

Welcome to a new gaming zine, published by me, Steve Knight.

The zine you are reading is doubtless a surprise, even if you were aware I was intending to publish. Even though this is the first issue, this zine has had a rather tortured history, which is written up in an article on page 5. The article is really a cathartic way for me to vent some frustration, so be forewarned; skip it if you don't want to read a very probably boring account of my recent life. As I said, it's cathartic.

Having brought that up, I should give you an idea of what to expect here. Let me begin by saying I feel Piggot was right; a good zine is produced for the benefit of its editor. Thus, expect to see a good bit of me here--not that I intend to bore you with articles about myself, but rather that my personality will show through in what the zine's about. After all, one of the attractive things about publishing is having a creative outlet for what interests you.

For starters, I'm opening two games of Diplomacy: one white press and one grey press game. I expect to open more relatively soon, but I want to start with a manageable number and add more as I gain experience. (No GM burnout here!) Additionally, since I believe potential players have a right to know what they're getting into before signing up, the Diplomacy HouseRules are on page 8. Those who identify me with having edited Bruce Linsey's voluminous HRs and fear the same will be pleasantly surprised.

I'll be running a league of Alan Parr's postal soccer game, United. The rules are on page 10, and I strongly urge you to at least take a look. United has become my favorite postal game, and in order to promote it in the U.S., I'm charging no gamefee for the league's first season. Yes, you can play United absolutely free the first season--provided you don't NMR.

I plan to run other games as well, but that depends on what interests you. If you have a game in mind which you'd like to see played postally, let me know. Off the top of my head, I'm intrigued by Purist Diplomacy (Dip without tactics), and Nomic (an odd game in which the goal is modifying the rules; I'll publish them in a future issue).. Any takers?

I hope to have a letter column, so let's hear from you. I intend to edit letters to keep them interesting to most people, but don't plan to chop them up and organize the column by topics. Any topic of conversation is fine, except one: hobby politics. The recent feuds have left an extremely bad taste in my mouth, and I will have no part of it intrude here. I will use my editorial power to ensure that this zine is an enjoyable place in which to play postal games and discuss things other than the hobby.

Running a bit low on room here, so more about the zine on page 4. How's that? I haven't mentioned the title? Oh, yes, welcome to...

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# IT'S A TRAP!

An amateur publication devoted to postal games and anything else the editor feels like; edited and published by Steve Knight, 11905 Winterthur Ln. #103, Reston, VA USA 22091. Subscriptions are 50¢ + postage per issue.

### **The It's a Trap! Introductory Subscription Giveaway!**

Yes, fans, to celebrate the start of my publishing career, to try to con as many of you as possible into actually subscribing to this turkey, and mostly just for the fun of it, we're giving away free issues! All you, yes, YOU, have to do is send me a subscription cheque in time for the second issue and tell me how you fulfill as many of the following criteria as possible. I won't, however, do your work for you; for example, you don't get the free issue for living in Europe unless you explicitly claim it, even if I can tell from the postmark that you're European. Most of these criteria are whimsical at best. On the plus side, though, there is (virtually) no limit to the number of free issues you can claim...

1. ONE free issue if you can tell me where the title of the zine comes from. ONE extra issue for being specific. (You may want to provide some documentation in case it's not the same source I'm thinking of.)
2. ONE free issue if you are a resident of: Madison, Wisconsin, where I was born and lived until 1970; Lincoln, Nebraska, where I lived from 1970 to 1976; or Minneapolis, Minnesota (or its suburbs), where I lived from 1976 to 1983.
3. ONE free issue if you are a graduate of Neil A. Armstrong Sr. High School in Plymouth, Minnesota. ONE free issue if you are a graduate of St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota.
4. ONE free issue if you are an employee of Computer Consoles, Inc., my current employer.
5. THREE free issues if you are Allan Calhauer or Alan Parr.
6. TWO free issues if you are Jim Grosch, who got me into this crazy hobby, or Doug Rowling, without whom there would be no ISE.
7. ONE free issue if you are female.
8. ONE free issue if you are a resident of Europe (the U.K. or the continent). TWO extra free issues if you send me your subscription via the ISE.
9. ONE free issue if you have ever used the ISE to subscribe to some zine other than It's a Trap!
10. ONE free issue if you had already sent me a subscription cheque for It's a Trap! before receiving this issue. (You don't need to send me another cheque, but you do need to write me and claim your issues.)
11. ONE free issue if you are currently a publisher (sorry, subzines don't count). ONE free issue if I am now, or have ever been, a subscriber to a zine which you publish or published.
12. ONE free issue if you are now, or have ever been, in a postal game with me. (This includes Williams's and Becker's United leagues.) TWO additional free issues if you were with me in any of the following postal Diplomacy games: 1983CK, 1983Z, 1983AA, Cocaine, or Rigel II.
13. ONE free issue if you can confirm your subscription via the USENET computer network by sending to my network address the cheque number of your subscription cheque. My network address is any one of the following: seismo!rlgvax!knight, allegro!rlgvax!knight, or ihnp4!rlgvax!knight.



