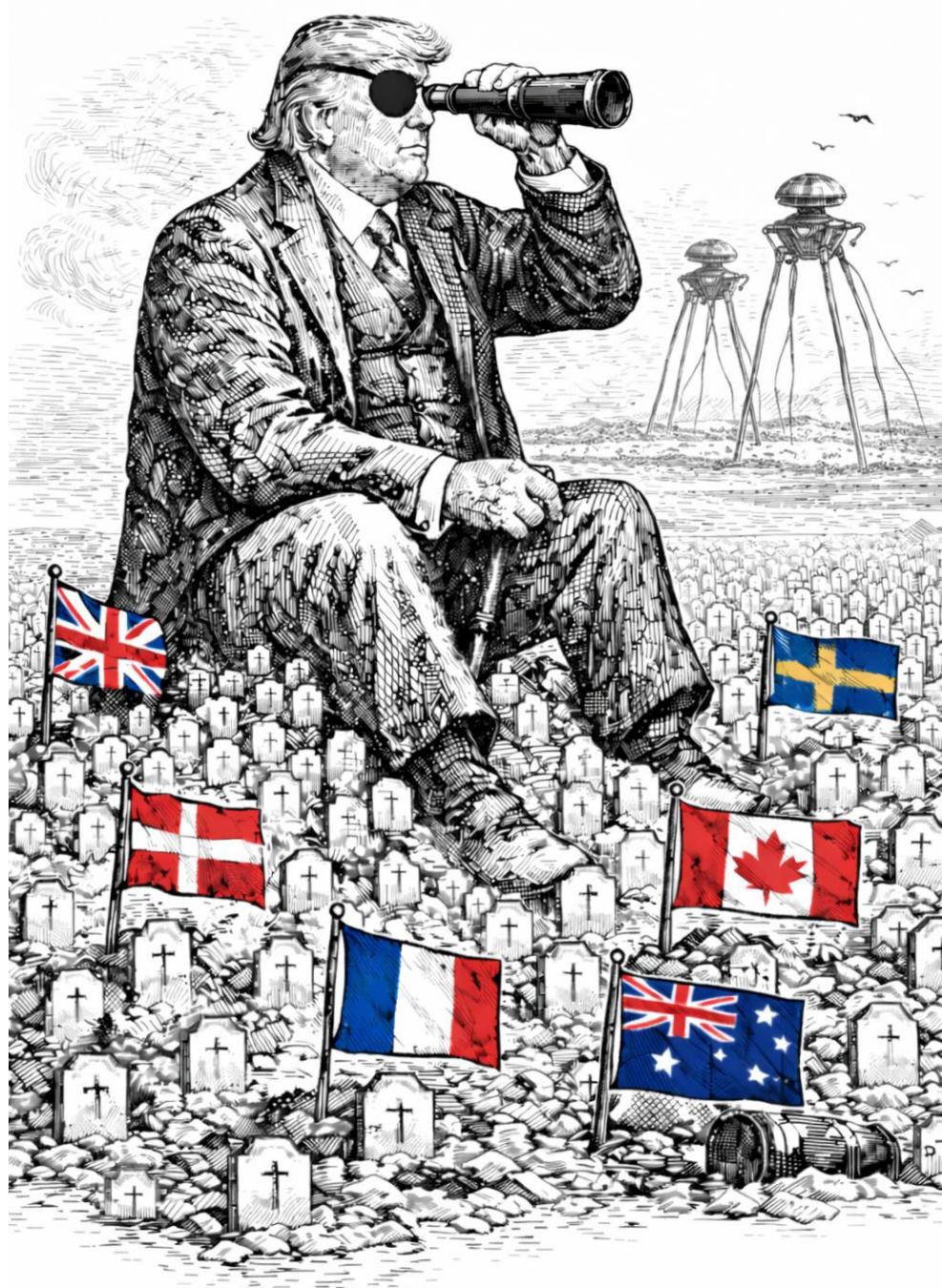


GOD SAVE THE ZINE 33



“I SEE NO SOLDIERS... ANYWAY, WE DON’T NEED THEM.”

with apologies to Admiral Nelson and HG Wells.



