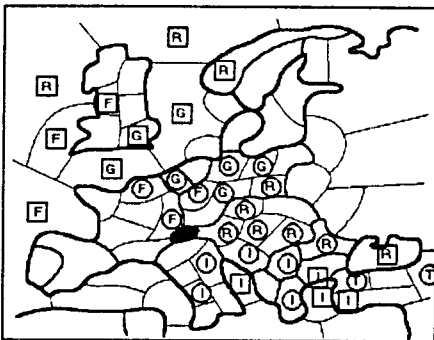
ENG-Russian Admiral: Bring your sharpened cutlass you over-inflated, pox-ridden, Sandersnatch!

Coffee Shop Constantinople-Tea Room Trieste: Turkish trident forks Rumania.

Par-Capt. Paranoia:

When the wind is in the East, It's neither good for man or beast;
when the wind is in the North, The skilful fisher goes not forth;
When the wind is in the South, It blows the bait in the fishes moth;
When the wind is in the West, Then it's at its very best.

Paris-Enemies of the Alliance: The Germans are of no use to me; they are like the waste metal left over after silver has been refined in a furnace. Now their time has come - weak filth. I will gather their worst in Gascony, in the same way that the ore is put in a furnace. My anger and rage will melt them, just as fire melts ore. Yes, I will gather them in Gascony, build a fire under them, and melt them with my anger. They will be melted in Gascony just as silver is melted in a furnace, and then they will know that they are feeling the wrath of Taff!!



1994DO KISS (Autumn 1995)

FRANCE (Kieron Quirke) A(Bur) - Bel (FAILED); A(Pic) s A(Bur) - Bel; A(Ruh) - Hol (FAILED); F(ENG) - NTH* (FAILED, DISLODGED TO MAO); F(Lpl) Stands; F(IRI) s F(Lpl)

GERMANY (James Emony) F(Lon) s F(NTH) - ENG; F(NTH) - ENG; F(SKA) - NTH; A(Bel) - Bur (FAILED); A(Mun) s A(Bel) - Bur; A(Ber) - Kie (FAILED); A(Kie) - Hol (FAILED)

ITALY (Andrew Feather) F(ADS) s A(Tri); A(Tri) s A(Ser) (CUT); A(Ser) s F(Con) - Bul sc; A(Gre) s A(Ser); F(AEG) s F(Con) - Bul sc; F(Con) - Bul sc; F(Smy) - Con (FAILED)

RUSSIA (Mike Sykes) F(Cly) - NAO; A(Edi) - Lpl (FAILED); F(Nwy) - NWG; F(Swe) - Nwy; A(Mos) - Ukr; F(BLA) - Con (FAILED); A(Bul) - Ser (FAILED, DISLODGED TO Rum); A(Bud) - Tri (FAILED); A(Vie) s A(Boh) - Tyr; A(Boh) - Tyr; A(Sil) - Boh; A(Pru) - Sil

TURKEY (Dave Allen) A(Ank) - Arm

Autumn 1995 Adjustments:

F: Lpl, Bre, Mar, Par, Por, Spa = 6; No change.
G: Lon, Bel, Mun, Ber, Kie, Den, Hol = 7; No change.
I: Tri, +Ser, Gre, +Bul, Smy, Nap, Rom, Ven, Tun = 9; Gains 2. Builds A(Ven), A(Rom).
R: Edi, Nwy, Rum, Bud, Vie, Mos, Sev, StP, War, Swe, -Ser, -Bul = 10; Loses 2. Removes A(Edi), A(Ukr).
T: Ank, Con = 2; No change. Builds A(Con).

Wilfred: The endgame proposal was defeated, 1 yes, 1 no, 2 abstain. We now have a new endgame proposal of 1st R, =2nd I, F & G. Votes please, unanimity required, abstentions = NO, NMRs = YES.

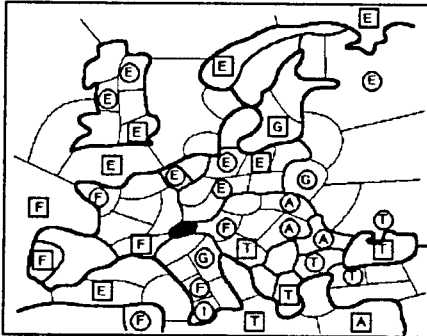
Press:

Russia-Italy: If you're not going to attack me, then who are you going to attack?

German High Command: "... But Kaiser, sire; if we tippex out the Russian and French units here, her and here, things don't look so bad, do they?"

German Ministry of Propaganda-German Peoples of Holland and Belgium: "Relax, everything is fine!"

Paris-All: I'm back (sort of).



1994DV MATCHBOX (Autumn 1995)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Rob Wills) A(Gal) s A(Ser) - Rum; A(Bud) s A(Ser) - Rum; A(Ser) - Rum; F(ION) - Gre (FAILED, DISLODGED TO EMS)

ENGLAND (Peter Berlin) F(ENG) - MAO (FAILED); F(MAO) - Por* (FAILED, DISLODGED TO WMS); A(Kie) s A(Bur) - Mun; F(Ber) Stands; F(BAR) s A(Fin) - StP; F(Nwy) s A(Fin) - StP; A(Bel) - Ruh (FAILED); A(Fin) - StP; A(Bur) - Mun

FRANCE (Allan Stagg for Tony Hyland) A(Tun) Stands; F(Por) s F(Bre) - MAO; F(Bre) - MAO; F(Spa) sc - Mar; A(Par) - Bre; A(Mun) - Ruh* (FAILED, DISLODGED TO Tyr); A(Tus) - Rom

GERMANY (Patrick Finglass) F(Pru) - BAL; A(Mos) - War; A(Ven) s FRENCH A(Tus) - Rom

ITALY (James Brown - NMR!) A(Nap) Stands; F(TYS) Stands

RUSSIA (Steve Bibby) A(Ukr) - Sev (FAILED); F(StP) nc - Nwy* (FAILED, DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRO)

TURKEY (Guy Thomas) F(BLA) s A(Sev) - Rum; A(Rum) - Ser* (FAILED, DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRO); A(Sev) - Rum (FAILED); A(Bul) s A(Rum) - Ser; F(Gre) s F(AEG) - ION; F(Alb) - Tri; F(AEG) - ION

Autumn 1995 Adjustments:

A: Bud, +Rum, Vie, Ser, -Tri = 4; No change.
E: Kie, +Ber, Nwy, Bel, +StP, +Mun, Edi, Lon, Lpl, Swe, Den, Hol = 12; Gains 3. Builds A(Edi), F(Lon), A(Lpl).
F: Tun, Por, Mar, Bre, +Rom, Par, Spa, -Mun = 7; No change.
G: +War, Ven, Mos -Ber = 3; No change.
I: Nap, -Rom = 1; Loses 1. GM Removes F(TYS).
R: -StP, -War = 0; Loses 2. Removes A(Ukr).
OUT!

T: Sev, Bul, Gre, +Tri, Ank, Con, Smy, -Rum = 7; No change. Builds A(Con).