**WHAT ELSE TO EXPECT FROM THIS ZINE**  
(i.e., More on IT's Policies and other boring Administrivia)

Let me lay out straight away that I will be producing this zine on a computer system. I recently acquired a Zilog S8000 system for a ridiculously low price through an employee purchase plan at work. No PC this, it's an 8-to-16 user system running ZEUS, a Version 7 UNIX<sup>®</sup> look-alike. I'm currently developing software on it to assist me in GMing Diplomacy and United, and, of course, plan to use it for text processing the zine itself, moving to word processing as I develop additional software. I have the computer systems at my workplace available, and can use those as a backup.

There are two reasons I'm telling you this. ONE, you may have second thoughts about a publisher's relying on a computing system to produce a zine. Like any mechanical beast, computers can break down at inopportune times. Of course, so can typewriters, but maintenance for computers is a bit trickier (and more expensive). If this makes you nervous, you may not want to sub. TWO, a computer-produced zine may naturally lead to discussions of computers in the zine itself. I'd be happy to discuss it if people are interested, but rest assured that I don't plan to go on at length about everything that happens with my system. Of course, many of you probably aren't interested, but that's true for any topic.

From my own pen, expect occasional book and music/record reviews; more frequently, expect movie reviews. I've recently developed a strong interest in film and film theory, and I hope that what I might have to say about certain films, or films in general, will spark some discussion--if only because I've succeeded in annoying you by trashing your favorite film.

Don't expect to see many articles from me about Diplomacy. I greatly enjoy the game, but don't think I have any particularly keen insight into its play. Nevertheless, I'll happily publish your articles on playing Diplomacy, or United, or what have you. And now that I've brought that up, the going rate for articles here will start at three (3) free issues per page. Again, hobby politics is out, but I'll consider publishing articles on just about any other topic (emphasis on the "consider"). Try me. Unless you specify otherwise, I'll edit articles for spelling and grammar.

After careful consideration, I've decided that I will not trade IT for other zines, period. (One exception: I may consider trades for European zines.) Not that trading isn't tempting, mind you. I can already feel that the zine one publishes is (psychologically) cheap hobby currency, and I suspect that I'd wind up trading for more zines than I can pay attention to--which wouldn't be fair to the zines involved. Hence, if I like your zine and have the time for it, I'll sub to it. If you like my zine and have the time for it, I invite you to sub. Either way, no hard feelings. If we like each others' zines, let's talk about arranging a mutual cash-value sub so we don't mail unnecessary cheques.

I've also decided that I'd rather not to take on any externally-edited subzines. This is mostly because of my no-hobby-politics stance; that is, I wouldn't want to be faced with a last minute decision of cutting a subzine because its editor included something I felt was inappropriate for IT as a whole, intentionally or not. Nevertheless, I intend to revive Edi Birsan's U.S. Dollars as a subzine of my own to keep people aware of the ISE and its administration. Additionally, I won't hesitate in the future to create a subzine of my own for a topic (e.g., computers) which warrants it. Makes things nice and avoidable for people who aren't interested.

And that's that. Dry reading, yes, but I feel it's much better to let you know, as best as I can, what you're in for ahead of time.

## Why This zine is Late

Let me fear that the title of this article sets a dangerous precedent, let me reassure you that I sincerely intend that this will be the only issue in which those words appear. You see, I have been planning on publishing a zine for more than a year now, since the beginning of 1984. Then, I had been feeling the need for some sort of outlet beyond playing games and writing letters; I had the energy and inclination; the hobby was enjoyable; in short, the time seemed ripe. One obstacle existed, though--and this article is really about how that's been affecting my life lately.

Some background is necessary here. For the last year and a half, I've been working as a software development engineer for Computer Consoles, Inc. in Reston, VA (the Washington, D.C. area), programming a word processor that's part of a large office automation system. Before moving here, I attended St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN, for four years, but I have not yet actually graduated, due to some unfinished requirements. When I took the job with CCI, they agreed to let me finish the remaining requirements in my spare time, using the company's computing systems.