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EDITORIAL

I've been having a bit of fun playing around with the layout – this time. I have tried to recreate the feel of the magazine *Punch*, circa 1914, to fit in with the First World War vibe. So, I have changed font and included lots of black and white line drawings and the odd drawing that takes up a whole page. I quite like the period look, but please feel free to disagree with me.

I think this zine is in danger of becoming a bit hardcore with lengthy articles on esoteric Diplomacy subjects. But what is the point of publishing a zine if you can't include things that interest you, however nerdish? Inside we have a six-page article from Bradley Grace about winning the Virtual Diplomacy Tournament (a terrific achievement) and a five-page article from Alex Lebedev on the Italian editions of Diplomacy (though I promise we will be back to UK editions next time). This is the sort of thing that I find fascinating, so I hope at least a few of you do as well. I realise that some of you will think that I am mad and no doubt Chris Tringham will take the piss.

I've also included a couple of new variants in this issue by yours truly. One is sort of a bit like a metaphor for dealing with global warming. Can competing Powers actually come together to defeat a common enemy and let go of their natural competitiveness for the greater good? I think we know the answer to that. The other variant is inspired by The Traitors, a TV programme which is both addictive, but totally destroys any faith that you may have that your fellow human beings are in any way intelligent. When you watch the Traitors, it is if you are transported back to the 17th century and observing a community witch hunt. The capacity of human beings to convince themselves of "facts" that are clearly ridiculous hasn't been diminished by the centuries, as vaccine sceptics demonstrate.

So why do I keep creating Diplomacy variants that will probably never be played? Part of me enjoys the thought experiment of taking a simple idea and making it fit the conventions of the game. And I also love researching historical variants and drawing maps as well. I find it interesting and relaxing. Hell, I even enjoy reading variant rules to test out new concepts in my head and ponder new strategies. Sometimes I do wonder if it is just me though. And then I heard about the recent DiploStrats variant design competition which had over 80 entries – and I knew I wasn't alone.

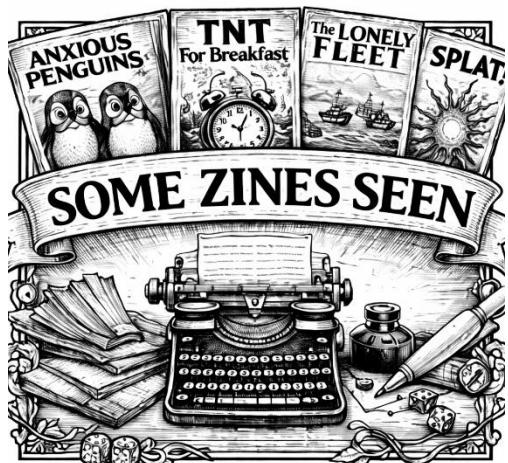
Don't we live in interesting times? Clearly a world Diplomacy variant called Trump Diplomacy featuring USA, Venezuela, Denmark, Russia, Israel, Iran and China would be fun. The UK can be an (almost) neutral. No doubt the USA would open to Greenland and Panama.

I've reprinted an old article of mine on the subject of meta-gaming. 28 years on and the same debate is still out there. At the recent NDC in Warrington I said to the person I was sitting next to at dinner, "if we end up in the same game together tomorrow let's have an alliance." They agreed, and guess what... we ended up in the same game the following day and allied. A complaint was made to the Tournament Director. Did I do wrong? An interesting question.

I wonder whatever happened to the European Diplomacy Association Ethics Oath? If you look at current WDC Rules and Conduct Code it is more about not discriminating against people because of their characteristics etc. rather than meta-gaming. In Rule 13 intimidation is directly outlawed and there is a plea to "play to maximise your score within the spirit of the game" – though the "spirit of the game" is a somewhat subjective concept. Is it within the "spirit of the game" to bribe someone? Or does it matter what you bribe them with (so offering Munich is fine, offering £10 is not?).

The WDC Code of Conduct goes on to say "Players are free to choose who they do or do not work with for any reason – however this should always be done in line with the Code and must not be on the grounds of an individual's identity in any way." So, no discrimination please (you can't even refuse to work with Toby Harris on the grounds that he is, er... Toby Harris), but bribes appear to be OK! 😊

Anyway, the bottom of the page approaches and it is now time for bed. See you next time.



Just time for a few mentions.

