

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER.....

excelsior

XMAS 1985

ISSUE No. 9

by BRUCE MCINTYRE



DIRECTORY

EXCELSIOR #9 by Bruce McIntyre with a whole heaven of a lot of support from Nancy Hurrell. Printed December 8, 1985 in Vancouver, BC Canada, by Chris Buck of Kinko's.

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Scattered throughout the zine.....Christmas Cheer, a one-time subzine of twelve parts.



DipGab

I've good news and bad news for you, most of which is apparent already. The bad news, in case you've not yet figured it out, is that this issue is quite late. It could have been out two weeks ago, but I decided to just get the games out on flyer and wait for the beginning of December, when I'd have a paycheck big enough to get all the stuff I've got this time printed. So that's the good news: there's lots of stuff this time. If I liked the idea of double issues, I'd call this one a double issue, but then I feel bad charging you one issue for this, as late as it is, so two is right out of the question. So let's compromise and call it a long-awaited double issue for half-price, hokay? Apologies all around of course, especially to the players in the Dip games, who waited extra time as the Christmas mail came in ponderously slowly. And the next issue will come out early in January, probably with a six week deadline to offset the predictable Canada Post backlog. I'd better mention that the rest of DipGab was written when I was still under the impression that this issue would be out on time. That may explain the following paragraph at least.

Well, as I write this, it appears that this will be a rather short issue, at least for the articles and general writing from M^cBruce side of things. So, for those of you here for the gospel according to M^cBruce, you have this stream-of-consciousness column, a couple of reviews, though not of zines--with as many zines as I receive, I'd not want to have to recommend one over the other in print, so I don't do zine reviews: although I will point out things I've seen and enjoyed from time to time. Getting back to the literary (?) side of XL#9, there is a rarity this time, which I hope makes of for the lack of narrative this time: an article I've actually edited. Yes, the "Masculine Attribute" piece is not the usual in-class essay, this is actually a prepared work! I hope you enjoy it.

Going further in the zine, I expect (remember that DipGab is written before decisions are made about what goes in and what doesn't) there'll be some Polltalk material in here somewhere. I had a clear message from your letters this month: stop letting The Feud into XL. (Strangely enough, more of the complaints were about Most Of The Post than last issue's cover.) I've got the message, and of course am sorry if I've offended. While I want to reserve my right to comment on Hobby politics/controversy *if I deem it necessary*, I'll try to keep such deeming to a minimum from now on. However, in the case of Polltalk, I think that it serves a valuable purpose, and is not a raging controversy: rather, its purpose is meant more as a fine tuning tool to make the Runestone poll as good as possible. I see that Bruce has addressed the two major points made by the Runestone poll detractors: telephone voting, and voter eligibility. As a matter of fact, I see a lot of white space looming at the end of Bruce's bit, and I think I will have responded there by the time this is mailed out. I hope there will be more response; surely we can discuss this without turning XL into a feudy rag, can't we?

On to other news....

Diplomacy World survives! Yes, fans, Diplomacy World has survived, and will continue on schedule, as most of us found out in DW Jr., put out by Larry Peery in his heroic, and successful effort to save DW. I myself will be going into overdrive after this zine is out, with an article or two for Kathy Byrne, who remains General Editor. But for Canadians, there's an added plus: DW plans to have inserts of regional news, and Canada has been chosen as one region. The only trouble is that Canada is larger in area than all the other regions put together. So, when Larry asked me to be Regional Editor, I suggested appointing

DIPGAB continued

two co-editors, nominating J.C. Hodgins, who sent me the first letter of concern about DW, and Alan Stewart, who I felt would be good for the job. In any case, Larry's appointed J.C. and myself. I hope J.C. was warned about this, because I forgot to write either Alan or J.C. and tell them of my nominations. (By the way, I didn't nominate a publisher because I'm one, and I know how busy publishers are already. *Yes Alan, I know you're a publisher now, but I didn't know when this was written, hokay?* What this implies, J.C., is that you better do most of the work--nah, only kidding!) Anyhow, the next issue of Oh Say Can You CDQ? will probably appear in the first DW of '85. You can send J.C. or me almost anything that you feel would be appropriate. After all, we're supposed to be editors, not creators!!!

I was shocked out of bed today by the latest issue of PoW, number 7, which literally lit up the room, making everything else look like it was in B&W by comparison. POW! And you all thought that XL covers were bright.....

The music excerpts are going to run a bit different from now on--I'm giving out 10 free issues to Ron (Snafu!) Brown, and 25(!) to Rosie Roberts. Ron pre-empted Rosie from getting 35 issues by saying the excerpts on pages 18, and page 2, as having "some silly name like Pompous Circumstances or something." Rosie correctly identified Pomp & Circumstance #1 (pages 2 and 18), #4 (13 and 31), and Enigma Variations (pages 11, 14, and 30). She even identified my favorite variation, on page 14 "the one where a dog falls into the river, trots (you mean swims, don't you?) along, climbs out and barks very loudly." And y'all thought these classical folks were serious-like! By the way the composer is Sir Edward Elgar, and that was the unanswered question on the theme linking all the excerpts together. The unidentified excerpts were on pages 5 and 10, both from Pomp & Circumstance #2. The new rule this time is that excerpts get you two issues, not five. There may be as many as 15 excerpts this time (they're all written out, waiting to go into whatever white space I find myself with), so you can still make a killing if you want to. And you can still phone and get them sung, though with the polyphonic ones (more than one note at a time: harmony), I just can't do them justice.

Does anyone mind if I convert sub balances to dollars and cents? I think that might turn out to be easier for me. And I'm not saying that because I'm planning to raise the prices: I'm not--if I did, I'd probably make sure everybody got the issues they'd paid for no matter what the new price turned out to be.

My NHL handicapping pool didn't bring as much response as I'd

CHRISTMAS CHEER Part One

Miss Aberdeen M^cHolstein
69 Cash Avenue
Beaver Valley, Colorado

December 14, 1985.

Dearest John,

I went to the door today and the postman delivered a Partridge in a Pear Tree. What a thoroughly delightful gift! I couldn't have been more surprised.

With deepest love and
affection,

Aberdeen

DIPGAB continued

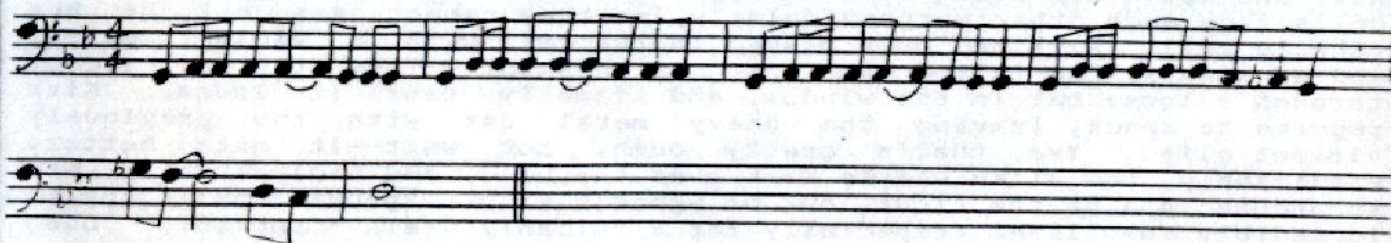
though. I get the message, and it's scrapped. I'll have enough hockey this winter anyhow. Not only have I got a 10-pack ticket to ten Vancouver Canucks games, but I'm also in a rather unique hockey pool. The scoring system is two points for a goal, one for an assist, and 1 point for every 2 minutes spent in the penalty box!! The eight players pit their teams against each other in one-on-one matchups covering each week's NHL games, creating a won-lost table instead of the usual drafter-total table. But that scoring system is crazy: Gretzky may not even go in the first round! The draft is this Saturday.

The Canucks are playing entertaining hockey this year, as opposed to last year when it was obvious that they were out of the playoffs by December. Does anyone out there know of any pro sports team that charges different amounts for games against weaker opposition? My idea was to have a lottery for people like me who buy 10 or 20-pack "season" tickets. Whoever buys the games that produce the most home wins would get some lavish prize. The theory, of course, is that people would come out and buy packages with lots of weak teams in it, in an attempt to win the big prize. Maybe I'll suggest it for next year. But I don't think I'd participate.

On Canada's World Cup efforts, I've seen two references to it in the zines of two other soccer fans. Scott Hanson in Pommes Mit Mayo wants me to bet the maximum amount on Canada in his World Cup soccer pool. Fine, Scott, on one condition: that after I lose, we have a private bet for double or nothing that Canada will last longer than the U.S. in the playdowns for the 1990 World Cup. Then there's Derek Caws, who writes in War and Peace the following about the soccer article from last issue: "...three pages on Canada's latest progress to the World Cup Finals in Mexico next year. England are there too, after beating little Turkey 5-0, so let's hope we draw Canada in the [first round] Group matches to give us an automatic two point start." Well, Derek, what would you estimate the odds of Canada getting a point should we play England in the first round? Your adjective "automatic" would indicate 100+ to one, but I'm willing to accept 10-1 if Canada should be drawn with England. If not, you name any team in our group, and I'll accept the bet (uh, provided it's not for too much...) And who says I'm not patriotic??

I've accepted a trade with Simon Billeness, who will be turning The Zine Register into a quarterly zine, and starting a Zine Bank for novices. Editors: send all pertinent material (preferably on the widely distributed circular note) to him at 61A Park Ave., Albany NY, USA 12202.

Lots of people commented on my plug of the fake DW, most of them negatively. "What plug?" I wondered to myself for awhile, then I remembered what Bruce Linsey's Hobbytalk had contained. Want my



opinion? I think it was really good....and really bad. But I think it was more, much more "really good" than "really bad". The timing, coming as it did as Larry Peery was on his knees pleading with the hobby to save DW, was "really bad", but Bruce and Larry apparently made their mailings roughly simultaneously, so how can you fault Bruce for that? Many of the "shots" at DW's current editor were not nice, but most of the articles I read were quite good. But the point is that I didn't know, other than my article, what the fake would contain. Had I known what it would look like, though, I'd still have left the DW#40 paragraph in. What should I have done? Write in big block letters a disclaimer? The paragraph was not controversial: it mentioned Mark Berch's Shep Rose article (which did appear in DW#40, and which I thought was good) and that was about it. I know that I seem to be missing the point here, that I aided Bruce in advertising his DW fake. Well since when is that a crime?

Last Sunday I watched the Seahawks beat the Raiders 33-3, and the best part was the out-of-town updates. I'm referring to William "The Refrigerator" Perry, the 300+ pound defensive player for the Chicago Bears who last week apparently decided to try out the offensive side of things. Perhaps the NFL should have a limit on how many *pounds* can be in motion before the ball is snapped, because the sight of Th Fridge in motion is enough to get me hysterical with laughter, and that's not even including him trotting into the end zone wide open (Who'd want to cover him? Who could?), catching a TD pass, and doing a dance! I watched the highlights as many times as I could, and was reduced to tearful hysteria each time. So, next week, I'm watching the Bears game--and don't give me this regional garbage: the man could double the ratings without even carrying the ball.

A local station has come up with an idea that could seriously hamper my efforts to get XL out on time. *No, that hasn't the whole reason.* They show *Star Trek* reruns at 1:30 AM on weeknights. I find I'm watching with a less serious air than I used to. After you've seen them all five times, you begin to be able to tell what's going to happen. For example, whenever six beam down, and two of them are wearing red and don't have any lines in the transporter room scene, you *know* that they're going to die. Similarly, you *know* Bones will find that antidote by 2:15. You *know* that Spock will save Kirk's ass. You *know* that any reasonably attractive woman will instantly fall in love with Kirk--or once did. But there are always surprises. I love to find examples of things that are really *dumb*. Two examples. First one: In tonight's episode, Kirk was in Sickbay unexpectedly after leaving the bridge. There was no possible way for the bridge crew to know that he had gone there. That whistling sound that indicates the communicator's desire to speak occurred. Kirk answered, and, miraculously, it was for him! Dumb, dumb, dumb. They could at least have had Sulu say "Captain, we've been looking all over for you", or *something*. Example number two: Kirk and Spock are being held in separate cells on some planet. The cells face each other perpendicularly, so they cannot see all of the other's cell. Kirk has been placed in the cell with a violent alien, and *as always*, has talked him into friendship. They try to escape through a loose bar in the window, and finally tear it loose. Kirk reports to Spock, leaving the heavy metal bar with the previously violent alien. Yes, that's pretty dumb, but wait--it gets better. Predictably, the alien whacks Kirk over the head, and escapes while Kirk is unconscious on the floor, out of Spock's view. Spock's brilliantly, incredibly *dumb* lines (especially for a Vulcan!) are: "Captain." Long pause. "Captain?" Another pause, then (*dumb, dumb, dumb*) "Captain, are you able to respond?" Brilliant. What's Kirk going to do? Say no? That's responding. Say yes? Then why didn't he in the first place? Dumb, dumb, dumb.

MASCULINE ATTRIBUTE

Let me tell you, it's not at all like me to bore my readers with a recap of the month's health problems. But I think you'll agree that they are at least rather peculiar. However, those of you who needed a barf bag to stomach Steve Knight's story about cutting off his thumb, may deem it necessary to go on to the next article.

The bad luck started immediately upon my return from Point Roberts. I should say something further about The Point beforehand. The reasons it is so popular with Canadians are a) alcohol (read: bar drinks) are much cheaper in the great state of Washington, and b) BC's X-rated movies are, from what I've heard, heavily censored, and stand no comparison to what apparently goes on on screens in Pt. Roberts. It is this last that I'm concerned with. On the 45 minute trip to the Point (actually we get off the bus in Tsawassen BC), I've made it a habit to look in the newspaper ads for the movie that is playing this week. Since this is the only real information we northerners get about Pt. Roberts, it does make a (reasonably) innocent fellow like myself rather reluctant to make the trip. The reality is that the Point is quite peaceful. We've not seen most of it, but the corner of Tye and Gulf, with its post office, hardware store, fish 'n chips place, and groceteria, is very peaceful. The two places -- The Breakers pub, and the X-rated movie theatre -- for which The Point is infamous are so far along Gulf Road that you can't see them for the trees. But one wonders, coming into contact with so many people who live in a region whose very economy depends on fun-loving Canadians filling their Canadian gourds with American booze, and opening their Canadian eyes with American no-holds-barred pornography. I mean, walking through their supermarkets, you'd not think of it (until you saw -- shocking -- that American wine for sale in a *supermarket*) hardly at all, unless it deliberately occurred to you. It didn't deliberately occur to me until two days later.

But I digress! Let me tell you the story. We went to Pt. Roberts and milled, and shopped (bought a big jug of Cherry Coke, and a lot of red Crystal Light), and then headed back. Nan went home; I went to work. By eight o'clock I had a dull headache. By nine I had two heaters within five feet, I was still shivering, and I couldn't read my own handwriting. I was about to call Nan for help, when she walked in, on her way home from the trip to the laundromat. I called in some relief, and was driven home feeling very cold and feeble. After a much-needed rest of about an hour, I had some chicken soup; then blacked out until the next morning. For some reason, I had acquired, to go with the headache, a dull pain just below my navel. I attributed it all to the flu, and got up rather painfully. After explaining to Nancy that there was no phauhckking way I was going to lie in bed for more than twelve hours at any one time, I watched some game shows, read some mail,

CHRISTMAS CHEER Part Two

Miss Aberdeen M^cHolstein
69 Cash Avenue
Beaver Valley, Colorado

December 15, 1985.