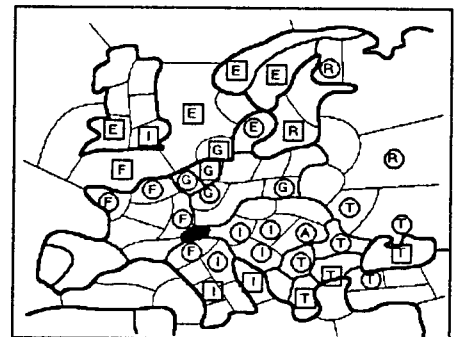
Wilfred: There was an error in the last adjudication. The French move A(Tun)-Apu should have been shown to have failed. It seems that there is a bug in the adjudication program which wasn't in the DOS version and I'm getting Stewart to sort it out.

Press:

France-England: Any fool could have pointed that out to you - I was obviously just quicker than the others.

Endgame Statement from Germany: I decided to start this game by persuading France and England to attack me, while annoying all of my other neighbours. This succeeded, and by 1903 I had achieved half of my victory conditions by capturing two supply centres from different countries. Despite a treacherous stab by France, who decided to ally with me, by good play I was able to complete my victory conditions by losing all of my home centres. Well done me, and thanks to Stephen for printing this rubbish.

Vienna (Govt.)-All: Observers of foreign affairs will have noted a softening of attitudes between the Mad Archduke and the Professor. This is due largely to a deepening friendship between the Professor's daughter and the Archduke's oldest son Milo who has just returned from leading the Austrian forces to victory in Rumania. Milo has, however, recently met with an unfortunate accident. While trying to absail into Susan's window carrying a box of plain chocolates he unknowingly passed through the beam of the Professor's experimental anti-gravity machine being tested in the courtyard below. (The Mad Archduke plans to go in for aerial warfare.) Milo dangled upside down above the roof until he was noticed by a cook and reeled in like a kite. He now mopes in the scullery, having been banned from most of the palace because of the damage his feet do to the ornate ceilings. Susan assures him that her father will think of a way to get him down soon.



1995EC NUCLEUS (Autumn 1994)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Tim Deacon) A(Vie) s A(Bud) - Tri (DISLODGED TO Gal); A(Ser) s A(Bud) - Tri* (CUT, DISLODGED TO Alb); A(Bud) - Tri (FAILED)

ENGLAND (John Boocock) F(Nwy) - StP nc (FAILED); F(Swe) s A(Den); F(Lpl) - Wal; F(NTH) - Lon (FAILED); A(Den) Stands

FRANCE (Paul Atmore) F(ENG) s ITALIAN F(Wal) - Lon; A(Gas) - Bre; A(Pic) s A(Bur); A(Bur) s A(Pic); A(Mar) - Pie

GERMANY (Neil Newman - NMR!) A(Sil) Stands; F(HEL) Stands; F(Hol) Stands; A(Bel) Stands; A(Ruh) Stands

ITALY (Peter Shortall) F(Wal) - Lon; A(Tyr) s A(Tri) - Vie; A(Tri) - Vie; A(Ven) - Tri; F(ADS) s A(Ven) - Tri

RUSSIA (Keith Ashbolt) A(Mos) - War (FAILED); A(Fin) - StP (FAILED); F(GoB) - BAL

TURKEY (Noel Turner) A(Ukr) - War (FAILED); A(Arm) - Sev; A(Bul) - Ser; A(Rum) s A(Bul) - Ser; F(BLA) s A(Rum); F(Con) - Bul sc; F(Gre) Stands

Autumn 1904 Adjustments:

A: Bud, -Vie, -Ser = 1; Loses 2. GM Removes A(Gal), A(Alb).
E: Nwy, Swe, Den, Edi, Lpl, -Lon = 5; Loses 1.
F: Bre, Mar, Par, Spa, Por = 5; No change.
G: Hol, Bel, Ber, Kie, Mun = 5; No change.
I: +Lon, +Vie, Tri, Nap, Rom, Ven, Tun = 7; Gains 2. Builds A(Ven), F(Rom).
R: Mos, StP, War = 3; No change.
T: Sev, +Ser, Rum, Bul, Gre, Ank, Con, Smy = 8; Gains 1. Builds A(Con).

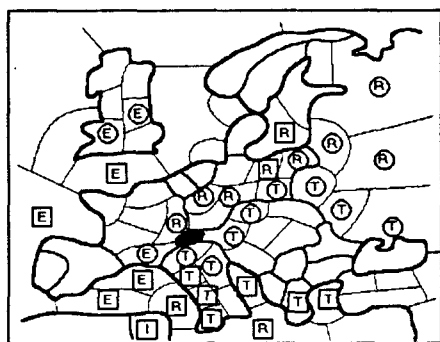
Press:

Rome-London: There's really no need to get so uptight - of course I'll get now't from you.

Roma-Londra: E grazie per L'introduzione - è come se ho conosciuto vi da molti anni! (o da trap anni, ad ogni modo!).

England-GM: I hope the written words mean what they say and not the map!! Also, if Italy had been late I'd be FAR better off. What is the point in accepting late orders??

Wilfred-England: My apologies for putting the previous season's map on the late re-adjudication by mistake. I will usually accept late orders up to delivering the zine to the printers (and sometimes up to posting the thing) because I believe NMRs spoil games and tend to breed more NMRs. However, players only have late orders accepted once in six issues - Peter is now in the Sin Bin.



1993BD ORCHOMENUS (Spring 1914)

ENGLAND (Richard Williams) F(WMS) s RUSSIAN F(GoL) - TYS; F(Spa) sc - GoL; F(Por) - MAO; F(Lon) - ENG; A(Mar) - Pie (FAILED); A(Lpl) - Wal; A(Edi) - Yor

ITALY (Paul Barker) F(Tun) s RUSSIAN F(TYS) - ION

RUSSIA (Jimmy Cowie) F(GoL) - TYS; F(TYS) - ION; F(Pru) - BAL; A(War) - Pru; F(Ber) s A(War) - Pru; A(StP) s A(Mos); A(Mos) Stands; A(Lvn) s A(War) - Pru; A(Mun) Stands; A(Bur) s A(Mun); A(Ruh) s A(Mun)

TURKEY (Lorraine Tullett) A(Sev) - Mos (FAILED); A(Ukr) s A(Gal) - War; A(Gal) - War; A(Sil) s A(Gal) - War; A(Boh) - Mun (FAILED); A(Tyr) s A(Pie); A(Pie) s F(Rom) -

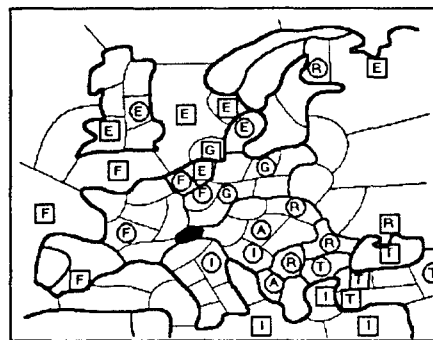
Tus (CUT); A(Ven) s F(Rom) - Tus; F(Rom) - Tus; F(Nap) - Rom; F(Apu) - Nap; F(ION) - TYS* (FAILED, DISLODGED TO ADS); F(AEG) - Gre; F(Con) - AEG

Wilfred: Note Lorraine's COA. Sunnybank, back Lane, Meriden, Coventry, CV7 7LD. Endgame proposal defeated, 3 for, 1 against. We now have two endgame proposals: (A) 4 way draw; (B) =1st T & R, 3rd E, 4th I. Votes please, unanimity required, abstentions = NO, NMRs = YES.