I was able to work on my requirements half-a-country off campus because I was a student in the St. Olaf Paracollege, a subset of the regular college and a remnant from the late-1960's experiments in "free education." The Paracollege is loosely modeled after the tutorial system of Oxford University, in that Paracollege students need not attend any classes per se and interact with professors largely via one-on-one tutorials. The major difference is that Paracollege students "design their own majors," and can get a degree in virtually anything that three professors will agree is a legitimate field of inquiry. Part of a Paracollege student's graduation requirements include completing a senior project (i.e., a thesis) and taking comprehensive exams, like graduate work in miniature. It was these components which I had to complete, and I have been working at them, off and on, for the last two years.

Back when I began thinking seriously about publishing (January 1984), I anticipated that I would finish my academic work by May, and thus planned my vacation that year to travel back to Minnesota (stopping at MadCon on the way) to visit family and friends, install my project (a relational database management system) on St. Olaf's computer, and to take the oral and essay components of my comprehensive exams. Based on my expectations, I told several hobby members of my plans to begin publishing once I had finished my academic work. I asked those I told to keep quiet about it, though, mostly because I wanted to avoid the situation where news of a new zine is widely announced, only to never see the zine actually appear. I still wanted to be able to back out without losing too much face if I decided to not take on the commitment.

Unfortunately, I told enough people of my plans that word did, inevitably, spread more than I would have liked. This would not have been too great a problem, except that the unforeseen occurred--I didn't finish my graduation requirements on that trip to Minnesota. Some key components of my project didn't work correctly on St. Olaf's system, and I had overlooked some necessary documents. The upshot was that I had yet more work to do before I could graduate--which meant a delay in publishing.

I don't know if I can effectively describe the academic paralysis that resulted from this. I'm sure that most of us have gone through similar periods in life, times when our workload seems so oppressive that it is difficult to muster the emotional courage necessary to face even the smallest related task. In my case, though, the workload was not huge; in fact, I probably could have finished off everything in less than a month of

steady work. But the unexpected disappointment of not having finished awakened some deep-seated doubts about myself and my graduating with a degree in computing science.

Again, some background is necessary. I originally enrolled at St. Olaf to major in music theory and composition. Music has always been a large part of my life. I started playing piano at an early age, had been singing in church and school choirs since grade school, and, largely through the influence of an outstanding choir director in high school, had gained a love and appreciation for music that led me to decide to be a composer. St. Olaf, although not otherwise a big-name school, has a well-respected music department and a nationally known choir. It was also relatively close to home, which was a plus.

Despite my clear choice, I struggled for two years as a music theory major, doing very well at the course work but unable to be self-assured enough to let anyone hear what I'd written, when I composed anything at all. It really amounted to two years of bashing my head against an emotional brick wall, partly because I had an unreasonable expectation that everything I produced had to be a mature work, as though I had been composing for years, even though I was just beginning. In other words, I wouldn't let myself learn the craft of composition.

Had I not been so blindly certain from the start that I was going to major in music theory, I probably would have made the natural switch earlier. I had started working with St. Olaf's computing system immediately as a freshman, using it to write papers and generally enjoying playing around and exploring. I had enough aptitude for computing that it became the natural area to move to when I realized, after two years in music and some counseling, that I was not going to be a productive musician until I first dealt with my emotional reactions and would let myself be a music student.

You cannot, however, leave a field that means so much to you without a lot of regrets, and I developed some affectations reactions to what I perceived as "selling out." For example, I disliked telling people that I was a computing science major, and would instead insist that I was an "ex-music major." This attitude contributed greatly towards my not finishing my graduation requirements during my senior year, while I was still at school. Getting a degree in computing science felt like it would be shutting the last door on my claim to be a musician of any sort. Thus, I worked far harder on my senior piano recital than on my senior project, and finished the year with my requirements in such an unfinished state that I wasn't permitted to walk across the stage during graduation ceremonies and receive a blank diploma.

Now, all of this melodramatic trauma came welling back when I didn't finish those requirements last May, as I had hoped and planned. This would have had enough effect on my life in general and my hobby activities in particular, but it was also about this time when things began to get really ugly in the American side of the hobby--and I'm sure I need not go into any great detail about all that. With the hobby becoming less and less enjoyable, I limped along, not feeling capable of working on my academics yet feeling guilty if I didn't work on them, and generally finding myself sliding into a mild, listless depression.