Dearest John,

Today the postman brought your very sweet gift. Just imagine -- Two Turtle Doves! I'm delighted at your very thoughtful gift. They are just adorable. You big silly, what next?

All my love,

Aberdeen.

MASCULINE ATTRIBUTE continued

had some more chicken soup, then had a nap as dessert. A big dinner made me feel much better, and I felt I was at that certain point where one good shower would kill the remaining germs. And it was there that I thought again of The Point, and why Canadians go there. Not to mention the diseases you might possibly pick up as a result.

Nancy described it later, in a letter to her parents, as a problem with my "masculine attribute". Apparently, she uses big words only when necessary. The problem was a swelling which was very alarming, and (fortunately) quite painless. I got out of the shower, and felt as though the flu was gone. But what the *hell* had I picked up?

Now let me explain about my doctor. Dr. S. and I have not met often over the years, as I have been lucky enough, since adolescence, never to have broken a bone, acquired a particularly brutal disease, or required surgery to close any wounds. Therefore, the few times I've seen Dr. S., who is reasonably young, and very energetic as doctors go (one gets the impression that he can't find a foursome for golf that would present enough of a challenge), his first comment is always the same: "How've ya been these last few years?" This is inevitably followed by the variation on "My how you've grown." Then we get down to business, I tell him what's wrong, and he sends me to someone else. Usually, my very presence in the office requires some specialist or other: I've seen foot doctors, eye doctors, and allergists (many allergists), but seldom have been treated by the good Dr. S. himself. When I go to the doctor, I have a *problem*.

But I have overshot myself once more, and gone on far, far ahead of where I wanted to be in the chronological order of things. What I must mention is that making an appointment is a terribly personal thing when you have an embarrassing problem. I mean, when they ask what the problem is, just what am I supposed to say? A simple "My dong is rather larger than it should be" sounds more like an obscene phone call, while any attempt at using the word *penis* in the telephonic presence of a woman I don't know makes the next few words come out very reluctantly, if at all. Finally, after prolonged and unsuccessful thought, I asked Nancy to make the appointment for me. She told the nurse I had a problem with my "lower stomach." (If I had two stomachs, I'd have a problem indeed!) It was contrived and inaccurate, but it seemed to get the job done.

So let me set the scene for you. Here I am, sitting in the waiting room with Nan by my side, waiting for my name to be called so I can go in and dangle my dongle in front of Dr. S., and then learn what terrible disease I've contacted, along with the effects it will have on my recently-revived sex life, not to mention my ability to father children (We must, after all, think about the future, mustn't we?). I feel embarrassed. I feel ashamed. And I've hardly even sat down before my name is called, not *quietly* by the nurse, but **LOUDLY** by Dr. S. himself. As though I was a regular patient, in so that the latest hole could be patched up! I gave Nan the computer magazine I'd bought on the way, and went in, following the good doctor, who told me he'd be right there. He wasn't. Not right away anyhow. I'd rather have waited out in the waiting room with *my* magazine than be forced to read dog-eared copies of *Time* dealing with the release of the hostages in Iran. Not only that, the emptiness started to get to me. *We'll put you in a private room, Mr. McIntyre, so you can worry yourself to death alone.* Just what was taking Dr. S. so damn long? Probably searching his files for a clue to what's wrong with my "lower stomach". Whatever that is.

The door opens. "How've ya been in the last few years?"

"Fine." The whole truth. Nothing but the truth. Start from the beginning.

"So, what can I do for ya?"

The whole truth. Nothing but the truth. Try to remain calm.

MASCULINE ATTRIBUTE continued

"Well, two days ago I came down with a sort of blitzkreig flu bug, and--"

"Hmmm, let's see. Breathe in. Breathe out. Open up. Yeah, looks like a flu bug."

"Yes, well, as I say, it just hit me two nights ago at work--"

"So now you need a note for work, eh? No problem, just gimme a sec."

"Well, actually, that's not the problem. The problem is some unexplained, uh, penis swelling."

Didn't even shock him. Not even for a split second did he hesitate. "Well let's have a look," he said. "Holy crow, hope we don't have to amputate."

This is *not* the thing to say when someone is unzipping his fly *very carefully*. Luckily, I managed to avoid being fatally caught in my own zipper, but what with all the shock, it was a close thing. "I sure hope not," I said stupidly.

Now he's probing. "Does it hurt any?"

"No, not, uh, where it's swelled up. But up in here there's been a dull pain for a few days."

"Does this hurt? How 'bout this? This? What about right here?"

Christ. "Yes." Please stop.

"This just appeared last night?"

"Well, that was the first time I noticed the swelling. That pain has been there since Wednesday night."

"Hmmm," he said, washing his hands quickly. "We're going to send you downstairs to Dr. Woo. He'll tell you what's wrong."

Drying his hands, a thought occurred. Even with his back turned, I could see it occur. "You didn't have any trouble with an erection or anything, huh?"

"I didn't think it would be particularly wise to try." Understatement of the year. I made Nan sleep far away so that I wouldn't even think about sex. (This didn't work. Try it. Say to yourself, I'm not going to think about sex for the next 30 seconds. Good luck.)

"Oh." Paper towel hook shot into the can. "You get dressed, I'll make the appointment and be right back."

And I'm in the room alone again. And, of course Dr. S. took his own sweet time to make the appointment. *How long does he think it takes for me to pull up my pants?* Then it occurred to me that not only was news of my affliction going to be further spread, but I was going to have to show my embarrassing aberration to another doctor, one completely unfamiliar to me. You scoff, I know; but remember that I go to the doctor so seldom that this *is* a big deal. A big embarrassment, to be more accurate.

Dr. Young-Chi Woo is a urologist. His English is faultless, with

CHRISTMAS CHEER Part Three

Miss Aberdeen McHolstein
69 Cash Avenue
Beaver Valley, Colorado

December 16, 1985.

Dear John,

Oh! Aren't you the extravagant one! Now I really must protest. I don't deserve such generosity -- Three French Hens. They are just darling, but I must insist, you've been too kind.

Love,

Aberdeen

MASCULINE ATTRIBUTE continued

the small exception of a conspicuous Oriental accent. He too has a greeting he uses on all his patients; it goes like this: "Howa yu?" He looked at me for five minutes, then explained that he could not see any cause other than a simple infection. He jogged my memory -- had I injured myself in any way, in that region. (I hadn't.) Then he asked me to have a blood sample and a urine sample in the lab across the hall, so off I went.

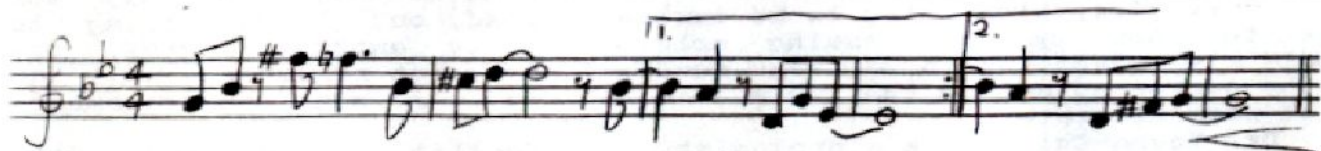
It occurred to me that I'd never had either a blood test or a urine test, and that I had no idea as to the procedures involved. Not only that, I had the awful but certain feeling that I had no urine to give at that time. Oh well, I thought after a brief dialogue with the lab nurse, and went into the bathroom to try.

Ah, thought I as I entered, instructions. I read down as far as the word *valva* and stopped. Then I noticed that the instruction sheet was hanging from a string, and bound in plastic. I turned it over, and on the other side was -- ah, yes, this *does* sound rather more familiar. Somehow (perhaps it was the sight of the toilet, perhaps it was the effect of gravity) I had enough urine in stock to allow the first ounce to go into the bowl, as the rules directed. Indeed, the inventory level very nearly exceeded the volume of the cup, which would have caused an awful mess. Finally I brought out my disgustingly warm sample cup, and, completely forgetting the "Please leave samples here" table, proudly tried to hand it to the nurse, who didn't want it as much as I didn't. As a matter of fact, she repaid me with a vengeful blood theft only minutes later. Then I went home. I did not feel better. I was given no prescription. I was told of no disease; Dr. Woo wanted to see me in a week, at which time he would tell me of the new and wonderfully-fatal disease I had, and the tragic effects it would have on the little time I had left.

A week later. "Howa yu?" Fine. Swelling's down, sex life back to normal. What's the verdict? "Yu haf nothing to wully about, missa M^cIntyre. I berieve it iss small infection, nothing worse.

It only took a few days before the third affliction of the month stuck. Shaking out a blanket after a shower, I managed to take a ceiling light cover down, breaking it into a few hundred pieces. I picked the larger ones up, then noticed I was bleeding.....

Missed me by that much.



CHRISTMAS CHEER Part Four

Miss Aberdeen M^cHolstein
69 Cash Avenue
Beaver Valley, Colorado

December 17, 1985.

Dear John,

Today the postman delivered Four Calling Birds. Now really, they're beautiful but don't you think enough is enough? You're being too romantic.

Affectionately,

Aberdeen

POSTAL CLUE BEGINS

This is the first episode in XL's first game of Postal Clue. If you are one of the six in the game (by the way, the other two mentioned below--not counting Steve Cooley--also sent in requests to join the fun, but were too late to be included), these are your cards:

The Excelsior amusement park lies on the back side of Burnaby Mountain, overlooking the Barnet Highway which is about the only way you can get to it, and that's only a start. It's highlight is the History of Din ride, better known as "The Gospel according to M^cBruce." It is here where the story begins:

Mitch Wageler surveyed the eight laughing tourists squeezing into the car. "Sorry, folks," he said. "Only six at once in the car."

"But there's room for nine," exclaimed the man near the back with the soccer boots.

"No, the regulations say three in each row, and one--the driver: me--in the front."

The one with the British accent exited, along with one of the men. "We'll go and find the nearest pub," said the English one, whose name, it turned out, was Malcolm Smith. "Come on Steve; we'll meet them when they get back." There were now five men in the car and they all seemed to be jumping over each other to give Steve a place, until he said "Don't worry about it: take my wife, please!"

This settled the score, and as Mitch started to drive the car, he overheard enough conversation to make out the names of all six. There was Conrad Minshall from Texas in the first seat, Ron Krukowski from Chicago in the second seat, and completing the first row was Indiana's Steve Dycus. The second row contained the woman, whose name he hadn't yet determined yet, the man with the soccer boots from Kalamazoo, whose name was Bill Becker, and another Texan, James Early. Then he heard the woman's name: Janet Cooley. He thought he'd heard that name before, but dismissed the thought as the car approached the new part of the ride, the Postal Clue segment.

"This section is a new section of the ride," said Mitch, "Still mostly under construction. We're all wondering how this will all work, and I think you're going to be the first ones through it. On your left you can see the various rooms: there's the Dining Room, and there's the Kitchen, for example, and here's some of the murder weapons, the Candlestick there, and over to your right, the Wrench. We can take a walking tour of this part if you want." There was a resounding chorus of yesses to that, so Mitch stopped the car and got out. And it was just coming back to the car that he realized that the man left outside, Janet Cooley's wife, was Steve Cooley, his avowed enemy in BEETHOVEN. Unfortunately, that was his last thought, because the lights then went out, and when they came back on again, Mitch had disappeared.

"What the hell happened?" said Conrad.

"Where's our tour guide?" whispered Janet.

The voice came from nowhere and everywhere at once. "He is dead: killed by one of you--in one of these rooms--with one of the weapons."

Six people all thought the same thought: "Such a wimpy voice. It has to be M^cBruce."

[Conrad's first suggestion, and the rest's preference list of cards to show, are due by next time.]

REVIEWS!

No, not zine reviews: but just about anything else. If you like to read negative reviews of things you won't find them here, as I don't feel there's any constructive use of such negative advice. What I will do here, however, is tell you of music, cinema, and literature I've been impressed with recently.

The music I'm going to recommend to you is not really a musical piece, it is rather a collection of records -- or, to be more accurate, a collection of long-playing *cassettes*. They do not come in disk form, and when I tell you that the series goes under the title of *Walkman Classics* you'll understand why. You'll find these tapes in your record store, under similar covers: white with a red, yellow and green logo. By far the best part is the promotional material, a poster listing the tapes available on one side and a beautifully-done portrait of one Mr. Mozart complete with stereo headphones.

Musically, there is double-barrelled good news. First, the quality is excellent. All the recordings are "previously released material", but the company which released them previously is *Deutsche Grammophon*, the cream of the classical crop. Each tape is between 80 and 95 minutes, and none of the eleven I now own have ever caused me trouble although they are treated as common slaves in my Walkman, instead of getting the royal treatment they should inside my more stationary stereo system. If you're interested in a way to introduce yourself to so-called "classical" music, this is it. The range of tapes cover much of what musical snobs term The Repertoire; the actual recordings, while not always definitives (like, for example, the twenty-year-old Karajan/BPO recordings of Beethoven's symphonies -- although I understand that Karajan has recently rerecorded them for quadrophonic sound), are nevertheless first-rate. And the price is very cheap: I'd estimate about \$5.00 per tape, compared with the usual \$12-15 dollars for a much shorter classical LP. I give it a "10", and will be glad to increase this to 11 should they follow up with a similar portrait of Beethoven.

I don't often go to movies, but of course this is unavoidable when you have someone to go with. Still, I hadn't been to a show in a few months when I saw *After Hours* with Nan 10 days ago. I've always liked the kind of comedy that makes you think about it on your way home, and often well into next week. Being There and Neighbours were two films I remember that did that to me; perhaps it's the way the hero of these movies is satired until nobody's really sure he's a hero anymore that appeals to me. But there's also a kind of slapstick mood that makes you believe in the same hero no matter what happens.

In any case *After Hours* appealed to me because it had a sense of *balance* I'd not seen before in a film. It seemed in retrospect (again, the thinking about it on the way home) that every scene in that film had an equal and opposite scene somewhere else, like a long mathematical equation with twenty-five levels of brackets not closed with their corresponding right-brackets until the last moment. The outer-most of these sets of brackets is represented in the film by the hero leaving the office building where he works, while guards behind him shut the massive gold gates (left-bracket), and later in the penultimate theme, the hero returns to the same massive gold gates, which are being opened for him by the same two guards (right-bracket). It is in between the brackets that all hell breaks loose, in a plot that I cannot possibly explain here, although it is well-woven, and definitely worth seeing. The photography contributes to the *air* of the film, and the film never succeeds in getting as serious as this review of it, though it succeeds at any level. 10.

I actually bought a copy of the fourth book in the *Hitch-Hiker's Guide* trilogy! Hard cover! Really! And having forked out \$16.95 for it, I suppose I'm expected to do a review stating how much of a waste of money it was.

Well, it was, but that doesn't mean that the actual book wasn't good.