Press:

Turkey(Govt.)-All: Although I agree that I can no longer win, my goal is still to gain as many centres as possible. If I am not delayed by obtaining those centres which I could, in the end, force, I will accept a draw all the sooner.

Russia-Turkey: Save your credibility Lorraine and vote for the draw. The game's finished now, you'll gain nothing by prolonging it.



1995BG OSIBISA (Spring 1904)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Donal O'Nuallain) A(Vie) s A(Ser) - Tri; A(Ser) - Tri* (FAILED, DISLODGED TO Alb)

ENGLAND (Dave Allen) A(Edi) - Yor; F(Lpl) - Wal; F(Lon) - NTH; F(StP) nc Stands; A(Den) Stands; F(SKA) - Swe (FAILED); F(Hol) s F(Lon) - NTH

FRANCE (Derek Wood) F(Mar) - Spa sc; A(Spa) - Gas; A(Bur) - Ruh; A(Bel) Stands; F(MAO) Stands; F(ENG) Stands

GERMANY (Gerwyn Michael) F(HEL) - NTH (FAILED); A(Mun) s F(HEL) - Kie (MISORDER); A(Ber) s F(HEL) - Kie (MISORDER)

ITALY (Bill Eaton) A(Tri) s RUSSIAN A(Bud) - Ser; A(Ven) s A(Tri); F(ION) - AEG; F(Nap) - ION; F(EMS) s F(ION) - AEG

RUSSIA (Rosie Sexton) A(Fin) - Swe (FAILED); F(Sev) s A(Rum); A(Rum) s A(Bud) - Ser; A(Bud) - Ser; A(War) - Gal

TURKEY (Gihan Bandaranaike) F(BLA) c A(Bul) - Arm; A(Gre) - Bul; F(AEG) s F(Con) - Smy* (CUT, DISLODGED TO Con); F(Con) - Smy; A(Bul) - Arm

Wilfred: Note COAs for Donal and Gerwyn on back page.

Press:

Indignant Turks: Peeg! You call me unclean? Oh well, anything to survive. Squeal, squeal.

Sultan-Backstabber: Fool that I am, I've done as you advised. I hope you are satisfied by this conditional surrender and will honour your promise to leave me to expand north. And don't

even think of my homeland (remember Gallipoli!).

Sultan: "It is a far, far better thing I do now than I have ever done. It is a far, far better place that I go to than I have ever been."

Old Italian Proverb: A fool and his SCs are soon parted.

Sultan-Czarina: Congratulations on your Cambridge place. How do I know? Aha! I hope my moves for this turn are a bit less predictable. Not my idea, I must confess.

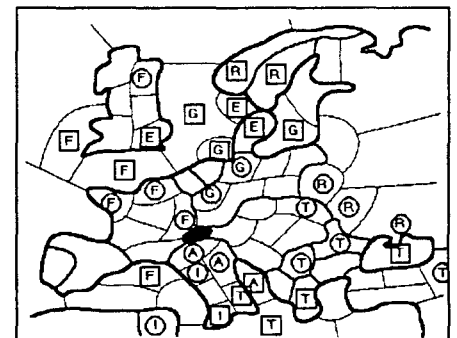
Berlin-Exchange & Mart: 2 armies and 1 fleet, low mileage, full service history, MOT etc. AVAILABLE TO ANYONE WILLING TO KILL WOPS / FROGS / POMS.

Germany-Turkey: Turkish Prince is full of hot air.

Turkish Chronicler-Impostor: Oh woe to all who spread false prophecy! For ye be guilty of a terrible sin, unforgivable in the eyes of Allah, the sin of unoriginality!

Turkey-Western Juggernaut: Hey guys, when are you two going to get it together? Vive L'Entente Cordiale!

Sultan-Old Friend: Rather ironic, your COA to Germany as it seems to be a popular place. I'll be Inter-Railing around Oktoberfest so could drop by. Write.



1995BH PILOT (Spring 1904)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Steve Walton-Grobb) F(Alb) - ADS; A(Tyr) - Pie; A(Ven) s A(Tyr) - Pie (CUT)

ENGLAND (Andrew Feather) F(ENG) - Lon; F(SKA) s F(Den); F(Den) s RUSSIAN F(BAL) - Kie (MISORDER)

FRANCE (Pete Duxon) F(MAO) - ENG; F(Lpl) - IRI; A(Edi) Stands; A(Bre) Stands; A(Par) - Pic; F(Mar) - GoL; A(Bur) Stands

GERMANY (Simon Rose) F(Ber) - BAL; F(HEL) s A(Kie) - Den; A(Mun) - Ruh; F(NTH) s FRENCH F(MAO) - ENG; A(Kie) - Den (FAILED)

ITALY (Jonathan Wills) F(Nap) - ION (FAILED); A(Tun) Stands; A(Tus) - Ven (FAILED)

RUSSIA (Ivan Woodward) A(Lvn) - War; A(Sev) s A(Gal) - Ukr (CUT); A(Gal) - Ukr; F(BAL) - Swe; F(Swe) - Nwy

TURKEY (Paul Barker) A(Rum) - Sev (FAILED); A(Ser) - Rum (FAILED); F(BLA) s A(Ser) - Rum; A(Bud) - Gal; A(Ank) - Arm; F(Gre) s F(AEG) - ION; F(AEG) - ION; F(ION) - Apu

Press:

Par-Wilfred: Ta for the advice on Maniacs Paradise.

Ministry of Photocopies: Don't despair, we have just installed a brand new digital copier.

Not only does it copy letters, it senses who to mail them on to.

Par-All: In case Wilfred doesn't print my letter I thought I ought to warn you that Stevie W gets most excited if you call him a Loveable Eccentric.

Pretty Please: I would like some more ideas for outings for the boys in Tunis.

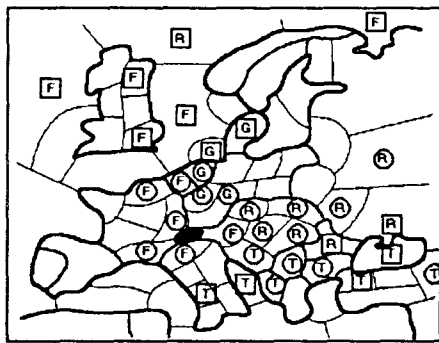
Par-Vie: So when's the wedding day?

Von Xerox-Windy Pox Muffin: Just how much weight have you put on recently?

Hello Jan: Modifications, modifications...

everywhere you look there are modifications!

Par-Bur: Is this a record? Must be getting close.



1993BR PYDNA (Autumn 1913)

ENGLAND (Anarchy - Jim Pilling) No units.