As far as my hobby involvement is concerned, I reached my low point early this year. My company has one of our office automation systems installed throughout the Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals. The center of the system is in San Francisco, but there are computers in the system wherever there is an appeals court in that district: Boise, Juneau, Honolulu, Reno--i.e., all over the west coast. Some of the people using the systems in San Francisco were experiencing difficulties that were severe enough

that CCI sent me out at the beginning of February to investigate--an oddity in itself, since I'm a "development engineer" and don't deal directly with our customers. Originally, I was supposed to be in San Francisco for five days. At the time, I was still conscientious enough about my games that I made certain I'd be back in time to send in my orders for all of them.

Of course, since I had never really been on this sort of "business trip" before, I naively assumed that five days really meant five days. For various reasons, the company kept extending--and extending and extending--my stay, with the upshot that I spent the entire month of February living out of a suitcase. (I also got locked out of my room one night for exceeding my credit limit, but that's another story.) For my games, of course, this was an absolute disaster. I NMRed completely out of one game, and NMRed once in all the others save one.

I'm sure those of you who have suffered NMRs at the hands of the Postal Service have felt the kind of despair that greeted me in the stack of mail piled on my bed when I returned. It hardly seems fair that your best-laid game plans come crashing down through a twist of fate that isn't your fault. And yet, in some ways it is your fault, because there are always extra steps you could have taken: not waiting until a week before the deadline to mail your orders, or sending a copy from another location. It's like insurance; you never see the need until you've been burned, and then you look back and wish you had made a habit of it.

Ordinarily, I'd try to bounce back strongly from a setback like that, but at the time it only served to aggravate my despondence. To top it off, a few weeks later my girlfriend of two and a half years and I decided to part company--very amicably, I'm glad to say, but it was still an emptiness to deal with that wasn't there before. In any event, I found myself with virtually no desire to do more than a bare minimum in any of my games, and I realized that I was hardly paying attention to the zines I was still receiving, at least partly because it seemed that any zine I picked up had too much about the feuding going on, which really turned my stomach.

A curious thing, though. My office mate at the time had taken an interest in the hobby, and started his first postal Diplomacy game during this time. I found myself enjoying following his game, like I hadn't really enjoyed a hobby activity since...well, since the feuding started. And I realized something very basic, something I had forgotten as I got more involved with people in the hobby: this hobby isn't about feuding or personality clashes, this hobby is about games. And I like playing games.

Between realizing this and having not much else of interest in my life, I somehow found the conviction to return to work on my academics. After all, feeling emotionally empty gets boring after awhile, and you must occupy yourself with something. Hence, I was finally able to really finish my graduation requirements, and I sent the work to my advisor at St. Olaf just under two months ago. I have some administrative trivia to attend to (such as registering as a part-time nonresident student for the summer), but I received advance indication that things seem to be in order and I merely have to await the formality of receiving the degree, probably by August.

Actually finishing that work has been anticlimactic in many ways (particularly in light of my feelings about the field), but psychologically it has genuinely freed me to pursue other interests. Without academic work hanging over my head, my creative urge has pushed me towards publishing this zine, and I intend to make it enjoyable, for myself as well as you. In any event, I hope this article has given you some idea of why I felt compelled to write it, and has assured you that publishing is not a hasty compulsion on my part. As I said at the beginning, I've been planning this for some time; now we'll see if my good intentions pan out.

## Diplomacy HouseRules for It's a Trap!

"...the law is not an instrument of any kind. The law is a causeway upon which, so long as he keeps to it, a citizen may walk safely."

--Robert Bolt, A Man for All Seasons

I. Accessibility. Participants in games in IT are expected pay any gamefee for the individual game and must maintain an NMR deposit of at least \$5.00. Any NMR deposit remaining upon the completion of a game, or a player's resigning from a game, will be returned to the player. I reserve the right to bar someone from playing games in IT.

II. Game Composition. I will assign positions in games to potential players on a first-come, first-served basis. I will avoid putting together in any game in IT any two players who are: 1) currently playing together in another game in IT; 2) from the same geographic region; 3) related, either by blood or by marriage. I will respect players's wishes to exclude themselves from games with certain individuals. I will accept preference lists and dispreference lists and comply with them as much as possible when assigning countries.

III. Combination of Seasons. Seasons will be combined in American fashion unless otherwise indicated. Thus, retreats following a Fall turn and Winter builds will be combined with the following Spring turn; retreats following a Spring turn will be combined with the following Fall turn.

IV. Separation of Seasons. In games of regular Diplomacy, the Winter 1901 turn will always be separate from Spring 1902. Otherwise, normally combined seasons will be separated on any player request, except that a given player may not separate two successive seasons.

V. Deadlines. ...will be explicitly announced and strictly enforced.

VI. No Moves Received. Any player NMRing forfeits, from his or her NMR deposit, a five dollar (\$5.00) NMR fee for each NMR. Any player missing two deadlines in a row or three deadlines over a (real time) year of play will be sacked in favor of a standby. There is no NMR insurance.