The book has it's moments, but there are also parts you read very quickly and then forget. It starts with the triumphant return of Arthur Dent to -- Earth.

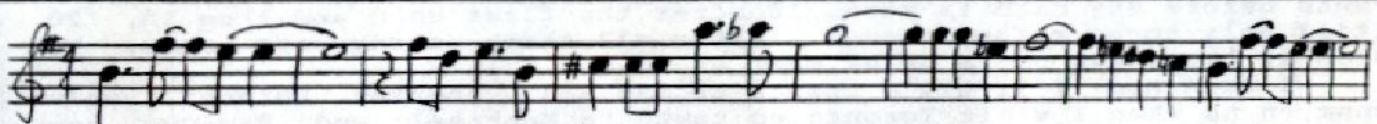
Yes, Earth. For it appears Earth was never destroyed by the Vogons and their hideous yellow ships. Or, at least, somebody put it back together again. Within chapters Arthur has met that girl who "one, Thursday, nearly 2,000 years after one man had been nailed to a tree for saying how great it would be to be nice to people for a change, ... suddenly realized what it was that had been going wrong all this time, and finally knew how the world could be made a good and happy place." And, starting in Chapter 25 (a little past halfway through), we learn rather more about Arthur Dent than we could possibly have hoped for in the first three books. It begins "Those who are regular followers of the doings of Arthur Dent may have received an impression of his character and habits which, while it includes the truth and, of course, nothing but the truth, falls somewhat short, in its composition, of the whole truth in all its glorious aspects" and ends with these rather remarkable paragraphs:

"'This Arthur Dent,' comes the cry from the furthest reaches of the galaxy, and has even now been found inscribed on a mysterious deep space probe thought to originate from an alien galaxy at a distance too hideous to contemplate, 'what is he, man or mouse? Is he interested in nothing more than tea and the wider issues of life? Has he no spirit? Has he no passion? Does he not, to put it in a nutshell, fuck?'"

"Those who wish to know should read on. Others may wish to skip on to the last chapter which is a good bit and has Marvin in it."

Three and a half pages later, Arthur Dent makes it in the close proximity of a Boeing 747 at cruise altitude.

In the last chapter, Marvin expires after having needed help in piecing together God's Final Message to His Creation printed in thirty-foot high letters of fire. I could tell you what it is, but I won't. What I will tell you is that the book receives a mark between 6 and 7 equal to the square root of, naturally, 42.



CHRISTMAS CHEER Part Five

Gold Finger

Miss Aberdeen McHolstein
69 Cash Avenue
Beaver Valley, Colorado

December 18, 1985.

Dearest John,

What a surprise! Today the postman delivered Five Golden Rings; one for each finger. You're just impossible, but I love it. Frankly, all those birds squawking were beginning to get on my nerves.

All my love,

Aberdeen.

POKER FORUM 2

I've received four submissions to the poker column in the last two months, and while this is not too much, I don't suppose I'll get much more if I don't print and comment, so here goes!

The comments I received from Bill Becker were potentially interesting if one could get the players to stop laughing. His game of Indian, or Ace On The Face goes like this: "The ante here is 25 cents (in the first hand). You are dealt one card, you do not look at it, instead you place it on your forehead so everyone else can see it. On a signal from the dealer, everyone must decide at the same time to stay or drop. High card takes the pot. Losers who stayed ante \$1 in the next pot; everyone else, \$.25. Keep playing until no one challenges. Looks even funnier if you put two cards on your forehead."

Seems to me any comment about this game must assume that all the players are beyond the hysterical stage. This may be a problem: how many times does it take before the game is viewed as one of strategy and not one to laugh at? Then there's the usual problem with all Guts-type games: just as you've settled in for a long round, nobody challenges in the first hand, and the game's over. Assuming we can get past all that, though, it's quite a different game. Instead of the usual strategies involving the "reading of others", you see immediately what they've got, but not what you have. I don't like the simultaneous declaration: I think it'd be better with the usual clockwise round of betting. This, it would seem makes bluffing possible, but more of a suicidal venture than usual. If you see from left to right A-2-5-4-7, you might try it to get the guy with the ace out, but I'd bet that shrewd players would see through that, and get out quick if they saw you with a face card or higher. More often you'll see two high cards out there, and your strategy would be rather difficult to determine. Maybe an improvement would be to deal one or two cards down and one the forehead (but then it gets even funnier!), so that you could get some information on what sort of hand you have.

Next up is Dave Carter: "I used to play poker regular when I was in my early 20's but now I have gone on to better things. At work there is a game during lunch and I'll sit in when the number of players drops below five, just to bring up the numbers. We use three raises, 5 cents a raise except on the last card which is a dollar. You pay an extra dime for an open pair and then you can bet a dime. The most anyone has won in one sitting was \$30 but usually wins/losses are less than \$10. Some of the games have increment betting eg. 87/2 pair is a high-low game with 5 down in the hand and 3 cards in the middle. Betting is 5 cents before any card is seen, 10 after the first card and then 15, 20. Still only three raises though. After all three cards are seen, you need at least two pairs or at most an 87."

I sure hope I'll get a chance to see what "better things" you've gone on to when I visit Toronto en route to Montreal and MaryCon next year, Dave! I always object to paying for good hands, like the above mention to paying a dime for an open pair. It seems to me that since everyone has an equal chance at getting one, the dime is both trivial and unnecessary, but what I really don't like is the principle involved. Poker handicapping, bleah! You might want to see Steve Langley's proposal below for a suggestion for low-stakes poker. 87/2 pair sounds like our Fiery Cross without the cross. Try dealing out the cross, and turning up two cards at a time, saving the centre card for last.

Mike Barno writes the following account of the MadCon poker games: "MadCon had a lot of Poker last year, but none this time around, losing out to euchre and, I believe bridge, neither of which I play. I assume you've heard of "pass the trash" games, usually five-card draw with

everyone simultaneously passing one card to the player on their left."

I love passing games. We often play something called Hoky Pokey in which you get seven cards, and pass two to the left, and one to the right. Then you toss two cards into the middle and it's Roll Your Own (Five Card Stud with the players choice as to what comes up first). Another one I've devised is called Second Best. Everyone (no more than 5) gets ten cards, and pass two to the left and two to the right. Then you make two hands out of them, and turn them up one card at a time. But the best hand of the two does not count, the second best is your actual hand!!

One of the best Poker variants I've heard of in a long time comes from Steve Langley: I'll let him explain it and comment upon it:

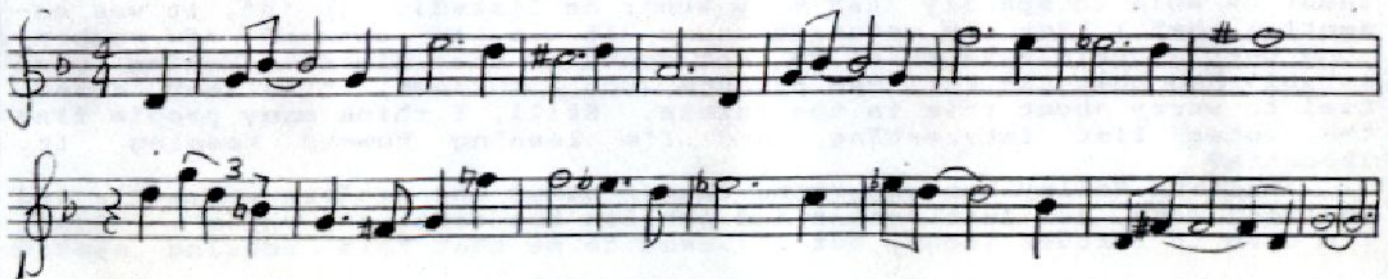
"A couple months ago you wrote an article on Poker. I don't have any specific variants for you--you listed all the games I've ever played and then some. I do have a game for you though. It is a sort of meta-game. We called it "Poor-Boy Poker." Essentially, you play whatever games you choose to play but the stakes are changed. Assign arbitrary value to your chips for relative betting as you choose. Keep track of the bank as you issue stacks of chips. At any point, anyone can call for more chips from the bank. Keep a good record. Either set a fixed time limit or be good friends. I prefer the former.

"When the time limit is up, you settle up. I did forget to mention that you set a limit on what can be lost. We played for 50 cents one night. That is, maximum loss was 50 cents. You count up your chips and measure against the bank records. The big loser always loses the maximum amount. The other losers losses are pro-rated to the maximum, as are wins. Now this may sound like a lot of work for very little gain--a limited loss, but it is actually a very stimulating game or meta-game.

"Suppose A, B, and C are playing and C is -100, B is -10, and A is +110. [I'll explain just a bit here: if the game were concluded now, C would be down 50 cents, B would lose 5 cents, and A would win 55 cents.] At this point, A's goal is to lose 90 units to C without changing B's holdings. That would leave A at +20, with both B and C -10; A wins twice the set amount. We often found ourselves in a small loss situation, ganging up on the big loser while the winner tried to bail him out.

"It takes a couple of evenings to get everyone to understand the strategy, but then it becomes a very challenging meta-game."

I see a multitude of advantages in all this. The greatest of these is that you can play a fun game of Poker without any chance of anyone leaving in debt, by setting a maximum loss that everyone can handle. Another advantage is that you could play a round of this, settle up, and then start another one if the players liked it enough to continue. Another excellent use for it would be if you have a few newcomers who aren't yet used to the house rules and Poker-variants commonly played in your game: play an hour of this, and then start the real game. Thanks for a great suggestion, Steve!



POLL TALK!

by BRUX LINSEY

...in which hobbyists can read what's in store for their Runestone Poll in '86!

First off, I have an important announcement. Pat Conlon has informed me that he'll not be able to repeat as my assistant next year, so the position is open -- write me if you're interested. Ideally, my assistant in running the Poll should be a non-GMing non-publisher who is willing to do a bit of hard work next June and July. S/he must be someone with good mathematical skills, and able to keep ballots in strict confidence. Someone who is as interested as I am in making the '86 Runestone Poll even more successful than the '85 model. Any volunteers?

As far as changes to the Poll's procedure are concerned, I have only decided definitely on one change so far, and that pertains to awards in the subzine category. Starting next year, the Gary L. Coughlan Award will not be awarded to subzines, and the score required for an honorable mention in that category will be raised to 7.500 instead of 7.000.

Several potential changes have been proposed to me. Fred Davis suggests that zines which have folded prior to February of the year of the poll should not be eligible. This is a fairly major change. It seems to me that there might be a practical problem: I'm not always aware of whether a given zine has folded (in fact, in the case of certain irregular publications, sometimes no one knows!). So I'd like further input, but at present I'm leaning towards keeping the current policy of anything-published-in-the-past-year is eligible. (I'll probably have some hard-and-fast decisions, based on comments received, by New Years.)

Next question: should I continue to allow (and even solicit) votes over the phone? My own feeling is that this can only help increase the turnout (I even had a few people tell me this year that they were glad I called because they just hadn't gotten around to sending in their ballots), so I'm leaning toward keeping the policy. But some responsible hobbyists, such as Fred Davis and Alan Stewart, have written in disagreement. I'm not sure why ballots should have to be sent any more than a GM must require orders to be sent in -- it seems to me that if Joe Blow thinks Europa Express is worth a "9", then the medium by which he tells me this doesn't make any difference. Steve Hutton has pointed out to me that there's always a risk factor in accepting phoned votes, but there are ways to deal with that problem without absolutely disallowing them. To me, a more persuasive argument is that the Runestone Poll must take every precaution (especially these days, sigh...) of not only being impeccably run, but looking impeccably run as well. A related question is whether I should accept written ballots given to me in person at cons -- HummusCon and MaryCon were worth 17 votes this year. I see even less problem with that than with phoned votes.

Should I continue to list the voters? Again, I like the status quo; however, Chris Carrier feels that voters should be anonymous (or at least be able to specify that they won't be listed). In '85, it was essential that I list the voters because 265 was an unheard of number; some people would have tried to cast doubt on that figure. Having once established that the Poll can produce such a turnout, it is less essential to worry about this in the future. Still, I think many people find the voter list interesting, and I'm leaning toward keeping it. Thoughts?

Melinda Holley has suggested that I scrap the preference matrix and modified mean, and just "count and publish the total of votes". Again I'm open to further input, but it seems to me that this scoring system

would give an undue advantage to high-circulation zines -- a zine receiving 50 "2"s would beat out one receiving 10 "9"s, which sort of demolishes the whole point of the zero to the scale. Besides, what would become of my 1000+ line COBOL program if we tell it "no more pref matrix or modified mean"?!

Several people have criticized the pages and pages of preference matrix material as being boring, and I agree; but as pointed out in Hobbytalk the purpose of this section is for reference, so I figure we'll keep it. On the other hand, Chris Carrier wants me to extend the pref matrix to include subzines and GMs. While this would be interesting for some, I don't think that subzines and GMs receive enough votes per capita to make the figures terribly meaningful.

The awards and certificates seemed to meet with universal approval, so I'll see what I can do to keep that process alive. I've applied for funding through the PDO Auction to help cover my costs in printing the certificates.

Another criticism raised by Bob Olsen has been that a large number of "burnouts, marginal players, and unknowns" cast votes in 1985. My own opinion is that all hobbyists should be allowed to vote, and so I plan to keep the same criterion for voting eligibility (that the voter should have participated in the hobby during the polling period). To restrict it any further than that, it seems to me, would be too elitist. Again, though, your opinions are solicited.

The '85 Poll was successful enough to persuade at least two previously uninterested publishers (Conrad von Metzke and Dave Kleiman) to give it coverage in their zines, so I'm looking forward to even more publicity next year, and hopefully another large voter turnout. Comments, public or private, are welcome.

Thanks to Bruce McIntyre for giving space in XL to this important topic. And thanks to everyone who's been concerned enough to submit constructive input so far.

Thanks Brux, I hope you don't mind if I make some comments on the above. I'd rather see the actual letters involved than just a recap of what was said in such a report, but since I asked you to hold it to a few pages, I guess that was probably the reason the letters were cut.

I remember offering to act as assistant number two last year, but if you think I'm going to do so now, you're dead wrong! Reason: no time!! Let this be a warning (even if oft repeated) to would be publishers: it's much easier at issue #1 than just a few months down the road!

Folding zines should get their Final Judgement, so to speak, in the Runestone Poll. But I'd be sure to caution the readers that folded zines usually do very well, or very poorly, the results generally reeking of either regret for their demise or vengeance for a "bad fold". I think perhaps changing the polling period gradually to January-December might be better than the "fiscal year"-type thing we have now. Then the eligible period would be a simple matter for those who aren't sure if that excellent (or horrendous) issue of Zine QXZ occurred in the polling period or not.

I think you ought to accept phoned votes. For me this year, a phoned vote would have been infinitely better, as I was seeing many more zines at the end of the polling period than I was at the time I sent in my ballot. (Perhaps this problem could be avoided in future by making the polling period include the month following the eligible period.) What I think you ought not to do is phone up people who have not voted. It's quite obvious why: unless you phone up everybody, there's certain to be a stink about just why Brux didn't want Mr XXX's vote, etc. If you're willing to spend that kind of money on the poll, I think a mass-mailing to those who've not got ballots in three weeks before the deadline might be in order. (If you *really* want to go all out, send

SASE's: sending them to everyone would be fair, and get you probably as many as you got by phone in '85.) To conclude my comments on the most controversial aspect of the '85 poll, I think you should allow votes by phone: but only if people phone you.