FRANCE (James Hardy) F(MAO) - NAO; F(ENG) - NTH; F(Lon) s F(ENG) - NTH; F(Edi) s F(ENG) - NTH; F(NWG) - BAR; A(Pic) s A(Bel); A(Bur) - Ruh (FAILED); A(Bel) s A(Bur) - Ruh (CUT); A(Mar) - Pie; A(Ven) - Tyr

GERMANY (Ken Flowers) A(Mun) - Bur (FAILED); A(Ruh) s F(NTH) - Bel (CUT); A(Hol) s F(NTH) - Bel; F(NTH) - Bel* (FAILED, DISLODGED TO Den); F(HEL) - NTH (FAILED)

RUSSIA (Geoff Norwood) A(Mos) s F(Sev); A(Ukr) s F(Rum); A(Gal) s F(Rum); F(Sev) Stands; F(Rum) Stands; A(Bud) Stands; A(Vie) s A(Bud); A(Tyr) s FRENCH A(Ven)* (MISORDER, DISLODGED TO Boh); F(Nwy) - NWG

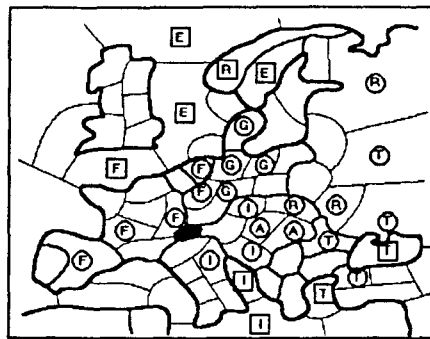
TURKEY (Peter Berlin) A(Alb) s A(Tri); A(Ser) s A(Tri); F(ADS) s A(Tri); A(Tri) s FRENCH A(Ven) - Tyr; A(Arm) - Sev (FAILED); A(Bul) - Rum (FAILED); F(BLA) s A(Bul) - Rum; F(Ank) - Con; F(Nap) - Rom

Autumn 1913 Adjustments:

E: -Lon = 0; Loses 1. OUT!
 F: +Lon, Edi, Bel, Mar, Ven, Bre, Par, Lpl, Tun, Por, Spa = 11; Gains 1. Builds A(Mar).
 G: Mun, Hol, Den, Ber, Kie = 5; No change.
 R: Mos, Sev, Rum, Bud, Vie, Nwy, StP, Swe, War = 9; No change.
 T: Ser, Tri, Bul, Con, Rom, Nap, Gre, Ank, Smy = 9; No change.

Press:

France-World: Is there anyone that'll help me stomp on this Molescroft?



1995BL QUATRO (Spring 1903)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Neil Newman - NMR!) A(Tri) Stands* (DISLODGED - DISBANDED BY GM); A(Vie) Stands; A(Bud) Stands

ENGLAND (Mike Collins) F(Edi) - NTH; F(BAR) - NWG; F(SKA) - Swe

FRANCE (Chris Brann) F(ENG) s ENGLISH F(Edi) - NTH; A(Mar) - Gas; A(Bel) - Hol; A(Por) - Spa; A(Ruh) s A(Bel) - Hol; A(Bur) s A(Ruh)

GERMANY (Steve Walton - NMR!) F(Hol) Stands* (DISLODGED - DISBANDED BY GM); A(Den) Stands; A(Kie) Stands; A(Mun) Stands; A(Ber) Stands

ITALY (Mark Golby) A(Boh) - Vie (FAILED); A(Alb) - Tri; A(Ven) s A(Alb) - Tri; F(Apu) - ADS; F(Gre) - ION

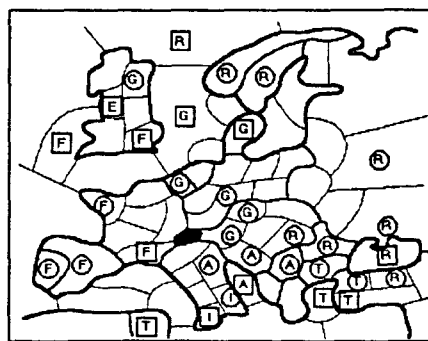
RUSSIA (Iain Heron-Stamp - NMR2!) F(Nwy) Stands; A(Gal) Stands; A(StP) Stands; A(Ukr) Stands

TURKEY (Stewart Whyte) A(Sev) - Mos; A(Arm) - Sev; A(Bul) - Rum; F(AEG) Stands; F(BLA) Stands; A(Con) Stands

Wilfred: Is this game jinxed or something? Russia is now in anarchy. Note COA for Mike Collins on back page.

Press:

Italy(Govt.)-Austria: Hope now you've moved house you can remember my address.
France(Govt.)-All: La Populace De La France Pretend A Tout La Terre A L'ouest De L'elbe.
Italy(Govt.)-France: Ta!
Lon-Ber: Glad to see you and the Czar so cosy. An odd friend showed me a copy of "Big Boys in Bondage" - was that you two in the centrefold with the wet lettuce?
Berlin-Turkey: Watch those Italian fleets?



1995BM RAINBOW (Autumn 1903)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Steve Ade) A(Ser) s A(Tri); F(ADS) s A(Apu) - Ven; A(Apu) - Ven; A(Tri) s A(Ser)

ENGLAND (Stephen Fitzgerald) F(Yor) - Edi (FAILED); F(Lon) - ENG* (FAILED, DISLODGED TO Wal); F(Lpl) Stands

FRANCE (Keith Loveys) F(ENG) - Lon; F(IRI) - Lpl (FAILED); A(Pic) - Bre; A(Gas) - Spa; A(Spa) - Por

GERMANY (Jeremy Tullett) F(NTH) s FRENCH F(ENG) - Lon; A(Boh) s A(Mun) - Tyr; A(Mun) - Tyr; A(Edi) s FRENCH F(IRI) - Lpl (CUT); A(Bel) Stands; F(Den) s F(NTH)

ITALY (Calum Macinnes) A(Rom) - Apu; A(Tyr) - Pie; F(MAO) - WMS; F(Nap) s A(Rom) - Apu

RUSSIA (Richard Williams) F(BLA) - Bul ec (FAILED); F(NWG) Stands; A(Nwy) Stands; A(Swe) Stands; A(Arm) - Ank; A(Rum) - Bud; A(Sev) - Rum

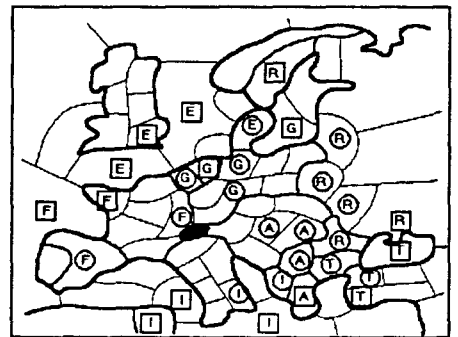
TURKEY (Stewart Cross) F(AEG) c A(Gre) - Con; F(EMS) - Smy; A(Gre) - Con; A(Bul) s A(Gre) - Con (CUT); F(ION) - Tun

Autumn 1903 Adjustments:

A: Ser, +Ven, Tri, Vie -Bud = 4; No change.
 E: Lpl-Edi, -Lon = 1; Loses 2. Removes F(Yor), F(Wal).
 F: +Lon, Bre, Spa, Por, Mar, Par = 6; Gains 1. Builds F(Mar).
 G: +Edi, Bel, Den, Ber, Hol, Kie, Mun = 7; Gains 1. Builds A(Mun).
 I: Nap, Rom, -Tun, -Ven = 2; Loses 2. Removes A(Pie), F(WMS).
 R: Nwy, Swe, +Ank, +Bud, Rum, Mos, Sev, StP, War = 9; Gains 2. Builds A(Sev), A(Mos).
 T: Smy, Con, Bul, +Tun, Gre -Ank = 5; No change.