Fury of the Northmen #147 was a bit of an Agatha Christie issue, recounting the tale of Agatha Christie's second marriage to the archaeologist Max Mallowan (she was 40 he was 26). Colin usually finds the time to read an interesting book (usually non-fiction) between issues and that gives him material for the zine. A good formula and one I may try sometime. Issue 147 also has the last instalment in Colin's American road trip.



Northern Flame #177 came with the news that 2026 is the centenary of the availability of the pop-up toaster invented by Charles Strite – well done that man. Rob is suffering eye problems which I hope clear up quickly. In his film column Rob discusses *The Blood of a Poet* by Cocteau from 1932, which sounds completely bizarre being a fantasy of death, suicide and strangeness. I have never “got” pre-war avant-garde, or, come to think of it, post-war avant-garde. Hell, I even struggled with *The Beatles Revolution 9*.

Issue 231 of **Western Front** from Brad Martin has as a main theme Baltic Sea Admirals from the 30 Years War. Once upon a time I could have probably given you a reasonably coherent account of the 30 Years War, but that has all long since been forgotten. I do remember being disappointed when I learnt that the three victims of the Defenestration of Prague all survived.



How or why Gustavus Adolphus got involved in it all, is now lost amongst the billions of brain cells that have disappeared from my head. Something to do with religion, perhaps. However, I am a subscriber to **History Today** and this month's issue had a feature on a diary/autobiography kept by a shoemaker called Hans Heberle from the Free City of Ulm in Germany, which was fascinating. Poor Hans had to flee his home as a refugee no less than 30 times between 1631 and 1648, running away from soldiers from both sides. Anyway, **Western Front** is definitely the zine to get if your two enthusiasms are history and RR/BB.

It makes you think, I've only looked at three zines and we've gone from Agatha Christie to the 30 Years War via Jean Cocteau. What other hobby could do that? **Cheesecake** #445 continues the use of linear separators, which were used in many zines in the

1970s. Bob Dylan is not just the most used artist in **Cheesecake**, the lyrics to *Highway 61 Revisited* were the first linear separator I ever saw, in good old **Mad Policy**. It made me realise that I still do somethings in the zine, just because I had to do them that way when using a manual typewriter on a stencil. Old habits die hard.

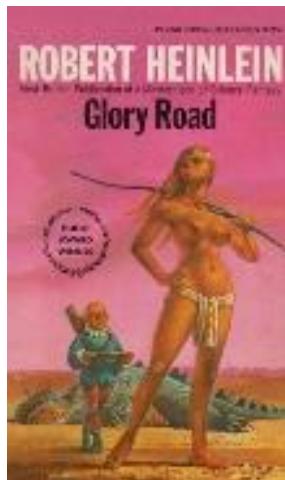
Andy is also having email problems; this time yahoo thinks he's sending spam if he writes to 15 people. I am experiencing something similar with Gmail, which seems intent on holding back any email I send distributing the zine for hours – though it does go through eventually.

Great cover on **Obsidian** #321, though I suspect non-UK readers won't have a clue why it is so good (try googling "Dusty Bin"). Until it was mentioned in the **Obsidian** letter column, it had never occurred to me that in my youth most fantasy novels and games had nearly naked young women on their covers and maybe that was part of the attraction

for teenage boys? Time has moved on and tastes change, However, in my youth I definitely remember buying Robert Heinlein's *Glory Road* and I suspect it wasn't the narrative that attracted me. Anyone else got any favourites?

In issue 293 of **mais n'est-ce pas la gare?** Steve Thomas casually notes "In the past month I have read the following 16 books..." and goes on to list them. How on earth does he find the time? I am lucky if I manage half a book a month and sometimes not even that. He then goes on to mention that after Christmas he played six games of 18xx in four days, which presumably left no time for sleep. I wish I had as much energy as Steve.

The Cunning Plan #320 has chat about music (usually punk) and chat about Trump (mainly fears that he may run again despite the constitution). Interesting bits about the Norman conquest, doomscrolling and Alan Frost on AI. Vick Hall's subzine, **Memoirs of a Gnostic Dwarf** is up to issue 5 and going strong. The Conclave game report has to be one of the most readable game reports of any game in the hobby.