The voters list is OK by me, but perhaps you should think about letting people go anonymous if they so wish (though of course their names would have to appear on their ballots.) But if you do, I'd also put in some data showing the results of the anonymous ballots only--might be, as Arte Johnson says, verrrrrrrrrry interesting!

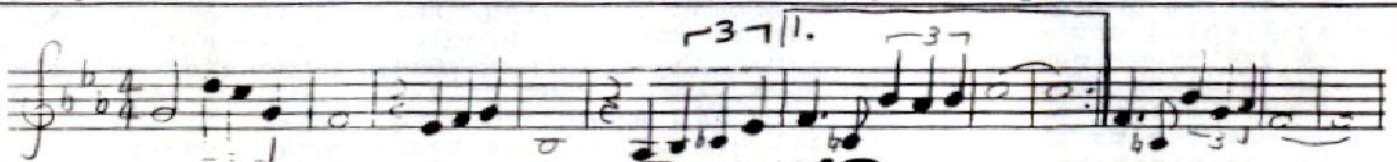
I didn't find the preference matrix too boring, though of course I didn't read it all (which reminds me of the story of the man whose feeling about the telephone directory is that it has "too many characters and not enough plot") and did not take the results too seriously: in other words, I didn't phone up, say, Larry Peery, and inform him I'd beaten him 4 to 3 on 11 ballots. But, although, unlikely, I think a zine that wins all it's matchups 5-4 should get a better score than one who wins them by scores of 11-1, 23-2, etc. Perhaps XL's score should reflect its total record of (if my calculations are correct) 418-128-108. Or perhaps that should be a raw score, to be adjusted so that the ranges are 0-10.

A new suggestion for next year, Brux: print the order of finish under the old system (without the preference score). There are a lot of old-timers who want to see how they'd have finished under just the modified mean as it used to be. By the way, I'm not one of them.

A lot of low-profile Dipsters did cast votes in 1985: you can't fault Bob Olsen for that comment, because he's absolutely right. Was the poll adversely affected? I think not, mostly due to the 50% effect of the preference matrix. The pref score gave greater weight to the ballots of voters who receive many zines: in fact, it should be obvious that the 46 voters who voted for but one zine had no effect on any preference scores at all! If we call anyone who has less than seven marks on his zine-poll ballot a "low-profile Dipster", it turns out that their votes influenced 654 matchups, while the total number of recorded matchups was 21,743! What this means is that the so-called "marginals" combined effect on the preference score was almost exactly three percent. This from over 63% of the voters. Their effect on the modified mean wasn't all that great either: the same 63% cast less than 22% of the total number of votes. So this 63% of "marginal players", and I think anybody who gets five or six zines would object to that title, had a (shocking!) net effect of just over 12%! While the 37% of voters receiving seven or more zines affected the result to the tune of 87%. The suggestion that this is a poll decided by nobodies is thus pure bull.

One of those nobodies was Nancy Hurrell, who has been criticized by Steve Langley for voting because she wasn't a hobby member, despite the fact that she is in two games in Conference Call, and had seen copies of XL before even coming out here. Even while here she had been living here for over a month of the polling period, during which time she took an avid interest in my large collection of zines. So don't try to tell me she's "a person who ... had no connection with DipDom during the polling period," Mr Langley: I'm afraid you're dead wrong there. I know because two issues of XL came out before the poll that wouldn't have been on time without her help.

You can send your comments and suggestions on the Runestone Poll to either me or Brux. After all, you wouldn't want to have a "Brux responds to McBruce" exclusive next time, now, would you?



THE XL HOCKEY TEAM?

After the success of last April/May's Conference Call Hockey Pool, the CC regulars were all clamouring for a pool over the regular season. This is the story.

The average hockey pool is quite simple. Sometime in early October, you get together and pick players for your pool team. At this meeting everyone puts in money and the method of splitting it up at the end of the season is decided. 90% of the hockey pools are run the same way. The winner is the player whose NHLers get the most points over the season. We figured that this was silly. What fun is there in drafting if you have to wait six months to find out how well you did? One thing we did in last years pool was encourage trading. This year we tried a new approach.

The emphasis was that this new approach was for not a hockey pool but rather a hockey league. Teams of NHLers picked by us would play against each other, and the result would be based upon one week of NHL games. The concept seemed interesting, but the first proposal was rather far-fetched. The second proposal proved more successful though, and the thing was started.

Each team in our league now has twelve players. Of these, eight are selected each week for your lineup. The scoring is the same for all players: two points for a goal, one for an assist, and one point for each two minutes in penalties. (Yes, a misconduct is worth two goals and an assist!) There are two rules which serve as catches. One is the Goon Rule, which nullifies points gained from penalties if a player has not gotten a goal or an assist in that week. The other is to keep teams balanced, so that a Gretzky doesn't throw the whole league out of whack by scoring 200 goals. The 8-1 rule says that no player may be credited with more than eight times the total of the lowest player on the team (If a player is shutout, we do allow up to eight points.). The average team will have three of its twelve players get zero or one point. Picking the nine good ones is very difficult!

The other features of the league include a six-team playoffs on the results of the NHL playoffs at the end of the season (two teams out of the eight are knocked out after the regular season). The playoffs is where the money is. Finishing first in the regular season gets you \$30, and the yearly fee is \$25. But if you win in the playoffs, it's worth \$90. Also, every two weeks each team protects ten of their twelve players and there is a re-entry draft at which those players and all untaken NHLers are eligible. We also decided to call any game in which the trailing player was eight or less behind a tie for the standings.

So, we all trooped over to Grant's place one Sunday and had a whale of a time drafting players. This is always the highlight of any hockey pool: listening to the "tips", jokes, and bad picks for two hours. There's always one guy who gets a laugh no matter who he picks. Several of us had made lists of 96 (8 teams times 12 players) players who we felt we should take: I made the mistake of basing mine on the current season. I was lucky enough to get first pick, and unlucky enough to be deluded by the scoring for penalty minutes to choose Tiger Williams. Grant, who had drawn second pick, immediately took Gretzky. I am currently in seventh spot with my team, called, of course the Excelsiors. However, I'm tied for third, as two teams are 1-0-2, and five are either 1-1-1, or 0-0-3 (like me). The Excelsiors have not beaten any opponents totals yet, but that "within eight to tie" rule is coming in very handy. And an important win looks like a good possibility this week, with the 'Cels ahead 31-12 after Thursday's games. I'll keep you posted.

excelsior

My MOVE/YOUR MOVE

No. 9

CHESS

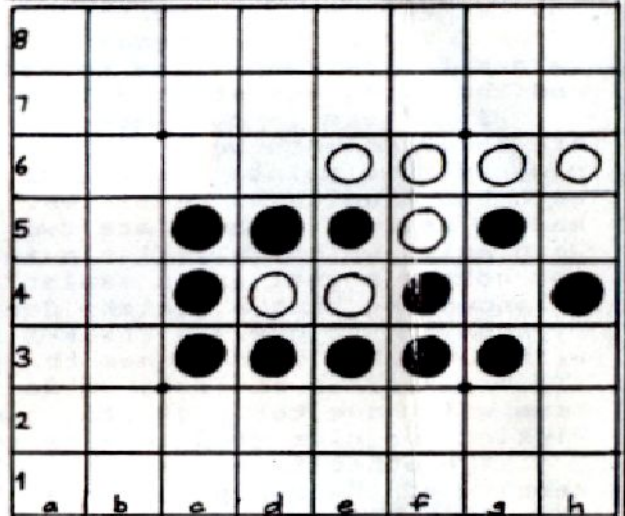
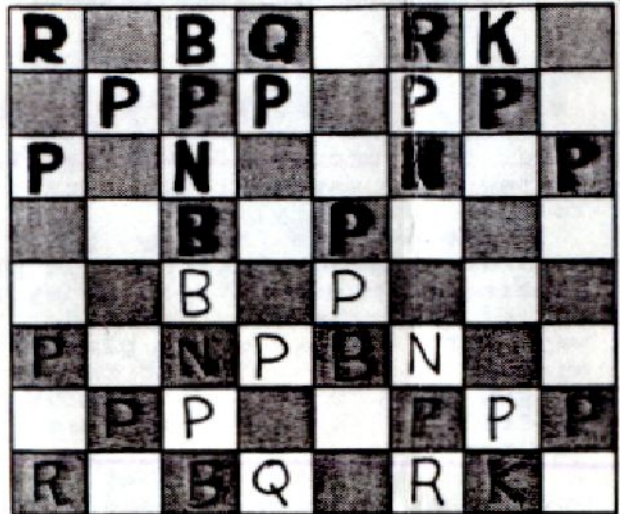
WHITE (me)	BLACK (you)
1. P-K4	P-K4
2. N-KB3	N-KB3
3. B-B4	N-B3
4. N-B3	B-B4
5. O-O	O-O
6. P-Q3	P-KR3
7. P-QR3	P-QR3
8. B-K3	???

Wallace Nicoll (1) and Conrad Minshall (6) scored this time, with Bill Becker voting R-K1, and Ron Krukowski voting to push the pawn a square further with P-QR4. Leader is Conrad Minshall with 6, Ron Krukowski has 3, Ken Corbin and Brian Lorber have 2.

OTHELLO

	BLACK (me)	WHITE (you)
1.	f4	f3
2.	e3	f5
3.	f6	d3
4.	c3	c4
5.	g5	h6
6.	h4	g6
7.	c5	e6
8.	g3	???

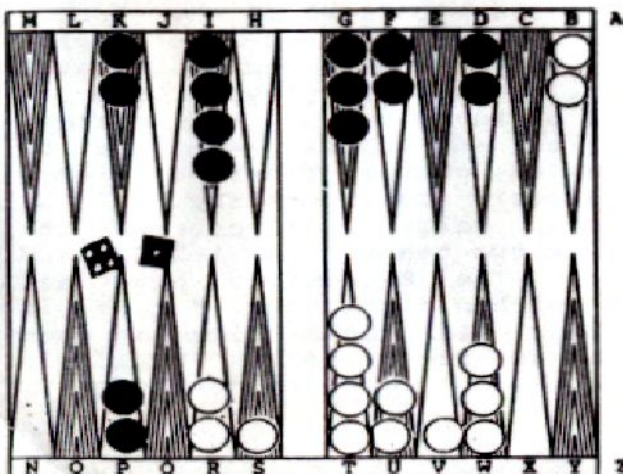
Bill Becker (6) and Ron Krukowski (3) formed the majority this time. Other votes were f7 (Wallace Nicoll), and g4 (Conrad Minshall). Leader is Bill Becker with 6, followed by Krukowski, Minshall, and Ken Corbin all with 3.



BACHGAMMON

	WHITE (me)	BLACK (you)
roll	move	roll
1.	6-3 MP MS	3-2 N-I
2.	3-2 RU SU	6-3 Y-P'
3.	1-1 A-D TU	5-3 ID' GD
4.	6-4 A-K	3-1 IF GF
5.	6-2 KQ MO	6-3 Y-P
6.	6-1 QW RS	5-3 NI NK
7.	5-5 OT RW MR	5-3 NI NK
8.	3-1 TW UV	4-1 ???

Ron Krukowski (4) and Bill Becker (6) scored this time. The other suggestions were KF IF from Wallace Nicoll, and PK IF from Conrad Minshall. Leader is Bill Becker with 6; Ron Krukowski and Conrad Minshall have 4, with Kevin Brown, Jeff Richmond, Ken Corbin and Mike Barno all tied at 3. What happened to the rest of the regulars this time???



MENSA 17 STATS & STATEMENTS

Following are the statistics and only endgame statement I have received for the Mensa 17 game run to conclusion here:

Boardman No: 83V

GMs and zines: Steve Hutton/No Fixed Address (to Winter 1908), Bruce McIntyre/Excelsior (to Fall 1910 conclusion).

AUSTRIA: Richard Benjamin (dro W01), Mike Ehli (out F09).

ENGLAND: Roy Smith (dro S02), Randal Husk (dro F05), Kevin Brown (out F10).

FRANCE: Windy Windblad (dro F03), John Ellis (sur F10).

GERMANY: Ron (Canada) Brown (WINS F10).

ITALY: Errol Platt (dro S04), Dave Carter (out F08).

RUSSIA: Larry Rystrom (res F01), Al Hoffman (dro S03), Dave Lincoln (sur F10).

TURKEY: Keith Sesler (dro F05), Paul Milewski (sur F10).

SUPPLY CENTRE CHART

	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	
AUSTRIA:	4	4	4*	4*	4*	3	3	1	0		
ENGLAND:	4*	4	5*	5*	4	3	2	1	0		
FRANCE:	5	5	4	3	4	4	5	4	3	2	
GERMANY:	5	7	7	8	9*	10*	11	14	15	18	WINS!!
ITALY:	4	5	4	3	2	2	1	0			
RUSSIA:	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	
TURKEY:	5	6	7	8*	8	9	9	11	12	13	

* - played one short

ENDGAME STATEMENTS

Ron (Canada) Brown [Winner, Germany]: It was not my intention to play in this game, so I was rather surprised to get a standby call in 1901 and then to get the position. I was very overworked at the time, both within the hobby and in that other world, so I didn't put near the effort I usually put into games into this one right from the beginning. I had never played Germany before, but the principles of playing any country are the same: fight one other country at a time.

France, for some reason, decided to ignore England and go after Italy. That made my task all the easier, as it meant one neighbour I didn't have to worry about. And Dave Lincoln, playing Russia, had problems with Turkey right from the beginning, so that left one obvious choice for who I was going to pick on first. I was also curious to see how Germany played as a sea power, as I much prefer sea battles to land ones. So, I began building fleets every opportunity I had. England convoyed an army to St. Petersburg, then moved it up behind my lines. If he had help from France that might have made sense, but I could afford to ignore that army, even when it took Berlin, as I had builds coming from poorly defended English home centres. Russia twice moved in my direction, at England's urging I suppose, but it was easy to convince him to pull back both times, especially as he did not have the strength to carry through against me with Turks sitting in his southern regions.

Once England was Hopelessly crippled it was a simple matter of grabbing all of France, who was still battling Italy and ignoring his own home country. At that point I counted dots and picked the remaining

centres I needed for the win. It looked for a while as though Turkey were going to give me a battle, but it never materialized. I attacked Galicia a few times to prevent, or slow, Turkey's taking of it, and was astounded when I kept ending up there. Even more amazing is that Turkey never attempted to annihilate that unit and hold Galicia for himself.

All in all, a strange game. I don't understand why France chose to leave his home country wide open. We never had any deal or understanding. Or why Turkey didn't defend against my win. There were a few times he could have punched through and caused me problems. For a while I thought a two-way German-Turkey draw would be the likely outcome. Well never look a gift horse, etc., or count your blessings... I was given the win by the other players. All I had to do was decide each year what centres to take.