Press:

England-All: How could I trust a nation that uses nuclear arms testing as an excuse for its army to bring home pieces of coral!



1995DG SAILOR (Spring 1902)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Steve Walton-Stein) A(Vie) - Gal (FAILED); A(Bud) - Ser (FAILED); A(Ser) - Gre (FAILED); F(Gre) - AEG (FAILED)

ENGLAND (Veronica Conboy) F(NTH) c A(Nwy) - Den; F(ENG) - MAQ (FAILED); F(Lon) - ENG (FAILED); A(Nwy) - Den

FRANCE (Mark Scott) F(Por) - MAO; F(Bre) s F(Por) - MAO; A(Bur) s GERMAN F(Hol) - Bel (MISORDER); A(Mar) - Spa

GERMANY (Gihan Bandaranaike) A(Ruh) - Bel; F(Hol) - NTH (FAILED); A(Den) - Swe* (FAILED, DISLODGED TO Kie); F(Kie) - BAL; A(Ber) - Mun

ITALY (Jimmy Cowie) F(Tun) s F(Nap) - ION; A(Tri) - Alb; A(Ven) - Apu; F(Nap) - ION; F(Rom) - TYS

RUSSIA (Andrew Clawson) F(Swe) s ENGLISH A(Nwy) - Den; A(StP) - Lvn; F(Rum) - Sev; A(Sev) - Ukr; A(Ukr) - Rum; A(War) - Gal (FAILED)

TURKEY (Mark Golby) F(Smy) - AEG (FAILED); A(Bul) Stands; A(Con) s A(Bul); F(BLA) s A(Bul)

Press:

Nick Kinzett-Dave Perry: Fuck off baldy.

Reuters-Ali Baba: You're fired.

Berlin-Moscow: Thank you very much for the loan of Swe. It could all be a trap so you can't blame me for covering myself with a temporary F(BAL). You will regain Swe when I gain my first English SC. If all went as planned, you truly are a gent and I hope to do more business with you in future.

Berlin-London: As promised, I moved to BAL. See? I do keep my promises.

Nick Kinzett (Govt.)-Dave Perry: Yes, as a matter of fact: Lem's EDEN and I've just re-read his FIASCO. Are you playing under a pseudonym or is it just a mate? We must get back in contact. Usual address for me.

For Sale: The collected letters of the Gibbering Bandersnatch. An almost complete set of negotiations pertaining to the first European War. Good condition, bindings a little frayed, believed to be genuine.

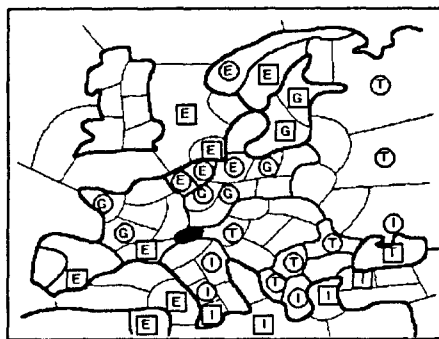
Berlin-Paris: The phone call from Russia meant a last minute change of plan with no time to inform you as I didn't have your number. If you poked at ENG as I advised, with me cutting NTH support, ENG will be empty if England went for Pic, so Mao can move to IRI. Also, with you breaking the Bur DMZ, I had to protect Mun. Then I'd have A(Ruh) & A(Mun) which would worry you. So you must realize A(Bel) is better.

Black Pig-Gibbon Bändyreich: For the last time - avert thine gaze from thine neighbour's arse!

Dear Vicky: It's nice to see that England's tourism will soon pick up. Your loving cousin, Willy. (Yes, I know it's 1902 and Victoria's dead - pedant! - but what's a few years between enemies?)

Telegram: MEGATHANX FOR THE ILLUMINATI CARDS STOP HOW DID THE MAGIC DECK PERFORM STOP

Gibbon Bändyreich-Black Pig: I liked the SPQR rules so much I bought it. Give you a game at mutual convenience.



1993DI UTICA (Spring 1911)

ENGLAND (Allan Gordon) F(TYS) Stands; F(Tun) s F(TYS); F(MAO) - Spa sc; F(Mar) s F(MAO) - Spa sc; A(Bel) - Pic (FAILED); A(Den) - Kie; A(Hol) s A(Den) -

Kie; F(HEL) s A(Den) - Kie; F(NTH) c A(Lon) - Nwy; F(Swe) s A(Lon) - Nwy; A(Lon) - Nwy

GERMANY (Andrew Lane) A(Spa) - Gas; A(Bre) - Pic (FAILED); A(Mun) s A(Bur) - Ruh; A(Bur) - Ruh; A(Ber) s F(BAL) - Kie; F(BAL) - Kie (FAILED); F(GoB) Stands u/o

ITALY (Richard Williams) F(Con) - BLA (FAILED); F(AEG) s A(Gre) - Bul; F(Nap) - TYS (FAILED); F(ION) - TYS (FAILED); A(Arm) - Sev; A(Gre) - Bul (FAILED); A(Rom) - Ven (FAILED); A(Ven) - Tyr (FAILED)

TURKEY (Calum Macinnes) A(Nwy) - StP; A(War) - Mos; A(Tyr) - Ven (FAILED); A(Alb) - Gre (FAILED); A(Ser) s A(Rum) - Bul; F(BLA) s A(Rum) - Bul (CUT); A(Rum) - Bul (FAILED)

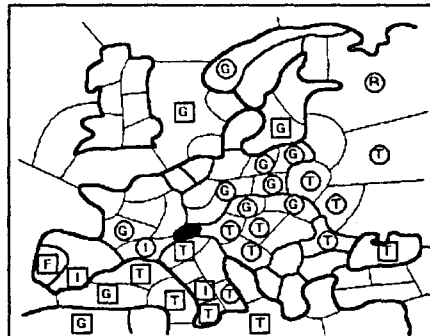
Wilfred: The endgame proposal is defeated, 3 yes, 1 no. I have an endgame proposal of a 3 way draw I / T / E. Votes please, unanimity required, abstentions = NO, NMRs = YES.

Press:

Turks-Brits: Sorry about Nwy, I felt sorry for the injured Hun.

Goose-Fox II: Operation Neapolitan Ice is Green.

Fox: No word from the Mole! Had his mark been rumbled, riddled and ruckled? Fox didn't like it. The little weasel was expendable, of course, but it meant a necessary resort to wip-pitting..... having to second-guess. Not good. It was enough that he had to do the icing, without having to worry about the cake recipe!