VII. Standbys. Standbys will be used for all games in IT, and will be called upon to submit standby orders in the event of a player NMR, or take over for a player who resigns or is sacked. Standbys who play a standby position to completion will receive three free issues.

VIII. Spring 1901 Orders: The following attempts at neutral orders will be used in the event of a S'01 NMR by a player:

Austria: A Bud-Ser; A Vie H; F Tri-Alb.  
England: A Lpl-Yor; F Edi-Nrg; F Lon-Nth.  
France: F Bre-Mid; A Mar-Spa; A Par-Pic.  
Germany: F Kie-Den; A Mun-Ruh; A Ber-Kie.  
Italy: A Ven H; A Rom-Apu; F Nap-Ion.  
Russia: F Sev-Rum; A Mos-Ukr; F Stp(sc)-Bot; A War H.  
Turkey: A Con-Bul; F Ank-Con; A Smy-Ank.

IX. Orders. Correct orders will contain: 1) the game's Boardman or Miller number, or its IT name; 2) the country for which orders are being submitted; 3) the season or turn number; 4) the date the orders are submitted; 5) the submitting player's signature. Orders which don't have each of these items will be accepted provided I am reasonably confident



they are genuine. I will use the last dated or last received set of orders before the deadline to adjudicate a season. Please put game orders (separate sheets for separate games) on separate sheets of paper from correspondence.

X. Types of Orders. Orders conditional on the results of a previous season are allowed. Joint orders, general orders, future orders, perpetual orders and codeword orders are not allowed for games in IT.

XI. Phone Orders. I will accept orders over the phone, but will not accept collect calls. I may ask for confirmation that you are who you claim to be, and may refuse to take orders if I am not convinced. I will read back the orders for verification; once verified, there can be no appeal about what I heard. I make no promise to be home around deadline time to receive phone orders, and will not accept orders given over the phone to my roommates or anyone else at my residence.

XII. Ambiguity. I will follow a liberal reading of Rule VII.4 (the "badly written order" rule) in attempting to interpret orders--that is, I will try as much as reasonable to interpret any given order as a legal, unambiguous order. I will ignore specific instructions that an order is meant to be ambiguous. If you have any doubts about whether or not a given order or format would be interpreted as ambiguous, ASK BEFOREHAND.

XIII. Abbreviations. The following province abbreviations not listed in the rulebook will be used in IT, and are guaranteed to be unambiguous.

Tyo	- Tyrolia	Tys	- Tyrrhenian Sea
Lvn	- Livonia	Lpl	- Liverpool
Lyo	- Gulf of Lyon	Bot	- Gulf of Bothnia
Nrg	- Norwegian Sea	Nwy	- Norway
NAf	- North Africa	NAt	- North Atlantic
Nth	- North Sea		

XIV. Draws and Concessions. All proposals for draws and concessions will be submitted to the players for voting. A game will end upon a unanimous vote among the players for a specific draw or concession. Failure to vote will count as a NO vote, unless the NVR is due to an NMR, in which case it will count as a YES. Who proposed a given draw or concession and how individual players voted will never be made public.

XV. Press. Press for games in IT will be either white, grey, or black, depending upon the individual game. White press means only datelines which correctly identify the press item's author may be used. Grey press means datelines which do not identify a press item's author may be used. Black press means datelines which incorrectly identify the press item's author may be used. The GM's press will always be datelined IT.

XVI. Errors. I will attempt to correct any and all GMing errors brought to my attention before the next season is adjudicated. Errors undetected until after the next season has been adjudicated must stand.

XVII. Disputes. A player has the unconditional right to appeal a single disputed GMing decision to a mutually-agreed upon ombudsman during the course of a game. All players and I are expected to abide by such an ombudsman's decision. A player may dispute additional GMing decisions only with the support of at least one other player in the game.

XVIII. Last But Not Least. Any player deceiving me on a game-related matter will be sacked, thereby forfeiting all game and NMR fees, and will be barred from playing games in IT.

## UNITED Rules for It's a Trap!

- I. Introduction. UNITED is a postal game of soccer management invented by Alan Parr; this set of rules has been influenced by (read: plagiarized from) the rules of Alan Parr, Jim Williams, Bruce Dawson, and Bill Becker, among others.