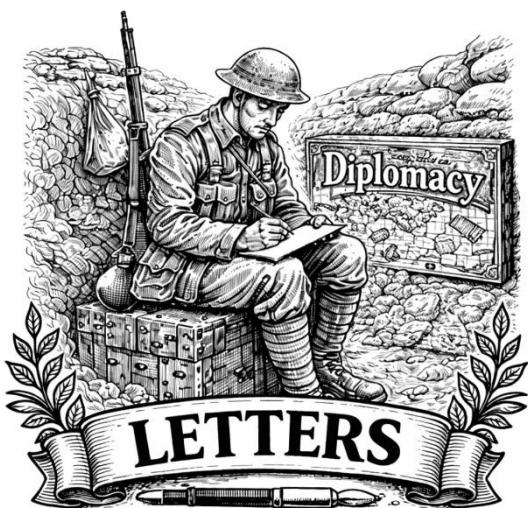
There has been a bit of activity on the Archive website this month. First, I have had a go at uploading a lot of leaflets, booklets and associated ephemera concerning Diplomacy Cons over the years. Although I've added over 150 documents, there are still some obvious omissions – and I'm particularly short of post-2000 material. I guess that post-2000 a lot of the information moved online and so may not be available in printed form. I've also had a push on UK Listing Zines – zines which give information on all of the zines being published at the time, I still haven't found the **Mission From God** folder, so many of those are still to come.

I have also added a lot of newsletters etc. from the various attempts to create hobby organisations in the 1970s and 1980s, such as the **NGC Bulletin**, the **Monthly Bureaucrat**, the **Diplomatic Backstabber** and **Commissar**. Not everything has survived, but you can get the flavour of how it was.

On the zine front I've added issues of **Realpolitik**, **Ripping Yarns**, **Rapscallion**, **The Roar Of The Greasepaint**, **Zine To Be Believed**, **Rhubovia**, **Rocinante**, **The Cunning Plan**, **The Tangerine Terror**, **Fury of the Northmen**, **NERTZ**, **Froggy**, **Geneva**, **Cut & Thrust**, **Borealis**, **Obsidian**, **Pigbutton** and quite a few others. In all that is something around 1000 zines added this month.

Notable zines missing include **Realpolitik** issues 87-90 – I would really like to find those to complete the set. I have a few gaps in **The Cunning Plan** (post-2004) as well – basically issues 119-136, 176-183, 193-194, 200, 203, 210-214.

It goes without saying that if anyone has any old zines or other Diplomacy-related material that they would like to contribute to the Archive, please get in touch.



IAN WATTERS

At last, a use for The Traitors! I was listening to Today this morning when they did an trailer for an episode (last one of the current season). Pah, selling a public domain game to TV for £lots as a new and exciting format, I thought. I wonder if someone will finally do a Diplomacy series given viewers now like betrayals?

SA: Well, I have produced a Traitors variant for this issue. Sadly, boardgames don't have a great pedigree of making decent TV (though I do remember being very excited as a young boy seeing the TV spy Callan with his wargame miniatures). I guess they are all far too slow to be interesting as a spectator sport.

Gmail is deliberately bad at some things - there was a design decision at the start not to do 'folders' like any decent email client, because you'd use search instead and Google search is great, right? The solution is indeed to do labels (what Chris T called 'tags') and it's relatively easy to have 99% of this done automatically via filters.

Originally, Gmail was advertised with slogans like 'you'll never need to delete an email' because you got much more space than Yahoo! or HoTMaiL offered. It didn't work out like that, not least because although the space expanded from around 1GB to 15GB, things like photos from non-early Pixel phones, documents, and phone backups got included in how much of that you use.

Even though I back up photos via an old Pixel, I still needed to do a Gmail purge on this account, so it was the opportunity to filter as much as possible. So now each arts org, financial institution, community

group, blog, games, shop etc etc has its own label under a general category heading. My free storage is getting full again, so I'm just going 'Oh, a thousand emails from those shops', and it's select all, really all, delete, sorted. (Important stuff like order receipts have their own label!)

SA: I am clearly going to have to put some effort in to master all this stuff. However, I fear I am reaching the age where nothing sticks any more.

James Hardy said "I remember it was Mark Wightman who told me where the Red Light District was – I'd walked right past it all weekend!"