Thanks to both Steve and Bruce who did a fine job of GMing despite the constant frustration of NMRs and drops. I'd have no hesitation about signing up for other games with either one, though I think I'll need to get Bruce to explain his supply centre charts again. I wasn't sure what I owned the last few seasons, though I must have gotten the count right. And thanks to all those who stuck it out to the end. I'm sure some of the standbys must have been as baffled by this game as I was, but, there you have it. Thanks guys!

Bruce McIntyre (Substitute Head Maestro Anarchist GM while Steve was in the real Europe!): I'd like to thank Steve for giving me a chance to see what GMing duties are like when a game gets to its last legs, and Ron for his kind words. Fifteen people in this game from start to finish, and I only know of eight of them. Can you tell I'm a newcomer?

I did receive a note of thanks from Paul Milewski, and surprisingly, a gamestart application. Quite frankly, the way I mismapped everything in the last few seasons, I'm surprised to be getting these accolades: thanks in return. Ron's win came as quite a surprise to me, but only because I trusted him too much! In an aside to me with his orders, he said it'd take another few seasons. But lo and behold, when I made the count Germany did have 18 centres. It must have been quite a peculiar game in the early going, with Austria and England playing one short 60% of the time, and so many player changes. And I hope to hear from Dave on just *how* he managed to fight for this survival: three centres for eight years in a row must be some sort of a record!

Good Lord, almost forgot: I've a confession to make! You know, I'm not even a member of Mensa at all! Although I sure feel like one with all the material Fred Davis has been sending me--perhaps someday I'll be sitting down at a table racking what little brains I have to answer those entrance exam brain-busters, but for now I'm up to my brain in Dip, Dip, more Dip, and a few other things as well. (When the level rises to my neck, well, then, maybe it's time to get out.....)

CHRISTMAS CHEER Part Six

Miss Aberdeen McHolstein
69 Cash Avenue
Beaver Valley, Colorado

December 19, 1985.

Dear John,

When I opened the door there were actually Six Geese A-Laying on my front steps. So you're back to the birds again huh? Those geese are huge. Where will I ever keep them? The neighbours are complaining, and I can't sleep through the racket.

Please stop.

Cordially,

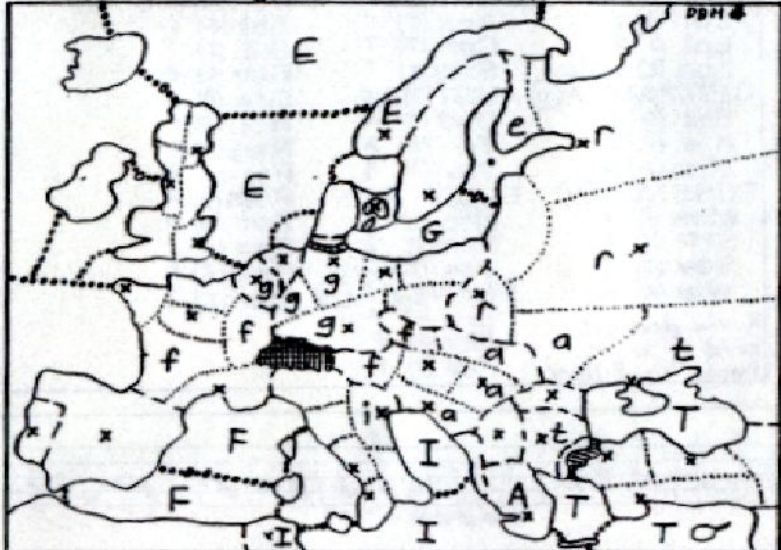
Aberdeen.

ALBINONI

OOPS!

LET'S TRY THAT AGAIN

ALBINONI-readjudication 1985 AA post Fall 1902



ALBINONI Dramatis Personae

GM: Bruce McIntyre, 6191 Winch St., Burnaby B.C., V5B 2L4

ENG: Bill Shirley, 618 Main St., Yarmouth NS, B5A 1J9

GER: Charles Arsenault, 4490 St. Kevin#7, Montreal PQ, H3Y 1H9

RUS: Kevin Brown, 100 Patton Dr., Warner Robins GA, USA 31093

TUR: Melinda Holley, P.O. Box 2793, Huntington WV, USA 25727

AUS: Michael Ditz, 5785 Danube Way#C, Orlando FL, USA 32807

ITA: Steve Dycus, 3450 Koring Rd., Evansville IN, USA 47712

FRA: Ron Krukowski, 5339 W. Eddy, Chicago IL, USA 60641

Summer 1902 Retreats: **FRA:** A Mun r Boh, **ENG:** A Swe r Fin,
RUS: A Ukr r War

NEXT DEADLINE (Winter 02-Spring 03) is Friday, November 8 1985--one day earlier if phoned in.

ALBINONI 1985AA Fall 1902 Orders

ENGLAND A Fin-StP, F Nth-Nwy, F Nrg S F Nth-Nwy, F Lon-Nth
GERMANY NMR! A Kie S, A Ruh S, A Mun S, A Bel S, F Bal S
RUSSIA A War-Ukr, A Mos-Ukr, A StP S F Nwy, F Nwy*skips stones in the Skag (Holds)
TURKEY NMR! F Bla S, A Bul S, F EMe S, F Aeg S
AUSTRIA A Tri H, A Bud S A Tri, F Gre S Tur F Aeg-Ion [no such order],
A Gal-Vie, A Ukr S A Gal-Vie [Impossible]
ITALY A Tun H, F Ion-TyS, A Ven-Tri, F Adr S A Ven-Tri
FRANCE A Boh-Vie, A Pic-Tyo, A Pic-Bel, A Spa-Gas, F GoL-TyS, F MAO-WHE

PRESS:

GM: As you can all see, this is a readjudication. We have two specific problems: the English orders I recieved by telephone were not used (they included a retreat for A Swe), and the English move F Lon-Nth was way off course on the map last time, giving Ron Krukowski fits as it appeared in the English Channel mistakenly!! There are also changes in the supply centre chart as a result of the extra English unit. As for the two NMRs, they will have to stay, as Charles never did get any orders in, and Melinda's arrived as I expected the Monday after the deadline. (in a way that's too bad, because although we are definitely blessed with the West Virginia Diplomacy Queen's presence in this game, the appointed stand-by, Larry Peery, told me he has some great gossip on good old Tomaso Albinoni!) I have orders on file from everyone except Bill and Steve for the next season, and of course you may change them in

light of these new developments.

One retreat next time: *RUS*: F Nwy r (Ska, Swe, Bar, OTB)

Moscow-Maestro: OK, I'll ignore the map.

Vienna: Hyster being at the ripe old age of lucky 13 and being an Austrian National has been arrested. He is now in Galicia working in a labor camp.

Burgundy: French peasants watched with interest as their German neighbors held manoevers this week. It is not known at present how long these manoevers will last.

Paris-Vienna: Thanks for the invitation!

Supplies OWNERSHIP OF CENTRES

GAME: ALBINONI-85 AA

post-FALL 1902 (readjudicated)

ENGLAND +	TURKEY 5	NEUTRALS 1
Edi (E) E	Ank (T) T	Bel (G) G
Lpl (E) E	Con (T) T	Bul (T) T
Lon (E) E	Smy (T) T	Den (G) G
GERMANY 4 (+)	AUSTRIA 5	Gre (A) A
Ber (G) G	Bud (A) A	Hol (G) G
Kie (G) G	Tri (A) A	Nwy (E) E
Mun (F) G	Vie (A) A	Por (F) F
RUSSIA 4 (+)	ITALY +	Rum (A) A
Mos (R) R	Nap (I) I	Ser (N) N
StP (R) R	Rom (D) I	Spa (F) F
Sev (T) T	Ven (I) I	Swe (R) R
War (A) R	FRANCE 5 (-)	Tun (I) I
Russia does not build if he retreats his F Nwy	Bre (F) F	
	Mar (F) F	
	Par (F) F	



CHRISTMAS CHEER Part Seven

Miss Aberdeen M^cHolstein
69 Cash Avenue
Beaver Valley, Colorado

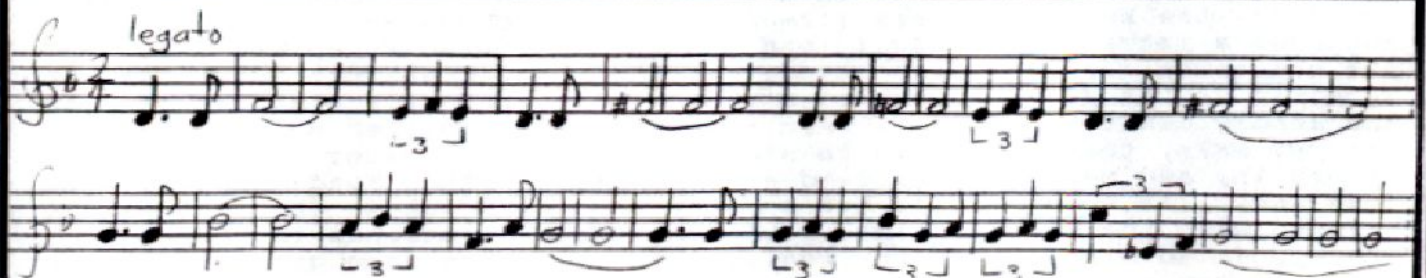
December 20, 1985.

John:

What's with you and those fucking birds? Seven Swans A-Swimming. What kind of god damn joke is this? There's bird shit all over the house, and they never stop with the racket. I can't sleep at night, and I'm a nervous wreck. It's not funny, so stop with those fucking birds.

Sincerely,

Aberdeen.



BEETHOVEN

FRANCE UNLOCKS BACK DOOR ENGLAND NOT HOME

BEETHOVEN Dramatis Personae

GM: Bruce McIntyre, 6191 Winch St., Burnaby BC, V5B 2L4

ENG: Mitch Wageler, 3623 School Ave, Vancouver BC, Canada V5R 5N6

GER: Mike Barno, 2811 Robins St., Endwell NY, USA 13760

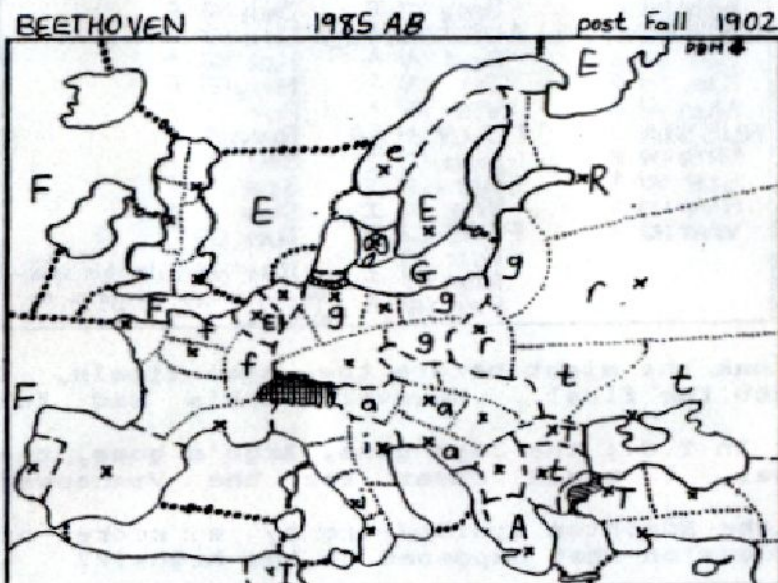
RUS: Pierre Touchette, 1 rue Georges, Masson PQ, J0X 2H0

TUR: Alan Stewart, 702-25 St. Mary St., Toronto ON, M4Y 1R2

AUS: Robert Acheson, c/o Echo Bay Mines, Lupin NWT, X0E 1M0

ITA: Melinda Holley, P.O. Box 2793, Huntington WV, USA 25727

FRA: Steve Cooley, 3551 Casamia Ave, Palmsdale CA, USA 93550



NEXT DEADLINE (Winter 1902/- Spring 1903), through the miracle of procrastination, is Friday January 10--one day earlier if phoned in.

BEETHOVEN 1985AB Fall 1902 Orders

ENGLAND F Nrg-Bar, F Nth C A Edi-Nwy, F Swe S Ger F Den-Bal, F Eng-Bel, A Edi-Nwy
 GERMANY F Den-Bal, A Boh-Sil, A Pru-Lva, A Ber-Pru, A Kie-Mun
 RUSSIA A Gal-War, A Ukr-Mos, F GoB-StP
 TURKEY A Sev-Ukr, A Arm-Sev, A Bul S F Rum, F Rum H, F Bla-Con
 AUSTRIA F Gre-Ion, A Tri-Tyr, A Vie S A Tri-Tyr, A Bud-Tri
 ITALY A Tyr*Mun, A Ven-Tyr, A Rom-Ven, F Tun-Ion
 FRANCE F Bre-Eng, F MAO-NAO, F Spa-MAO, A Gas-Bur, A Bur-Pic

PRESS:

GM: As I expected, Melinda's orders got here the Monday following the deadline, so you can't really blame her for Canada Post's filing system. Perhaps they should call it Canada Moving...and Storage.

Retreat for next time: ITA A Tyr r (Pie, Tus, Apu, OTB)

Moscow-Maestro: How do draws figure in your odds? What about giving me 6-1?

Maestro: Sure, if you can name all the countries in the draw (including yourself, of course) and no others. Before the next deadline.

Dieppe-London: GREAT move into the Channel! Sure "proved" that no triple exists. I hope you'll take my moves in the same spirit.

Paris-Moscow: Writing novels would probably not save you now, but try it anyway.

Paris-Budapest: Feeling crowded?

Budapest-Bohemia: What are you doing there & how fast can you get out?

Budapest-Tyrolia: It's bad enough to have you there, now I've got some idiot in Bohemia.

Budapest-Ankara: I think that I'm going to have to go against the grain and start writing.

Budapest-Paris: Decision time, which way to go?

Budapest-Moscow: I'd say that you're about the only player who's in more trouble than me!

Lion-Argo: What happened to your team? Grey Cup prediction: BC over Montreal by 6.

Maestro: Since I have Montreal and BC in the M^cIntyre/Acheson CFL bet (he has the rest of the CFL, and the Cup winner gets \$10, the loser \$5), I should thank you for the kind words, but sitting here half drunk the night before the semi-finals, I doubt either team will make it to the final. However, Bob's sad for another reason....

Budapest-GM: This is a sad year in T.O.; the Jays gone, Argo's gone, the Leaf's going. It could be worse. I could cheer for the Vancouver have-nots.

Maestro: Who have just lost to the Edmonton Spoiled-ers by a score of 13-0, believe it or not. Any ideas on what happened to the Argos???