Participants in the game, henceforth referred to as managers, guide their teams through a season of soccer play against the other teams in their division with the hope of becoming league champion or making the season's-end playoffs. At the end of each season the divisions will be reorganized by moving stronger teams to stronger divisions to keep the league as a whole more competitive. Each division will have anywhere from 8-10 teams; at present the league will consist of one to three divisions, depending upon response.

Managers are expected to pay any gamefee for the season in which they are participating and must maintain an NMR deposit of at least \$5.00. Any NMR deposit remaining upon a manager's leaving the league will be returned to the manager.
- II. Players. There are five types of players in the game: goalkeeper (GK), sweeper (SW), defender (DF), midfielder (MF), and forward (FW). Each player is given a name and registered with the GM at one (or more, in special cases) of the five positions. Each player also has a skill level (SL) ranging from 0 (worst) to 10 (best), which represents how well that player plays his or her position. A player may be played out of position with a slight loss of skill (see Rule VII).
- III. Getting Started. A manager entering the game either buys a squad of players or takes over for an existing team, in which case he inherits a squad of players. All managers buying a squad start with \$6,000,000 to spend on players for their club. Forwards, midfielders, and defenders cost \$100,000 per skill level; goalkeepers and sweepers cost \$200,000 per skill level. All such players start at age 1. As the league progresses, the GM may adjust the starting sum for new managers in order to keep newer squads competitive with older ones.
- IV. Team Composition and Balance. Each club may have up to sixteen active players on its squad at any time, including apprentices. Any team fielded for a match must have eleven players (of course!), and must consist of one goalkeeper, at least two players at DF, at least two players at MF, and at least two players at FW. Additionally, the rating of each of the areas DF (not including SW), MF and FW must not be more than three times the rating of any of the other areas. (An area's rating is the sum of the effective skill levels of the players playing in that area.) Beyond this restriction, the actual formation and composition of a fielded team is the choice of the club's manager.
- V. Match Mechanics. To decide on the outcome of a match, opposing areas are compared:
  - A. If the rating of a team's FW area is greater than the rating of the opposing team's DF area, the first team receives a number of shots on goal equal to the difference.
  - B. The team with the greater MF area receives a number of shots on goal equal to half the difference between the two MF ratings, rounded down.

C. If the rating of a team's DF area is greater than the rating of the opposing team's FW area, that team receives a number of shots on goal equal to one-fourth the difference, rounded to the nearest unit or rounded down for an extra half.

Example: Given these two possible teams (the team on the left is using a 4-2-4 formation, while the team on the right has a more defensive 4-3-3):

GK	DF	MF	FW		FW	MF	DF	GK
	4		5	1	1	3	7	
5	5	7	8	1	4	8	1	10
	6	3	4	1	2	5	2	
	3		5	1			7	

Since Team L (on the left) has a FW rating of 22 and Team R (on the right) a DF rating of 17, team L's FWs win them  $(22 - 17)$ , or five shots on goal. Team R, on the other hand, receives no shots from its FWs, since their rating is a paltry 7 compared to L's DF rating of 18.

At midfield, R has the advantage, as their MF rating is 16 compared to L's MF rating of 10. Hence, R's MFs win them  $\frac{1}{4}(16 - 10)$ , or three shots on goal.

Since Team L has a DF rating of 18 and Team R has an FW rating of 7, Team L's DFs win them an additional  $\frac{1}{4}(18 - 7)$ , or three shots on goal. Team R receives no shots from its DFs, since their DF rating of 17 doesn't quite match up to Team L's FW rating of 22.

To see how many goals are scored, each shot is rolled against the opposing team's percentage chance of stopping the attempt. There is a basic 40% chance that any given shot will go wide of the goal (this percentage may be adjusted by the GM as the season progresses); additionally, there is a  $3 * \text{GK's SL}$  that the opposing goalkeeper will block the shot, and  $2 * \text{SW's SL}$  that the opposing sweeper will block it.

Example: If a team is playing an SL10 GK and an SL5 SW, then the percent chance of the shot missing (or being blocked) is:  $40 + (3 * 10) + (2 * 5) = 80\%$ .

VI. Sweepers. Provided that a team is fielding at least two players at DF, it may also field a player as a sweeper. A sweeper's function is twofold: 1) the sweeper's SL is included in the DF area rating in figuring the number of shots on goal the opposition's FWs get; and 2) the sweeper blocks shots on goal, as explained in Rule V.

NOTE: The SW is not counted in the DF area rating in figuring how many shots a team gets from its DFs. The SW is counted with the GK area rating in determining team balance.

VII. Playing out of position. A player may be played out of his registered position with a slight decrease in skill level. Once a player has played at another position for six games in a single season, he is deemed to have become accustomed to playing that new position and may henceforth play in either position without loss of skill level. (Managers are advised to bring such qualification to the attention of the GM when it occurs, lest it be overlooked.)