1993DX XERXES (Spring 1911)

France (Anarchy - JOHN TODD) F(Por) Stands

Germany (GRAHAM TUNNICLIFFE) A(Bur) - Mun; A(Gas) s ITALIAN A(Mar); F(MAO) - NAF; F(NTH) c A(Yor) - Nwy; A(Boh) - Gal; A(Tyr) - Vie* (FAILED, DISLODGED TO Boh); F(WMS) s ITALIAN F(Rom) - TYS (MISORDER); A(Ber) - Pru; A(Sil) s A(Boh) - Gal; F(Den) - BAL; A(Kie) - Ber; A(Yor) - Nwy

Italy (DAVE ALLEN) F(Nap) s F(Rom)* (CUT, DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRO); F(Rom) s F(Nap) (CUT); A(Mar) Stands; F(Spa) sc s GERMAN F(WMS)

Russia (Anarchy - BILLY STEPHEN) A(War) Stands* (DISLODGED - DISBANDED BY GM); A(StP) Stands

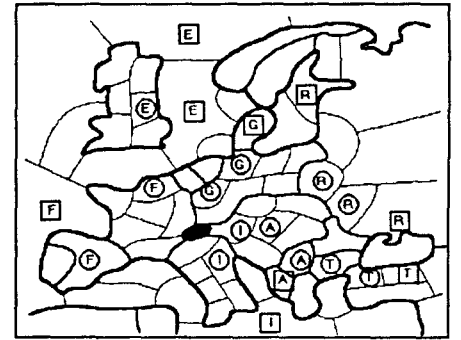
Turkey (PATRICK FINGLASS) F(GoL) - WMS (FAILED); F(TYS) - Rom (FAILED); F(ION) - Nap; A(Apu) s F(ION) - Nap; F(BLA) c A(Con) - Rum; F(Pie) s ITALIAN A(Mar); A(Mos) s A(Ukr) - War; A(Ukr) - War; A(Gal) - Sij* (FAILED, DISLODGED TO Ukr); A(Tri) s

A(Vie); A(Vie) s A(Ven) - Tyr; A(Ven) - Tyr; F(ADS) - ION; A(Con) - Rum

Wilfred: The endgame proposal was defeated, 2 yes, 1 abstention = no. The 3-way draw G / I / T is re-proposed. Votes please, unanimity required, abstentions = YES this time and NMRs = YES.

Press:

Turkey(Gvmt.)-Germany: I have spent ages trying to work out the strategic significance of ignoring London and paddling off Skegness. Is there a hidden centre there?



1995?? TRAPEZE (Spring 1901)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Oscar Goldman) A(Bud) - Ser; A(Vie) - Gal (FAILED); F(Tri) - Alb

ENGLAND (Steve Mellors) F(Lon) - NTH; A(Lp) - Yor; F(Edi) - NWG

FRANCE (Roy British) F(Bre) - MAO; A(Mar) - Spa; A(Par) - Pic

GERMANY (David Evans) F(Kie) - Den; A(Ber) - Kie; A(Mun) - Ruh

ITALY (Richard Scholefield) F(Nap) - ION; A(Rom) - Ven; A(Ven) - Tyr

RUSSIA (Paul Reeves) F(StP) sc - GoB; A(Mos) - Ukr; A(War) - Gal (FAILED); F(Sev) - BLA (FAILED)

TURKEY (David Teakle) A(Con) - Bul; A(Smy) - Con; F(Ank) - BLA (FAILED)

Wilfred: Please note the COA for David on the back page.

Press:

Vienna-Oppressed Proletariat Everywhere:

Workers of the World, unite! The glorious victory of the proletariat, and the installation of the People's Democratic Socialist Republic of Austria and Hungary, heralds a bright new dawn for the working classes of Europe and the World! While rejecting war and all warlike actions, the People's Republic remains determined to leave no stone unturned in its battle to free all of those crushed under the heels of the aristocracy. Already, the cries of the Serbian and Albanian nations have been heard and answered - and the kingdoms of Europe are warned to stand in the way of the volunteer armies of the People's Republic as they move with revolutionary zeal to free their brothers and sisters. Death to the running dogs of capitalism.

ARFLE SOPWITH RUNDOWN

ISSUE TWO

Produced by Dave Tant, 32 Nursery Avenue, Bexleyheath, Kent DA7 4JZ

NEXT DEADLINE SATURDAY 7th OCTOBER

My thanks for some nice letters to start with, and particularly to Paul Hunter for correcting turn numbers and providing photocopies to show cloud positions. These latter have made their re-appearance this issue, adjusted for two issues movement which handily left most back where they were. From now on their movement will be in a random direction, three hexes at the end of each turn. And my apologies for not including my address on Issue One, but there was some confusion between me and Stephen over when it would go out and in what form, and for some reason I thought the details had appeared in SpOff when they hadn't. In the hope that some of the NMR's may have arisen through not knowing where to send your orders (though the enterprising sent them to Stephen for forwarding), I'll look for a full set next time!

While on the subject, it's always a good idea to include your address and the date on your orders, in case I need to get in touch in a hurry: Those doing so got the last issue direct from me some two weeks before the others, due to a postal problem somewhere between Bexleyheath and Brighton.

I have started to put "Res" instead of "NMR" against the names of those players who have actually resigned. The effect on their moves is the same, but you will know that there will never be any action but "A ; A ; A" from those who have resigned, while those merely NMR'ing may still produce a surprise.

ROAD RUNNER T227AG TURN TWO

A) VAUGN BIGEND (Pete Mason - Ace)	RT/ Ammo 16	A/ Damage 12	A/ Points 0	Hex E7 Fcg F8
B) GLASS EAGLE (James Millington - Res)	A/ Ammo 16	A/ Damage 12	A/ Points 0	Hex G10 Fcg H10
C) REAPER (Donald Scarr)	RS/ Ammo 16	A/ Damage 12	RT/ Points 0	Hex H13 Fcg H12
D) BELLA DONNA (Dave Lomas - Ace)	I/ Ammo 16	A/ Damage 12	A/ Points 0	Hex Q16 Fcg R16
E) PHCLFST (John McCoubrey Res)	A/ Ammo 16	A/ Ammo 12	A/ Points 0	Hex S16 Fcg S17
F) VIC RATTLEHEAD (Rob Moore - Ace)	A/ Ammo 16	A/ Damage 12	A/ Points 0	Hex D1 Fcg C1

Fliers close in purposefully on Glass Eagle and PGHLFST, to try to get their bonus points before they can manage to fly off the board.

MR JELLY T204AG TURN NINETEEN

A) STEVIE NICKS (Dave Lomas - Ace)	A/ Ammo 16	LT/ Damage 12	A/ Points 18	Hex J4 Fcg K5
B) BULLSHOT (Paul Hunter)	RT/ Ammo 16	A/ Damage 11	A/ Points 29	Hex L15 Fcg L14
E) RETALIATOR (Mark Wightman - Res)	Ammo 16	ON GROUND Damage 9	Points 5	Hex S10 Fcg ?