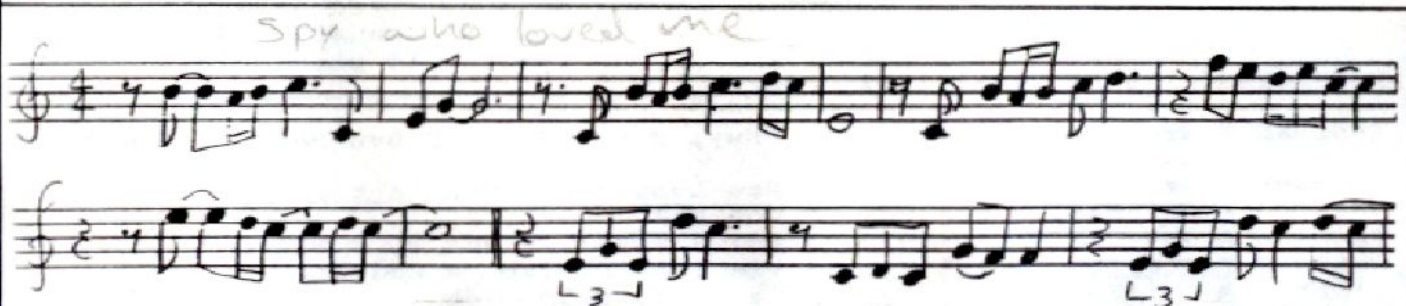
Supplies OWNERSHIP OF CENTRES

GAME: BEETHOVEN 1985 AB

post-FALL 1902

ENGLAND 6 (+)	TURKEY 6 (+)	NEUTRALS 0
Edl (E) E	Ank (T) T	Bel (E) E
Lpl (E) E	Con (T) T	Bul (T) T
Lon (E) E	Smy (T) T	Den (G) G
GERMANY 5	AUSTRIA 5 (+)	Gre (A) A
Ber (G) G	Bud (A) A	Hol (G) G
Kie (G) G	Tri (A) A	Nwy (E) E
Mun (G) G	Vie (R) A	Por (F) F
RUSSIA 3	ITALY 4 (+)	Rum (R) T
Mos (R) R	Nap (I) I	Ser (A) A
StP (R) R	Rom (I) I	Spa (E) F
Sev (T) T	Ven (I) I	Swe (N) E
War (R) R	FRANCE 5	Tun (I) I
	Bre (F) F	
	Mar (F) F	
	Par (F) F	

IF ITALY retreats his dis-lodged army, he gets no build.



CHRISTMAS CHEER Part Eight

Miss Aberdeen M^cHolstein
69 Cash Avenue
Beaver Valley, Colorado

December 21, 1985.

Okay Buster:

I think I prefer the birds. What the hell am I going to do with Eight Maids A-Milking? It's not enough with all those birds and maids a-milking, but they had to bring their goddamn cows. There's shit all over the lawn, and I can't move in my own house. What are you doing to me? Just lay off me, smart-ass!

COPLAND

ITALY CHANGES ORDERS GM MISSES CHANGE

COPLAND Dramatis Personae

ENG: Charles Arsenault, Voie Du Car D'Or 2/102, 1348 Louvain-La-Neuve, BELGIUM

GER: Alan Stewart, 702-25 St Mary St. Toronto ON Canada M4Y 1R2

RUS: Sean McGonigle, 44B Kelvin Rd., Papakura NEW ZEALAND

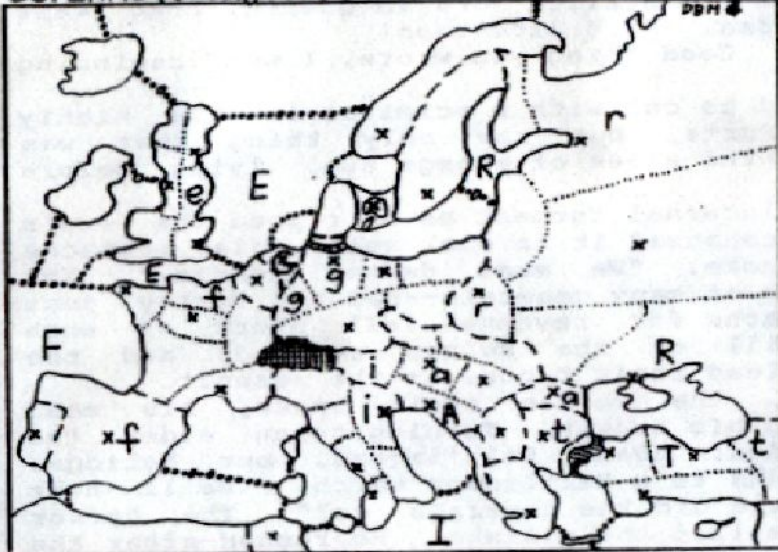
TUR: Travis Laster, 125 Garden Court, Winchester VA, USA 22601

AUS: Melinda Holley, P.O. Box 2793, Huntington WV, USA 25727

ITA: Jeff Albrecht, P.O. Box 295, Doland SD, USA 57346

FRA: Ben Schilling, 24730 Roosevelt Ct., Apt 315, Farmington Hills MI, USA 48018

COPLAND (revised) 1985 CG post Spring 1901



Deadline for Fall 1901 is Wednesday January 15, 1986, under our 7 1/2 week deadlines. One day earlier if phoned in, as usual.

COPLAND 1985CG Spring 1901 Orders (corrected)

ENGLAND F Lon-Eng, F Edi-Nth, A Lpl-Yor
 GERMANY F Kie-Hol, A Ber-Kie, A Mun-Ruh
 RUSSIA F StP-GoB, A Mos-StP, F Sev-Bla, A War-Gal
 TURKEY A Con-Bul, F Ank-Bla, A Smy-Arm
 AUSTRIA A Bud-Rum, A Vie-Gal, F Tri H
 ITALY A Ven-Tyr, A Rom-Ven, F Nap-Ion
 FRANCE A Par-Pic, A Mar-Spa, F Bre-MAO

PRESS:

GM: This game has been delayed due to extreme errors all 'round, though most of the fault lies with me, I'm afraid. The first problem is that Charles moved, and did not tell me so: a few of you eventually did, but when at first only one of you did, I decided to take the "COA" with a grain of salt, in the spirit of Diplomacy. After all, it would surely occur to Charles to tell me of such a move early enough so that I could be ready for it.

The next problem was a beauty. Jeff Albrecht sent a concerned letter informing me that I'd used the wrong set of orders, and proved it by noting that I'd changed his address throughout most (but not all!) of the zine: the COA was in with the later set of orders. But when I looked for the 2nd set of Italian orders, I couldn't find 'em! Finally, tonight, I got them from Jeff (with one hell of a lot of embarrassment) through a medium known as the telephone.

COPLAND continued

Finally, I forgot that our deadlines should have been longer than they were quoted in the original report. So, the above mistakes have been corrected, an issue has been added to all of your subs, and Spring 1901 has been redone above. The rest of this is precisely the same as what appeared last time.

GM: Two players sent me changes of orders without any indication that I was to print the press which appeared on the original set, so poof, they're gone!

London: Despite the fact that France and Germany are good friends of England, the government has decided that the English Channel and the North Sea will always be secured.

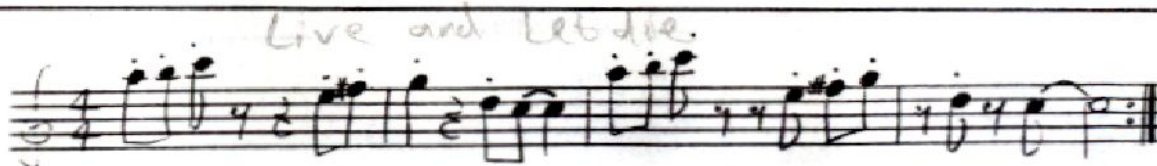
Maestro: It was this press item, and the fact that I vaguely recall from my high school French that "north" is spelled *Nord* in Quebec, that kept your F Edi out of the Norwegian Sea. *Fait attention!*

Constantinople-Vienna and Paris: Good thing you wrote, I was beginning to think this was a Gunboat game!

Constantinople: The tension could be cut with a scimitar in the highly domed room at the center of the Porte, but the only thing that was cleaved was the mutton hewn from the sides of a huge ewe, lying before the Sultan.

The Sultan, displaying his internal torment as he ripped the ewe's remaining eye from her head and consumed it in one gulp, his mustache twitching in pleasure, finally spoke: "We must defeat Russia." The words struck fear into the hearts of many generals--had not Turkey just lost the Crimean War? Even the ache for revenge fell short of such foolhardy audacity. But the will of the Sultan reigned, and the generals filed from the room to lead their troops in the assault.

As the last general left, the Sultan again spoke, his meal finished, now contentedly smoking his hookah. Turning to an aide, the Commander of the Faithful commanded: "Send Rolz'ingoud, our National Champion, to challenge the Russians to a Backgammon match. We'll beat the harem pants off 'em. And where did the generals go?" The horror grew on the aide's face as he realized the mistake. He rushed after the departed commanders, but it was too late; the orders had been given, the troops mobilized, the attacks launched. Turkey was forced to fight a war she did not want. Or did she?



CHRISTMAS CHEER Part Nine.

Miss Aberdeen McHolstein
69 Cash Avenue
Beaver Valley, Colorado

December 22, 1985.

Hey Shithead:

What are you? Some kind of sadist? Now there's Nine Pipers Playing. And Christ, do they play! They've never stopped chasing those maids since they got here yesterday morning. The cows are getting upset and they're stepping all over those screeching birds. What am I going to do? The neighbours have started a petition to evict me.

You'll get yours

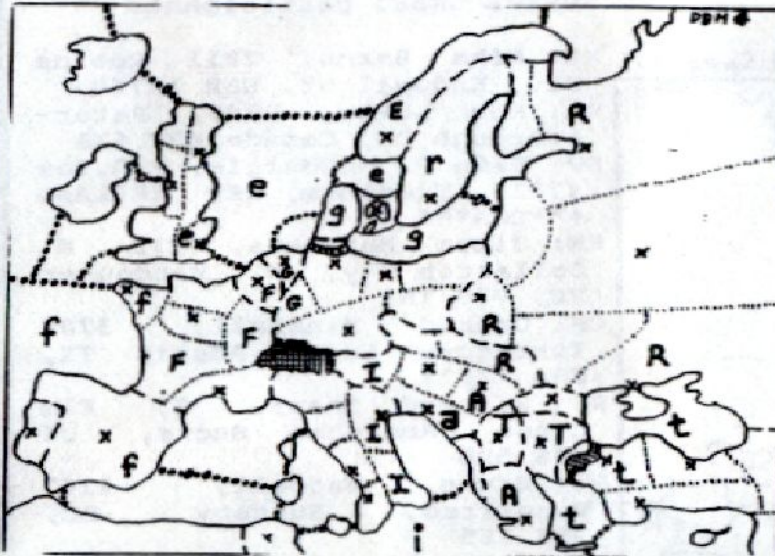
AUSTRIA SURROUNDED

DEBUSSY

85 WCH

Spring 02

DEBUSSY



GM: Mitchell Wageler 3263 School Ave
Vancouver, BC V5R 5N6
Phone: (604) 435-3299

B: Dennis Quine 55 Rosemoor Drive
Little Rock, ARK, 72209

G: Pierre Touche 1 Rue Georges,
Masson, P.Q. J0X 2H0

R: Alan Stewart 702 -25 St. Mary St.
Toronto, ON, M4Y 1R2

T: Ron Krukowski 5339 W. Eddy
Chicago, IL 60641

A: Randolph Smyth 119-70 Maryland St.
Winnipeg, MB R3C 1K7

I: Kevin Brown 100 Patton Drive
Warner Robbins, GA 31093

F: Bruce Waddell 4247 Winnifred St.
Burnaby, BC V5J 2S5

Moves - Spring 02

A: A GAL - RUM, A BUD SA GAL-RUM, A GRE - SER, F TRI - VEN
 F: A BEL S ENG F NTH - HOL (NSO), A PAR - BUR, F BRE -ENG, F POR - MAO, F MAR-SPA (SC),
 A SPA - GAS
 G: A RUM S A KIE - HOL, A KIE - HOL, F DEN S F BER - BAL, F BER - BAL,
 I: A VEN - TYR, A APU S A ROM - VEN, A ROM - VEN, F TUN - ION
 E: F SWE - BAL, A MOS - STP, A SEV - RUM, A UKR - GAL, A WAR S A UKR - GAL
 T: A FUN - SER, A BUL S A RUM - SER, F BAL S RS A SEV - RUM, F CON H, F SMY - AEG
 B: A NWY H, F LON - ENG, F NTH - SKA, F NRG - NTH

RETREATS: AUSTRIA A GAL (SIL, BOH, VIE OR OTS)

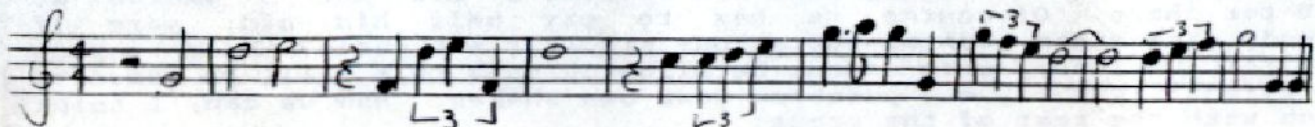
SPRING 02 RETREATS AND FALL MOVES DUE THE WEDNESDAY BEFORE THE ALBINONI DEADLINE. (Jan. 8)

COMMENTS:

- NO PRESS.

GM: There is freedom of the press in this game. More specifically I will (must) print as much of the press as I receive, even "black press". I did not restrict the press at the start of the game other than to limit to the space of this one page. So anything goes, except I will reserve the use of GM for me alone so as to avoid confusion.

GM: Let me ask all players to get their moves in early. It often takes letters from the US 14 days to get here. You can always change your moves later.