In general, a player may be played out of position at a loss of one skill level (e.g., a FW with SL 6 may play as an SL 5 DF). This is not a permanent loss; i.e., the player still plays in his registered position at his normal skill level. The exceptions are:

- A. Goalkeeper: Only a specialist GK may ever play in goal, and no GK may ever play out of position.
- B. Sweeper: A sweeper may play as a DF without loss of level. Any player capable of playing DF may play as an SW at one-third of his skill level when at DF (rounded to the nearest whole number). After six games of acclimation, a player capable of playing DF may play as an SW at one-half of his DF skill level (rounded down).

VIII. Home Advantage. The home team in each match is given six extra levels to be distributed amongst the DF, MF, and FW areas as the manager sees fit. The GM may increase the home advantage as the season progresses and teams become generally stronger.

IX. Coaching. Each session, a manager will have the chance to coach his players using accumulated value points (VPs). Every club receives one VP per session plus a further one VP for each win and 4VP for each draw in the previous session. VPs and extra 4VPs may be used or saved and accumulated from session to session as each manager sees fit.

The GM may make additional extra VPs available from time to time, such as in a Manager of the Month award or the like.

One VP may be used to raise the level of a DF, MF or FW player by one level; two VPs are needed to raise a GK or SW by one level.

No player may be coached to rise more than one level in a single session. No player may rise more than three levels in any one season (with the exception of apprentices; see Rule XI). No player may be coached higher than skill level 10.

X. Ageing. All players range in age from age 0 (apprentices) to age I up to age V. At the end of each season, a player's age advances to the next age in line. To reflect the effect that ageing has on playing ability, players lose skill levels when they age. A player loses two skill levels after completing his age I season; three levels at the end of his age II season; four levels at the end of his age III season; and five levels at the end of every subsequent season.

If ageing causes a player to fall to skill level 0, that player must retire.

XI. Apprentices. Managers may sign up to three apprentices per season simply by so informing the GM. An apprentice must play his first four games at skill level 0 and may not be coached, but after completing four matches in one position he immediately rises to SL2 in that position and may thereafter be coached like other players. An apprentice is not subject to the three-level-per-season coaching limitation.

An apprentice who does not complete his apprenticeship (i.e., play his four games) by the end of his apprentice season should be released from the club.

- XII. Hard play. A team may play hard to add to its strength, but in so doing runs the risk of penalties and disciplinary measures. In each game a manager must play at a hardness level from 1 (soft) to 12 (hard 'n dirty). Each hardness point used gives a manager an extra skill level to be distributed amongst the areas GK, SW, DF, MF or FW, but it takes two hardness points to raise the GK or SW by one level, and neither the GK nor the SW may ever be so raised above 10. All players in the areas where hardness is used have a 5% change of being booked (yellow card) and a 1% chance of being sent off (red card) for each hardness point used in their area. Each hardness point used also carries with it a 10% chance that a penalty will be conceded. There is a 90% chance that a penalty kick will score a goal, reduced by 4% for each skill level of the GK. The GM may adjust these percentages as the season progresses.

Example: If a manager uses three hardness points in DF and two hardness points in FW, each player at DF in that match has a 15% chance of being booked and a 3% chance of being sent off, while each FW playing has a 10% chance of being booked and a 2% chance of being sent off. Additionally, there will be five checks made for penalties, with a 10% chance of a penalty occurring each check. Hence, a manager may be able to get away with dirty play, but also runs the risk of incurring multiple penalties.

Although the skill level of the penalty taker has no effect on the success of the kick, each manager should list a player to take the penalty kicks each match for record-keeping purposes.

- XIII. Discipline. A player who is booked receives four disciplinary points (DPs); a player who is sent off receives 10. For earning 10 DPs, a player is suspended for the first match of the next session. Upon earning 20 points, a player will be suspended for three matches; for earning 30 points, a player will be suspended for five matches; for earning 40 DPs, a player is out for the rest of the season. All disciplinary records are wiped clean at the end of a season, with the exception that any disciplinary points earned in the last two sessions of a season will count towards that current season's and the next season's tally.

- XIV. Scouting. A manager may use VPs to scout matches and obtain additional information about other teams' alignments. One VP may be used to scout any single match between two other teams, or to scout one's opposition for all three matches during a session.

- XV. Finances. At the end of each session each club receives \$100,000 plus a bonus \$40,000 for each win and \$20,000 for each draw in that session. All of this money is profit and is hence available for use in transfer deals.