Retaliator will stay on the ground for two more turns and then be catapulted into the air from runway beta with 12 Damage points (in Turn 22).

MR SKINNY T205AG TURN FOURTEEN

B) VAUGN BIGEND (Pete Mason - Ace)	RS/FL Ammo 7	RS/ Damage 2	RS/ Points 7	Hex E11 Fcg D10
C) CAPTAIN FEARLESS (Steve Turner - NMR)	A/ Ammo 9	A/ Damage 4	A/ Points 8	Hex H8 Fcg H7
D) TBEBOB&W (Sandra Bond - Ace - NMR)	Ammo 16	ON GROUND Damage 12	Points 14	Hex S19 Fcg ?
E) BARON LANDSCAPE (Mike Lay - Ace - NMR)	Ammo 16	ON GROUND Damage 7	Points 22	Hex S10 Fcg ?

TBEBOB&W (any chance we can call you TBE for short) will have to take off next time, whether or not orders are received: the Baron can doze on for a while yet, should he so wish.

MR MUDDLE T209AG TURN TWELVE

A) STEVIE NICKS (Dave Lomas - Ace)	A/ Ammo 16	*A/ Damage 6	A (lands) Points 15	Hex A1 Fcg ?
B) GLASS EAGLE (James Millington - Res)	A/ Ammo 16	A/ Damage 11	A/ Points 8	Hex H5 Fcg G4
C) SKY TRIPPER (Duncan Adams - NMR)	A/ Ammo 16	A/ Damage 12	A/ Points 8	Hex K14 Fcg K13
E) BERENICE (Georgina Wightman - Res)	A/ Ammo 14	A/ Damage 6	A/ Points 2	Hex Q10 Fcg R10
F) ELPP (John McCoubrey - Res)	A/ Ammo 16	A	crashes Points 1	

ELPP's demise gives the other four one point each. (*No Dave, you can't fire when your wheels are actually on the ground.)

[SA: I'm in your hands gentlemen, but as Duncan Adams no longer sees this zine is there any point in continuing with this one?]

The Games

America Latina	Page 19
Bedlam	Page 16
Cannibalism	See Flyer
Cochise	Page 25
Colonial Diplomacy	Page 32
Cynic	See Flyer
Dot	See Flyer
Downfall	Page 16
Dragon	See Flyer
Ducati	Page 25
Eurymedon	Page 25
Fifo	Page 25
Foghat	Page 26
Greer	Page 26
Hannibal	Page 26
Ithaca	Page 16
Jigsaw	Page 26
Kiss	Page 27
Lighthouse	See Flyer
Matchbox	Page 27
Millennium	Page 18
Nucleus	Page 27
Orchomenus	Page 28
Osibisa	Page 28
Pilot	Page 28
Pydna	Page 29
Quatro	Page 29
Railway Rivals	Page 19
Rainbow	Page 29
Sailor	Page 29
Sopwith (Dave)	Page 31
Sopwith (Tom)	Page 20
Trapeze	Page 30
Troubleshooter	See Flyer
Utica	Page 30
Xerxes	Page 30

Changes of Addresses

Gerwyn Michael, Psychiatric Unit, RAF(H)
Wegberg, BFPO 40
Aidan Slattery to 24 Newgate Road, Sale,
Cheshire, M33 4NG. 0161-962-8304
Mike Collins to 45 High Close, Nelson, Mid
Glam, CF46 6HJ. Tel. (from 21/9) 01443-
453265.
David Teakle, 17 Penfold Road, Worthing,
West Sussex, BN14 8PH.
Lorraine Tullett to Sunnybank, Back Lane,
Meriden, Coventry, CV7 7LD. 01676-522417

Waiting Lists

Regular Diplomacy. GM: Stephen Agar.
Game U2: Andy Bassett, Jason Asker, Paul
McEwan, Dave Thomas, Colin Smith, James
Trotter, Anthony Coogan FULL! GAMESTART
ON FLYER. Game V2 Peter Dunnett, John
Boocock, Richard Scholefield, 4 needed.

Gunboat Stab! GM: Stephen Agar. Hidden
movement anonymous Diplomacy. FULL.
Players notified. Sorry to the two who didn't get
a game.

Storm from the East II. GM: Edmund
Morgan. This is the second version of *Storm*
which is an eight-player Mongols and
Crusaders variant set in the early 13th century.
Calum Macinnes, Colin Smith, Ludger
Wilmott, Gihan Bandaranaike, Mark Golby,
Steve Wells, Aidan Slattery, John Boocock.

Rules enclosed, send me pref. Lists for next
time.

Machiavelli. GM: Colin Smith, Ian Coleman,
Gihan Bandaranaike, Mike Pollard, Calum
Macinnes, Patrick Finglass (?), Donald Scarr
(?), Paul Hunter (?), John Boocock, Aidan
Slattery. This looks full, maybe one or two too
many. I'll send out rules, please confirm and
send pref lists to me for next issue.

Colonial Diplomacy. GM: Shaun Derrick.
Peter Berlin, Steve Walton, John Boocock,
Chris Stone 3 needed.

Railway Rivals. GM: Steve Watts. John
Boocock, Jason Asker (Not USA). Apply with
preferences for a map to Steve or me.

Sopwith. GM: Tom Tweedy. Rules in issue
35. Doug Rood, Jimmy Cowie, Allan Stagg,
Andy Bassett, Ludger Wilmott, Jed Stone.
FULL. Send your pilot's name and first orders
to Tom Tweedy. Next game: John Boocock, 5
wanted.

History of the World. GM: Gihan
Bandaranaike. Rules in issue 36. Graham
Smith, Mark Scott, Brad Martin, Aidan Slattery.
More needed.

Sin Bin

The following players have Yellow Cards for
submitting late orders:

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 Emory (No.34 - 3 days late).
Gerwyn Michael (No.34 - 3 days late).
Keiron Quirke (No.35 - 4 days late).
Bill Eaton (No.36 - 1 day late).
Veronica Conboy (No.37 - 2 days late).
Andrew Lane (No.37 - 3 days late).

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

BumCon NDC Qualifier

=1st. Richard Newby, Neil Gunn and Bill
Wood all on 63 points; 4th Steve Bibby 32
points; 5th Chris Richardson 22 points; 6th
Malcolm Cornelius 4 points, 7th Aidan Slattery
3 points. The first 4 qualified for the NDC.
Does anyone have addresses for Neil Gunn
and Bill Wood?

MAIN DEADLINE
SATURDAY
14th OCTOBER
1995

External GMs: Sat. 7th Oct.

Colonial Diplomacy Gamestart

BRITISH: Donald Scarr, 13/3 West Piton
Drive EDINBURGH EH4 4HR

CHINA: Chris Latimer, 79 Chapel Street,
Pelsall, WALSALL WS3 4LW

DUTCH: Cohn Smith, 14 Dukes Road,
BRAINTREE, Essex CM7 5UE

FRENCH: Joakim Spangberg, Sodra
Ringvagen 32, S352 35 VAXJO, SWEDEN

JAPAN: Aidan Slattery, 24 Newgate Road,
Sale, Cheshire, M33 4NG.