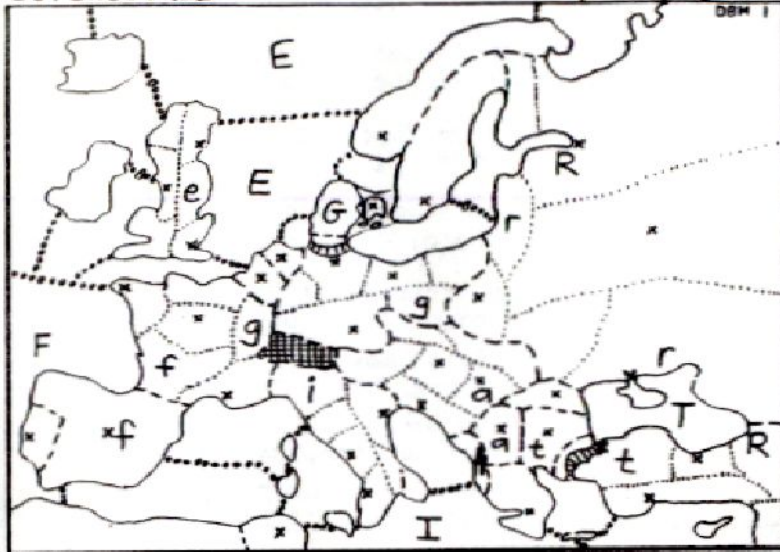
NEW RULE THWARTS SNAFU

BARNO GETS IN ON THE ACTION

SUPERBOURSE! participants

SUPERBOURSE

post Spring 1901



MB: Mike Barno, 2811 Robins St., Endwell NY, USA 13760

RL: Rob Lowes, RR#9, Peterborough ON, Canada K9J 6X1

SP: Sean P. McGonigle, P.O. Box 47015, Trentham, NEW ZEALAND
COA

SM: Simon Matthews, 432 N. Dollarton Hwy, N. Vancouver BC, V7G 1N1

CM: Conrad Minshall, 3702 Tarragona Lane, Austin TX, USA 78727

RS: Richard Sharp, 27 Elm Close, Amersham Bucks, UK HP6 5DD

BW: Bruce Waddell, 4247 Winnifred, Burnaby BC, V5J 2S5

MW: Mitchell Wageler, 3623 School Ave., Vancouver BC, Canada V5R 5N6

SUPERBOURSE! Spring 1901 Results

ENGLAND 2F Edi-Nrg, 2F Lon-Nth, 2A Lpl-Yor
GERMANY 22F Kie-Den, 29A Ber-Sil, 30A Mun-Bur
RUSSIA 6A War-Lva, 4F StP-Lva, 21F Sev-Arm, 3A Mos-Sev
TURKEY 98F Ank-Bla, 1A Con-Bul, 1A Smy-Con
AUSTRIA 1A Bud-Ser, 1A Vie-Bud, 1F Tri-Alb
ITALY 98A Ven-Pie, 1A Rom-Apu, 1F Nap-Ion
FRANCE 42F Bre-MAO, 26A Mar-Spa, 16A Par-Gas

PRESS:

GM: The entire Superbourse!-playing population of Greater-Vancouver was quite chagrined to find out that they would be forced to offer their shares this time, but after answering several other questions that were made obvious two issues ago, it became apparent that the locals haven't read the rules, so I won't pity them. Other interesting happenings: one player submitted orders with his Winter 1900 bids, not knowing which would be used: I used any that were legal. Another player sent me three orders, without designating how many shares were to be allocated to each: I allocated one each, despite the wasted values. And there was the GM error: in my readjudication, I reverted all the listed nominal prices back to 10 cents, making many (including-blush-me) believe that they were indeed 10 cents: a quick, expensive phone call to Richard Sharp cleared this up. Then there was The Loophole. I won't name the discoverer, but it goes like this. Mr. X is a majority shareholder in, say Russia, but doesn't want to sell any of his shares. So, he offers up 5 shares at the nominal price, and submits a bid for 5 shares at \$1000 per share. Of course, he has to pay half his bid, more if somebody else makes such an outrageous bid, but who cares? He's paying himself!! Obviously this cannot be allowed, so a rule shall be added to this effect: you may not purchase your own shares. Now we can, I think get on with the rest of the press:

Amersham: Good game, this, he said modestly.

Maestro: Yes, I should say so, said the other one, patting his pocketbook.

In the table below, the actual values are computed based on a guess on how many centres I figure each country will get based on the position after Spring 1901. It's a VERY rough estimate. Conrad Minshall has had \$7.00 added to his credit, at his request that I use his sub as part of his credit. Richard Sharp mentioned that the random order I use for the taking of countries is potentially dangerous for players who submit bids that would only work in a certain order. What I should have said is that I'll allow you to be temporarily below zero as long as your credit comes out in the black when all seven countries are taken.

Player	Original Credit	SUPERBOURSE							Total Shares	Total Assets		
		Cash	-----Current shares owned in-----									
			ENG	GER	RUS	TUR	AUS	ITA	FRA			
GM		84.18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	84.18	
Sharp	24.00	9.19			26	<u>90</u>					116	19.63
McGonigle	6.00	2.57		20		5					25	5.15
Loves	10.00	7.30			10				17		27	9.65
Barno	6.80	3.49		4		5	5	5			19	5.38
Matthews	35.00	14.12	<u>95</u>		25				<u>48</u>		168	31.38
Minshall	8.00	4.22	4		<u>28</u>				3		43	6.99
Wageler	40.00	17.45	1	<u>76</u>	11		<u>95</u>		10		193	37.30
Waddell	20.00	5.80						<u>95</u>	22		117	16.88

Market Prices 17 16 10 16 17 17 10
 Actual Value / Share 0.52 0.52 7.37 9.47 0.52 9.47 9.47

And this is what happened in the Bourse period. In a peace-pipe gesture to those who complained about having to sell their monopolies, I rounded all such 5% figures down, so 99 shares means sell 4, not 5. Offers are stated as number of shares offered, followed by minimum acceptable price. Bids are number of shares bid on, and maximum acceptable price. The final price is halfway between the bid and offer, rounded in favour of the seller. Higher bidders get their turn to pick and choose from the shares available before lower-bidders.

The Stock Exchange

FRANCE Offers: SM (2 at 10). Bids: CM (50 at 10) Result: CM buys 2 from SM at 10.

ITALY Offers: BW (5 at 13). Bids: KW (5 at 14), RS (100 at 13), CM (50 at 13), MB (20 at 20). Result: MB buys 5 from BW at 17.

RUSSIA Offers: GM (54 at 10). Bids: MW (1 at 11), RS (26 at 11), CM (50 at 10). Result: RS buys 26 from GM at 11. MW buys 1 from GM at 11. CM buys 27 from GM at 10.

ENGLAND Offers: SM (4 at 17). Bids: MW (5 at 14), CM (50 at 17). Result: CM buys 4 from SM at 17.

GERMANY Offers: MW (4 at 12). Bids: CM (50 at 12), MB (4 at 20). Result: MB buys 4 from MW at 16.

TURKEY Offers: RS (5 at 13), RS (95 at 15). Bids: SP (5 at 19), SM (5 at 12), CM (50 at 13), MB (5 at 19). Result: MB wins tiebreaker and saves a penny: MB buys 3 at 16 and 2 at 16 from RS. SP buys 2 at 16 and 3 at 17 from RS.

AUSTRIA Offers: MW (5 at 12). Bids: SM (5 at 15), RS (100 at 12), CM (50 at 12), MB (5 at 21). Result: MB buys 5 from MW at 17.

***** Deadline for Fall 1901 is January 10 1985.*****

Supply CENTRE CHARTS

The following being a small editorial on the subject of supply centre charts, I would expect a sort of reader counterpoint for next time.

It is time for a Supply Centre chart showdown. The vast majority of players in Excelsior hasn't had anything to say on this matter, but since nobody who has said anything has come out on my side in this issue, I'd like to state my views. But first, let's have a look at what we're dealing with. Taking the BEETHOVEN supply centre chart from this issue (post-Fall 1902), my version appears a few pages before this article. The standard version of a supply centre chart would look more or less like this:

Supply Centre Chart for BEETHOVEN, 1905 AB, post-Fall 1902

AUSTRIA: Home, Gre, Ser. 5, build one.
 ENGLAND: Home, Bel, Nwy, Swe. 6, Build one.
 FRANCE: Home, Por, Spa. 5, no change.
 GERMANY: Home, Den, Hol. 5, no change.
 ITALY: Home, Tun. 4, Retreat A Tyr or build one.
 RUSSIA: Mos, StP, War. 3, no change.
 TURKEY: Home, Sev, Bul, Rum. 6, build one.

"Oh", you say, "he can do it thr right way. M^cBruce can actually produce a normal supply centre chart, if he wants to."

Well, I don't want to.

The M^cBruce-bashers out there seem to feel that a supply centre chart's primary purpose is to list the centres owned by each country. I disagree. A supply centre chart's primary purpose is to tell who owns the supply centres that you're currently looking into grabbing. I have never wondered about the current list of centres owned by any enemy in a game I've been in, but I often wonder about their current total, and, even more often, who owns this centre.

If I'm an anti-Russian Turk, I care little that Russia currently owns Norway and Sweden (except that those are simply two more added to his current total). But if Rumania is vacant, and I'm allied with Austria, I want to check out the ownership before I quite possibly invade my ally's centre. Looking at lists will certainly be more of a hassle than seeking out Rum (between the P's and S's) and checking out the ownership.

Many GMS complicate their supply centre charts with mysterious overslashes and underlines, or capitals or brackets, to indicate gains/losses. The XL charts reflect this by putting the centres previous owner in brackets. Thus (G) G means Germany held the centre for the year, and (E) T means that Turkey took a centre from England. It's quite easy to get a full report by just skimming through the centres keeping your eyes peeled for changes. With capitals, brackets, overslashes and underlinings, you'd need to make your own list as you went along.

A big problem in my view with the traditional supply centre charts is that they stop grouping home supply centres as soon as one of them is lost. As soon as you lose the word "Home" beside your county's name, you're in trouble and you know it, but from who? It takes a few seconds to figure out who swiped that home centre if you restrict yourself to the chart. If I'm playing Germany in XL, all I need do is look under the word GERMANY. If I don't see three G's, I know at once that something awful has occurred, and what's more, I know the jerk that did it! Not only that, I know the result it had (-3, most likely) without even moving an eyeball!

Tell me what you feel the problem is. Is it the tininess of it on

excelsior

THE LAST SUPPER

No. 9

There are a few things you need to know before reading this. Unable to get a Christmas flight home for Nan, we finally settled upon a pre-Christmas visit for her. The flight left at 8:10 AM on December 3, and it occurred to me that we'd be having our last meal together when I got home from work the Monday night. So, in an attempt to take Nan's mind off the fact that we'd not be seeing one another for nine days, I tried humour....

It was snowing like hell in the city that night. A cold spell had finally combined with precipitation to give us six inches of the stuff in six hours. Not only that, the wind was blowing hard into my face as I walked home. It was a long, hard journey, but I came through it okay. I greeted Nan, and stepped into the shower.

Drying myself, I felt very clean, and pure, but also sensed that something was about to happen. I wasn't certain what it was, but the upcoming meal would likely be my last before it happened.

I sat down at the table, which somehow seemed smaller than it should. Nancy placed a jug of red Crystal Light onto it. "Where are the others?" I asked.

"What others?"

"I feel that there are supposed to be eleven others here with us." It sounded weird to me too, but something was making me say it. "How can we have a Last Supper with only two present?"

Nancy was skeptical. "You haven't invited anyone else over, have you? Bruce, you do this every time. When you went to DipCon you had an all night Rail Baron game the night before. Why can't we ever spend the night before we're parted in peace?"

"Parted, yes. Tomorrow at this time you will be without me. Where is Peter, I have a few stories to tell him."

"We don't know any Peters. Now eat."

I poured out the drink, noting it's similarity to the colour of blood. "Do we have any bread in the house?"

"No, we never have bread with dinner. What is wrong with you?"

"How can we eat a Last Supper without bread?" I asked. "Oh well, at least we've got wine."

"We do not."

"But of course we do: in our glasses here."

"Bruce, have you been drinking?"

"What do you mean by that, my child?"

At this point Nancy dropped her fork. Deliberately. It made a hell of a noise. "Christ, what is wrong with you tonight?"

I turned the other cheek and ate in silence. Then she caught on to the joke, just as our Last Supper came to a conclusion.

CHRISTMAS CHEER Part Eleven

Miss Aberdeen M^oHolstein
69 Cash Avenue
Beaver Valley, Colorado

December 24, 1985.

Listen Fuckhead:

What's with the Eleven Lords A-Leaping on those maids and ladies? Some of those broads will never walk again. Those pipers ran though the maids and have been committing sodomy with the cows. All twenty-three of the birds are dead. They've been trampled to death in the orgy. I hope you're satisfied, you rotten, vicious swine.

Your sworn enemy,

Aberdeen.

Most of the Post

Another hastily typed letter column, or boy-am-I-glad-I-took-Friday-off! I begin typing this all up at the same time that the NHL Vancouver Canucks are playing in Edmonton (right now they're singing the national anthem), so I'll link the letters together with accounts of how badly we're losing.

CHARLES ARSENAULT: *Big changes in my life as you can see. I had to leave my country for a matter of bank robbery...No, in fact I came to the Old Country [Belgium] to do new technologies. I'm here for two years at the University of Louvain-La-Neuve and I'm studying Microelectronics. That's the science which is at the bottom of all your problems with the C-64!!*

BM: Well, that's one way to get an international game more international! My only regret is that you apparently told the other players in COPLAND about the move before you told me!! I got a report about how you had moved from a player; what was I to think: couldn't exactly believe him, could I. I even contacted Mark Berch to find out if this could be construed as deception of the GM, and your letter arrived the day after his. Ah well, I hope you enjoy your stay. As for problems with my C-64, I don't have all that many.

Puck comes out in front; Sumannen shoots...scores! Edmonton leads 1-0 after 2:36 of the first period.

FRED DAVIS: *I knew of the Point Roberts anomaly, since I once met a fellow who'd been stationed somewhere near Bellingham in the Army. He told us about making trips to Point Roberts for some reason while he was there. (Being that he was a G.I., I suppose it involved either booze or girls, but I can't remember). [I didn't go to The Point for either reason, and look what happened to me....Semenko...to Gretzky....to Kurri, scores! 2-0 Edmonton after 9:17 of the first period.] But I don't think Pt. Roberts is a separate county. According to my Rand McNally Road Atlas, it's part of Whatcom County. Incidentally, wouldn't it be easier to get to Blaine on the mainland to mail your zines? Or doesn't the Vancouver Transit System go in that direction? Would a Greyhound bus be too expensive?*

BM: Yes, considering that we have a bus pass that allows us to get anywhere in the system on non-peak hours for free. It's a longer trip and a longer walk to Blaine by Vancouver's transit system. And we discovered that The Point was indeed part of Whatcom County on our last visit.

FRED DAVIS (Cont.): *I'm always interested in hearing about the existence of good public transit in other countries, it's so bad in most parts of the U.S. I'm a member of a railfan club, as well as of the Baltimore Streetcar Museum. I've been reading where Vancouver is building a light rail system, which will eventually go as far as New Westminster. Will it go through your neighbourhood in Burnaby? Incidentally, I understand that most of the new light rail system will follow the right-of-way of the old streetcar system, which the politicians decided must be eliminated in the name of the Great God Automobile somewhere around 1950.*

BM: The trains don't go anywhere near North Burnaby, where I live about two miles from Simon Fraser University (30% of that distance is straight up!), but it does go within about a block of where my parents live. The ALRT (Automated Light Rapid Transit), which is scheduled to start next January--mostly a show-off piece for Expo 86--will run on the old train line along Vaness Avenue, but there are also other former streetcar lines that were ripped up in the 50's when our excellent bus system took

over. As a matter of fact, the busses that replaced the streetcars lasted until last fall (34 years!) and then were used again in the winter when it was discovered that the new buses had a dangerous reaction with the salt on the streets.

McTavish comes in....shoots....scores!! 3-0 Edmonton.
Lumley....scores, makes it 4-0

FRED DAVIS (Still Cont.): Please send me a copy of the flyers, map, etc., when the Vancouver light rail vehicles start operating. Did you know that Larry Peery and 6 other people once played a Diplomacy game on the San Diego Trolley on its way to Tijuana? Their original plan was to carry the board the last 200 yards across the border, to make it the first truly international FTF game. However, apparently there was some difficulty with Customs that day, so they didn't go to Mexico. Maybe someday you could arrange for a game to be played between Vancouver and Bellingham, or at least Pt. Roberts.

By the way, your XL#8 is postmarked "Everett, WA" which is a long way south of the border. [It's a suburb of Seattle, I believe] Did someone go all the way to Everett, or is this just the PO's usual ineffective way of stamping evrything in one area with the same postmark, so you can't tell where it's really from? They use terms like "South Suburban" and "Northern Va." now to keep the mail's point origin a secret.