Loans between clubs, of cash or players, are not permitted. Clubs may, however, go up to \$500,000 into debt subject to a 10% interest charge per session in debt. Should a club's debt exceed the limit, the GM will immediately and without prior notice sell players from that club's squad at random until the debt is eliminated.

- XVI. Transfers. Players may be traded from team to team at the discretion of the respective managers. Managers must truthfully inform each other of the age, skill level, coaching record, and injury status of any players involved in a transfer, and are expected to agree on a time for the transfer to take place (so that no player is listed on two different teams for a given match). Any

manager found misrepresenting any of the information about a player involved in a transfer will be immediately sacked. No deal is complete until both managers submit substantially identical transfer instructions to the GM.

Any player involved in a transfer between teams may not be traded again until three sessions have passed, although such players may be sold at auction or to a non-league side (see Rules XVII and XVIII).

No transfers may be conducted after session 7.

- XVII. Auction. Each session the GM may, at his discretion, announce the availability of a number of new players of definite age, skill level, and position; additionally, some of these players may have special characteristics (e.g., a player who ages more slowly than normal, or who may be coached higher than SL10). Managers may bid for these players as they wish, and each player signs with the highest bidder. Bids must be in complete thousands of dollars, and must include a name for the player--failure to do so will result in the bid being ignored. Each of the players up for bid will be given a number, and they will be auctioned off in sequence. Managers may submit conditional bids based on the outcome of bids on previously auctioned players. Auctioned players are not available for play until the subsequent session.

Should a manager have a player that he is unable to use or trade, the GM will arrange an immediate cash sale of the player, for which the manager's team will receive 80% of that player's face value (\$100,000 per SL, double for SW and GK) if that player is an apprentice, 60% of face value if the player is of age I, 40% for an age II player, 20% for age III, 10% for age IV, and 5% for age V.

- XVIII. NMRs. The deadline(s) set by the GM are rigid; telephone orders will not be accepted. The penalties for missing the deadline are:
- A. The manager will forfeit \$5.00 from his or her NMR fee deposit.
  - B. The GM will choose the side for all matches that session at random.
  - C. All matches that session will be played away.
  - D. All matches that session will be played at hardness 1, distributed by the GM, at double the normal risk for penalties and disciplinary action.
  - E. All opposing teams that session will receive four extra hardness points, distributed randomly by the GM, at no risk of penalty or disciplinary action.

Two successive NMRs or three in one season will be sufficient cause to sack that manager in favor of someone on the waiting list.

The penalties for an NMR are purposefully harsh and can ruin a team's record. The moral is: don't NMR.

- XIX. Renaming. Names of clubs and players may not be changed while the season is in progress. Managers may, if they wish, change such names during the off-season.
- XX. Administration. Postal aspects of the game (orders, NMR fees, deadlines, etc.) will be as set forth in the Diplomacy House Rules.
- XXI. Last but not least... The GM's decisions are absolute and final.

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For gamestarts and subscriptions: JUNE 22, 1985

For other submissions (articles, etc.): JUNE 17, 1985

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<b>Diplomacy:</b>	(Please specify which game you prefer.)		
White press game	\$5.00 game fee	\$5.00	NMR fee
Grey press game	\$5.00 game fee	\$5.00	NMR fee
<b>United:</b>	NO game fee!	\$5.00	NMR fee

[illegible]

Purist Diplomacy; Nomic; Clue?  
Other games you'd like to see played?

[illegible]

**DON'T FORGET TO VOTE** in The 1985 Runestone Nine and GM Poll. This is your chance to provide your (un)favorite publisher or GM with some feedback which is potentially more potent than a letter or editorial. Ballots and rules have been widely circulated; feel free to contact me if you need a copy. Before June 22, 1985, send your ballot to whomever you trust more: Bruce Linsey, 73 Ashuelot St., Apt. 3, Dalton, MA 01226; or Pat Conlon, Box 17014, LSU, Baton Rouge, LA 70893. Bruce will take ballots up to June 29.

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A LAST NOTE. Based on my recent level of hobby involvement, I recognize that many of you will consider subscribing here to be risky at best. This is a fair criticism. Publishing a zine is very much a put-up-or-shut-up situation. There is no way to accurately predict whether or not a zine will succeed, even if a publisher has good intentions; only actually attempting to publish a zine will reveal if a person has the conviction to carry through on the commitment. Thus, if you feel for one reason or another that you'd rather not subscribe now, no hard feelings; simply wait a year or so, and if I'm still at it, please feel free to give it a try.

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It's a Trap! #1 has been brought to you by: Steve Knight  
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