RUSSIA: Steve Walton-Blobb, 213 Broomfield
Road, Earlsdon, COVENTRY CV5 6LD

TURKEY: Vick Hall, 115a Offord Road,
Islington, LONDON N1

Deadline is SATURDAY 7th OCTOBER

Remember that orders come to me, Shaun
Derrick at 313 Woodway Lane, Walsgrave,
COVENTRY CV2 2AP. Tel. (01203-618922)
or fax me at work on (01926-831578). I prefer
written orders as I cannot guarantee verbal
orders. The fax is sometimes dodgy as
personal items do tend to be 'mislaidd'.

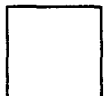
Your Subscription

It is a condition of subscription to *Spring
Offensive* that you consent to subscription
information being maintained on a computer
database and that you consent to me releasing
address information to others in the Diplomacy
hobby. If you object, let me know. The precise
amount of your existing credit is shown after
your name on the address label (so retrieve the
envelope from the bin now!). By way of an
additional warning:

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



A top up would be nice...



All done using Windows 95 and Word 7.0, but
that's one horror story I'll spare you...



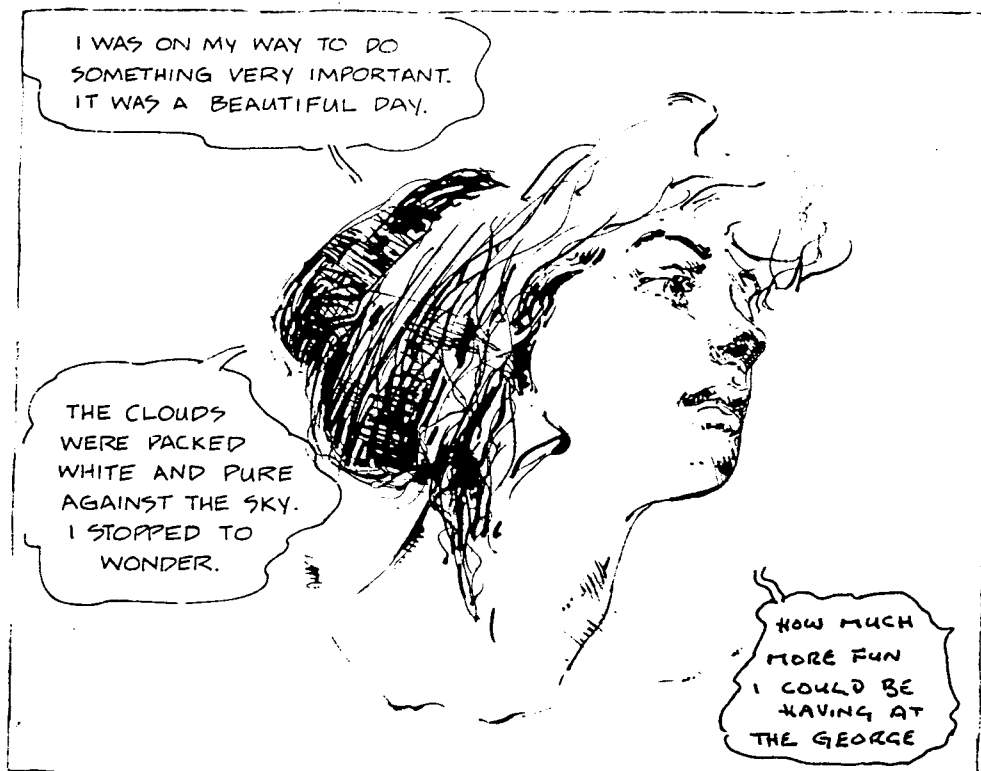
MIDCON

THE LONDON QUALIFYING ROUND

to be held at

The ROYAL GEORGE

on EVERSOLT STREET, just outside EUSTON STATION
Saturday 30th September, 11 o'clock.



The Biggest Qualifying Round in Britain and probably the most fun!
Food and Drink readily available and a chance to play some of the country's best players make this a Saturday of DIPLOMACY not to be missed. Can reigning Champion Jim Mills (winner of the last two years and recent winner at ManorCon) be defeated?

You can even make a day of it, with other games being played in the evening, and of course the traditional prize giving ceremony!

Further Details can be obtained from Vick Hall: Tel: 0171 700 2008.
115A Offord Rd, Islington London N1.

If you are in need of accomodation for Saturday night, then give me a call and I'll try and help you out. In anycase, please get in touch to reserve your place in the diplomacy.



MidCon 95

Friday 10 - Sunday 12 November 1995

MidCon is a board games convention held in the comfort of the Royal Angus Hotel in Birmingham. **MidCon 95** will be the 15th event run by its very experienced organisers and will take place from Friday 10th to Sunday 12th November 1995.

At **MidCon**, we provide a very comfortable setting to play your favourite board games, and try out new ones; to meet old friends and find new opponents. The emphasis is on relaxation and enjoyment and with normally around 150 people present, the convention is big enough to provide the variety you want, but small enough to retain the personal touch.

The centrepiece of the weekend will be the finals of the National Diplomacy Championship. Qualifiers from all over the country will compete to prove themselves Britain's best individual Diplomacy player. The finals will take part on Saturday and Sunday, and there will be a qualifying round on Friday starting at 4pm, which is open to everyone to give players a last chance to meet the qualifying

standard. And keen Diplomacy players who have not qualified for the finals need not fear. They will still be able to play tournament Diplomacy at **MidCon**, and compete for the **MidCon** Trophy.

There will also be several other



tournaments arranged through the weekend. There will be a United! tournament, darts, table croquet and the ever popular quiz. There will be subbuteo sets available, and a range of other exciting events. And if you don't want to take part in any of the tournaments, you can simply try out some of the hundreds of different board games that will be available throughout the weekend, including many of the newest games that enthusiasts have brought back from the recent Essen games fair.

The Royal Angus's facilities are ideal for a convention of this kind. All bedrooms are equipped with en suite bathroom, colour TV, tea and coffee making facilities etc, and there are two comfortable suites, and a lounge and bar area for our use. The bar will be open for most of the day and late into the night, and as well as the normal hotel restaurant there will be reasonably priced snack meals available at various times throughout the weekend.

Some people have been coming to **MidCon** for years, but every year there are many newcomers and we go out of our way to make them feel welcome. So if you haven't been before, don't be nervous. You'll soon feel part of the family.

The hotel's special **MidCon** rates will be £27 per person per night for a twin/double room and £34 a night for a single, including the Royal Angus's famous English breakfast. This is excellent value for a four star hotel. In addition, there is a convention fee of £10.

To register, please use the form below.

To: **Brian Williams, 30 Rydding Lane, Millfields Estate, West Bromwich, W Midlands, B71 2HA.**

() Please register me for MidCon. I enclose £10. Cheques payable to 'Midcon'.

() Please also book me a room in the Royal Angus: Single/Double/Twin: Fri 10/Sat 11/Sun 12 November

(Do not send any money for your room now. You pay the hotel on the weekend).

Name:.....

Address:.....

If twin room, name of person sharing:.....