BM: We didn't go to Everett, obviously somebody did, though. FTF International? Might work, but the weather would require that we wait till next summer--my trip to the Point this time may be through a few inches of snow.

After the first period it's Edmonton 4, Vancouver 0. I'm taking a dinner break.

Well, it's now 5-0. On with the letters:

RON KRUKOMSKI: If the hookers move into your neighbourhood, petition the city to rename your street "Wench Street".

BM: I doubt you'll have to worry: my neighbourhood is halfway down a great bloody hill, and there are no hotels in the vicinity.

RON (Snafu!) BROWN: I agree that it would be weird to have Christmas in the middle of summer, but don't you guys in BC do that every year?

BM: Ask Nancy; she's from Quebec. I know what she'll say though. Try to imagine all the times in the Winter that it snows in Nepean. Now imagine it's not snow, but pouring, cold rain. Rain has a mean streak that snow just doesn't have, and we get it from September thru August.

RON BROWN (Cont.): I won my position at work. I got 75% on the written exam and my closest competitor got 30%. So, they've agreed to have the oral exam and offer me the position immediately. That ends all the uncertainty about my career situation which has haunted Ann and I for three years. I am now an official civil servant in a "permanent" position. Better yet, I am officially a "systems analyst". I always wondered what those creatures were. I still don't know. I still spend all my time writing code using the "trial and error" method, though I get interrupted now and then to reconfigure a printer or tape drive. I guess I must be one of the last to get into the computer field with no training. Basically, a self-taught hot shot.

Yes I realize you stole the idea for your borders from Snafu!. The reason I had borders was that Ann got fed up with me getting pages too wide and made me a master so I could at least try to stay within the lines. However, in the past year I've had to use three different master pages sizes (for D-Day as a zine, for No Fixed Publisher, and now for D-Day! as a subzine.), so I've had to learn to stay within the limits even if I don't have pre-described lines. So, you can thank the fact that I am a klutz when it comes to layout for that idea.

BM: During that letter, Edmonton scored again: 6-0. Ron, I think there was ample evidence in XL's BC (Before Computer) period to prove that I'm a klutz as well. In fact, without justification I don't know what I'd do. Congratulations on reaching the light at the end of your career

tunnel; I'm surprised that they made you wait that long: seems pretty sadistic to me, but I guess that's the government for you.

The final score in that game was 13-0. Believe it or not. Anyhow, I've decided to finish off my letter column concurrent with another Canucks game, against the Washington Capitals. A step down in class, perhaps, but it's still 0-0 after 3/4 of the first period. Continuing with the letters then, we have the valid complaint from our man in Scarborough:

STEPHEN SWIGGER: If I were to tell you that I was a lot P.O.'d with you about the length of time it takes to get an XL gamestart would you be surprised? Well SURPRISE!!! I'm a lot P.O.'d!

I wrote you in May indicating I was looking for my first postal game (having seen XL listed as having openings in the April Pontevedria) and your reply of June 11th indicated or at least implied that I was in line for your next game...

"You're allowed to send in a preference list (...) of countries you prefer; I probably won't receive it in time, so you'll have to take your chances if I start the next game in XL #5 (due out this weekend), but much more likely is that I'll wait another month."

I'd say that looks like a pretty firm commitment for a gamestart by XL#6. Wouldn't you?

In XL#5 (page 2) you indicate you've had "...many requests...to open new games(...six sample requests...from newcomers to the hobby)...". So what do I see on the back of XL#8? Little old me signed up for Elgar and nobody else. I guess everybody else said to hell with it and looked elsewhere for games. Obviously I'm not the only one who thinks six months is too long to wait. Admit it Bruce, Excelsior looks nice but it's hardly a good advertisement for new players. If I were already a dedicated Diplomacy player of the FTF genre and hadn't immediately gotten a start in the Canadian Diplomat I'd have given up on the postal hobby before I got started. I can appreciate that putting out a Dip zine takes a lot of work and maybe you're overloaded but you still owe it to those writing for gamestarts, particularly novices, to be up-front about when they'll get them. If you've got too many requests why not say so and help them get another start in another zine. You put a lot of effort into detailing your personal anecdotes and into trying to generate interest in a host of non-Diplomacy activities in XL and that's your prerogative, but if these mean that the Diplomacy side of the zine suffers as a result then I think you should pause a moment and reflect on what you consider to be important. From my point of view you're obviously a man of imagination and enthusiasm, if somewhat egocentric in your perspective, and someone who could do a lot for the Hobby at large. You've certainly got enough eyes on you and XL. So don't blow it by getting so wrapped up in the pubbing and the hobnobbing with the hobby wheels that you forget about the little guys and the newcomers.

My wife, Kim, thinks this letter is too harsh so let me emphasize that it's not a "Hey, you're an asshole!" letter, it's a "Hey, I think I have a legitimize beef and some constructive criticism!" letter, and I hope you'll treat it as such.

BH: Of course I will, and I fully appreciate your problem, but Steve, what do you want me to do? Certainly I made an error in believing that every novice that wrote asking about gamestarts would sign up, and in telling you that there'd be a start in #6 on that basis, and apologies are extended for that, but quite frankly, if you'd said you wanted a game soon (and I thought it unlikely that you'd get a quick start here) I'd send you to SK. I am not going to use the zine to appeal to everybody in the hobby to help me get another game started, all I can do is wait until people are ready to play, and suggest other places to go for information. As for the Dip side of the zine suffering as a result of the other stuff, explain what you mean by that. Since there is nothing for me to do as GM in a game which hasn't started, I can't very

well be deprived of time to do nothing, can I? And the games which are running are getting enough attention from me, I'd say. Forgetting about the little guys and newcomers? Bull. All six of those samples I sent out last summer were accompanied by letters suggesting other places to go, including Supernova. In return I think I got two subs, one game request (yours), and one sub cheque which bounced. With that sort of response, maybe I should forget the newcomers. But I won't.

And now for the latest leaders in the Do You Agree With Alan Stewart? contest. Alan prefers Adidas to Nikes, Holiday Inn over Ramada, Shell over Esso, GM over Ford, and Time over Newsweek. The resulting scores are as follows:

Name	Score	Total	Pct.
Ron Krukowski	4-1	14-6	.700
Nancy Hurrell	4-1	9-6	.600
Mike Barno	2-3	9-6	.600
Pete Gaughan	0-0	6-4	.600
Doug Rowling	3-2	3-2	.600
Bill Becker	2-3	11-9	.550
Greg Ellis	2-3	5-5	.500
Wallace Nicoll	4-1	5-5	.500
Bruce M ^c Intyre	3-2	9-11	.450

Doug Rowling is ineligible, having answered only ten if he attempts the next five. Pete Gaughan, Greg Ellis, and Wallace Nicoll must answer next time to qualify for the five free issues.

Here are the last five:

- 21) Mel Brooks or Woody Allen?
- 22) Jean Chretien or John Crosbie?
- 23) Budweiser or Miller?
- 24) Justification by Faith Alone, or Baptismal Regeneration?
- 25) Forsyth, or Arrow?

CHRISTMAS CHEER Part Twelve

LAW OFFICES

Badger, Bender, and Cajolo
303 Knave Street
Denver, Colorado.

December 26, 1985.

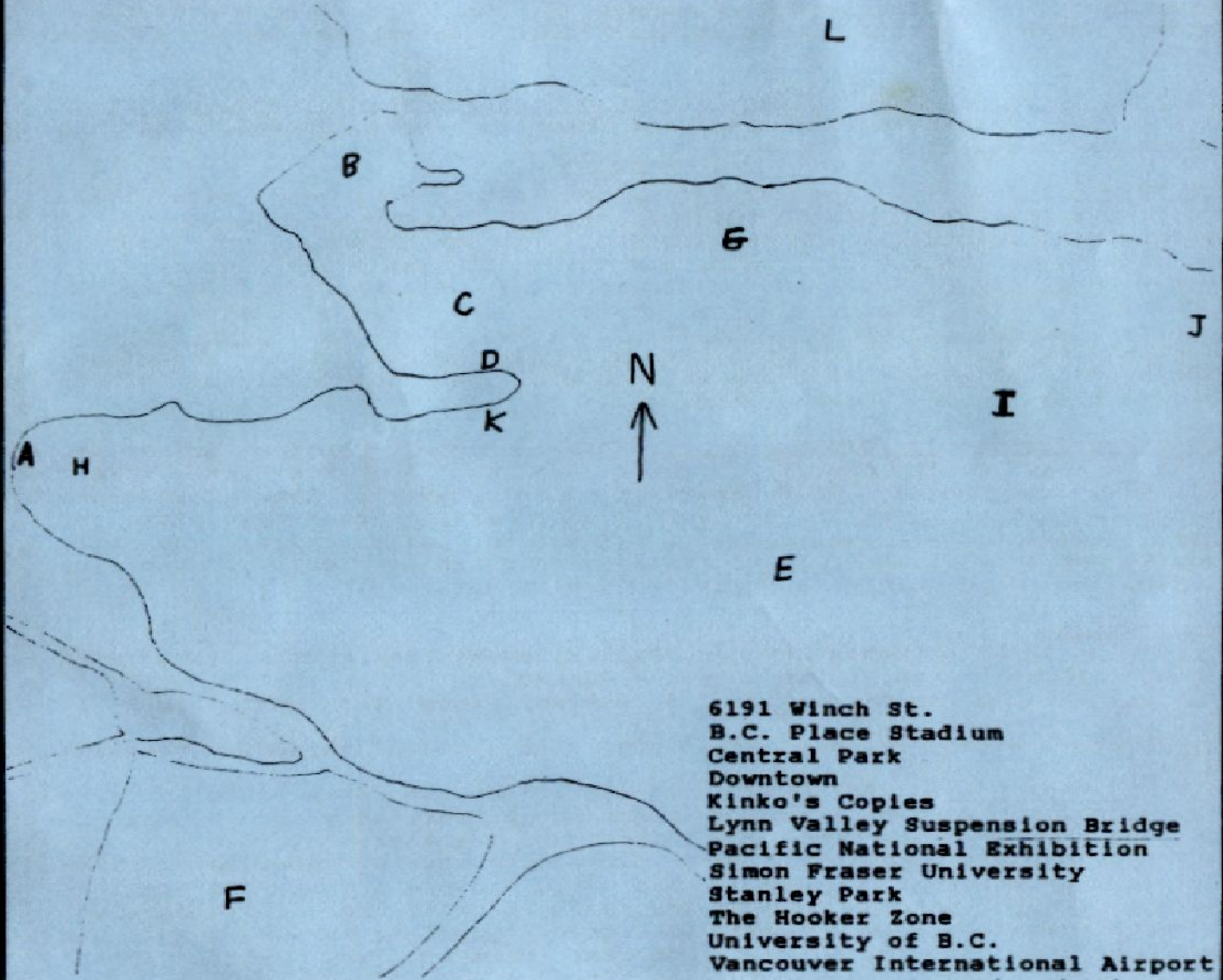
Dear Sir:

This is to acknowledge your latest gift of Twelve Fiddlers Fiddling, which you have seen fit to inflict on our client, Miss Aberdeen M^cHolstein. The destruction, of course, was total. All correspondance should come to our attention. If you should attempt to reach Miss M^cHolstein at Happy Dale Sanatarium, the attendants have instructions to shoot you on sight. With this letter please find attached a warrant for your arrest.

[No, this is not a M^cBruce original, but I've no idea who the author is -- I have a very ragged and yellowing copy courtesy of a friend. I hope you'll all appreciate the effort that I had to exert to keep from changing the names to reflect the current unfortunate state of the Hobby. May there be better times in 1986, and Merry Christmas to you all.]

THE «I'M LOOKING FOR» CONTEST

Match the letters on the map with the Vancouver landmarks below correctly and you might just win yourself five free issues if you beat everyone else.



excelsior

No. 9

HOUSEKEEPING

Welcome to:

Ken Peel, 8708 First Ave., No. T-2, Silver Spring MD, USA 20910
Marvin & Darlene Baker, Rt. 3, Box 431, Pell City AL, USA 35125
Luc Dodinval, Parc de Mehagne, Au Passou 18, B-4600 Chenee, BELGIUM
(*Mach die Spuhl*)
James Early, 3705 Uruguay Dr., Pasadena TX, USA 77504 (*The Razor's Edge*)
Malcolm Smith: Bus 26, Astridplein 31-32, Antwerpen 2000, BELGIUM
(*Bohemian Rhapsody*)

Assorted items of subscription-extending monetary value received from:

Bill Shirley, Alain Martine (Welcome back!), Steve Hutton, and the newcomers above, of course.

Sub Warnings: (*NONE, One, or Two* issues left in your sub after this one.): Over the Christmas holidays I shall be doing a major overhaul of my financial records, which are getting a bit out of date. But this is the data I have on expiring subs, bad though it is: Mike Barno, Bill Becker, Mark Berch, Kevin Brown, Steve Cooley, Gary Coughlan, Michael J. Ditz, Steve Dycus, Claude Gautron, Steve Knight, Travis Laster, Brian Lorber, Rob Lowes, Sean Mcconigle (to 9.5), Paul Milewski, Ralph Morton, Dennis Quine (to 10.5), Craig Reges, Ied Shannon, Lynn Torkelson. That's a lot of people, but the vast bulk of your subs went from #2 to #11, so this is just advance warning.

Stand-bys for regular Diplomacy are: Bob Acheson, Charles Arsenault, Kevin Brown, Chris Carrier, Claude Gautron, Ron Krukowski, Paul Milewski, Craig Reges, Bill Shirley, Alan Stewart, Lynn Torkelson, Pierre Touchette. Want in or out? Just ask! Stand-bys play for free--including their subscription. If you're called here, you will receive one free issue of XL tacked onto your sub for each season you played, including holdovers, provided you do not drop.

Gamestarts:

Diplomacy: ELGAR: Stephen Swigger, Paul Milewski, Pete Fuchs (who will sub when I have seven, apparently), 4 wanted.

Patterns II: Charles Arsenault, 3-5 wanted, room for any number if enough interested.

Superbourse: Anyone can sign up at any time, rules straddled betwixt XL#6-7.

International Trivia: Rules appeared last time, we have entries from Bill Becker and Wallace Nicoll. Have another look, it's so simple to play, nobody can claim that they haven't got the time.

International Diplomacy: This game will not be started until we've seven different countries represented. The three players who applied for this and got COPLAND instead (Charles Arsenault--Canada, Ben Schilling--USA, and Sean McGonigle--New Zealand) have priority unless they want out. We also have Rosie Roberts entered from West Germany, and Malcolm Smith from Belgium (soon to be Norway), so there is now only two needed.

Stand-bys called: None this time. Lucky me. Thanks to those I called last time for sending orders.

Address Changes:

Charles Arsenault, Voie du Car D'Or 2/102, 1348 Louvain-La-Neuve, BELGIUM

Scott Hanson/ Frauke Petersen, 3508 4th Ave. S., Minneapolis MN, USA 55408

Steve Hutton, 1175 Broadview Ave. #711, Toronto ON, Canada M4K 2R9

Steve Knight 2732 Grand Ave S., #302, Minneapolis MN, USA 55057