In the 00s, the Met Police had a target of raiding a handful of brothels in RB Kensington & Chelsea a quarter (and doubtless other boroughs!) It might have been three or four. At the sex work project I was working with in the borough, we knew of about eight brothels *on our not very long street* but unless you knew what to look for, they weren't obvious.

It was doubtless really more, as a surprising number of places are unwittingly brothels, thanks to a classic bit of classism.

Around 1930, someone discovered that a number of Cambridge students (i.e. posh young men) were using a house in the town to have sex with lower class women they weren't married to, AKA "illicit" sex. There was no evidence the women were prostitutes or that any money changed hands, but clearly something had to be done, so the owner of the house was charged and convicted of the crime of running a brothel. In 1945, a hotel owner lost their lease for knowingly letting non-married couples use the hotel for sexual assignations on the same basis.

When assorted sex laws were being revised in what became the Sexual Offences Act 2003, the maximum penalty for running a brothel were to be greatly increased. The owners of assorted gay saunas went eek at that - they're somewhere people go for "lewd" homosexual sex that'd been the equivalent of the "illicit" heterosexual sort since 1967, even if there hasn't been a relevant conviction for decades - and ran a successful lobby campaign. So, there are now two offences: running a brothel (six months) and running a brothel *involving prostitution* (seven years). The Met's targets are doubtless still the same and I'd be surprised if there were fewer brothels.

SA: Ian, you always teach me something. I was once at an industry event that involved a lot of alcohol and

went on until the small hours. The group I was with got talking about prostitution and I remember how shocked I was that everyone else I was drinking with had been with a prostitute at least once (and some many times). I have clearly had a very sheltered life. There must be an awful lot more of it going on than I ever realised. On balance, I don't think I will put the experience on my bucket list.

"A surprising number of copies on eBay seem to be unplayed. On second thoughts, maybe that isn't so surprising."

Most games sold are never played. Doubtless most books sold are never read. (And certainly, never read cover to cover.)

Your article has encouraged me to look to see which edition my older set is: it's an Intellectual Diversions box, with white Russia. Step one, find it.

SA: Only the first edition had the white Russian pieces. They are fairly uncommon, but not priceless.

The other one is my original 1970s Gibsons, but now I know I'd need to have kept the plastic pieces tray. Instead, all that remains is the board, rules and most of the pieces.

SA: If it has Gibsons on the box, it will be a 1980s set. Gibsons took over Diplomacy in November 1981.

Starforce Alpha Centauri was a case of the designer being a better - a brilliant - graphic artist than a game designer. Most of his games have one idea (*Sorcerer*: what if strengths were non-transitive, so $A > B > \dots > F > A?$) and fail to have a game that really works. In this case, the main thing it gave the world was being the source of the name for The Human League.

SA: Really? Can anyone think of any other groups named with a Boardgames connection.?

I have at least two copies of *Masterpiece*. Nice production, but it's nowhere near as good as *Modern Art*. Do you want one?

SA: How kind of you. Once I move house I may take you up on it. Thanks.

If Martin Davies is not following Bret Devereaux and reading his '*A Collection Of Unmitigated Pedantry*' blog, he should - there have been some excellent articles on how the Romans managed it.

The short version is that 'population including plenty of small farmers rich enough to afford armour plus mobilising and keeping them in service plus warfare system plus leadership system' meant LOTS of good heavy infantry armies that could each be lost (and sometimes were!) but almost inevitably inflicted serious damage on their opponents even then and were replaceable. Most of their opponents could only lose one major battle in a war before being in deep shit, and many had "if this leader dies, we're in trouble" problems too.

"further proof that all articles on Diplomacy tactics are basically meaningless, since the game depends mainly on personalities"

It's not going to stop you though, is it? :)

SA: Absolutely not.

JAMES HARDY

So, it appears I have a copy of UKPPL4C – or rather I have the pieces for it. The box and the green plastic holder are well gone and the board I leant to Alan Sharples many years ago (along with another board I had) as he wanted it to play with his sons or something. Either way I never saw them again. I did bump into Mr Sharples at MidCon in 2024, but it was a very brief breakfast interaction and I never got the chance to ask him about them. Maybe next time.

Your hypothesis that some (most) Diplomacy boards never actually get used in anger is a sound one. The second board I mention was a set a guy I worked with back in the 80s gave me. He heard me talking about Diplomacy and said he had a copy I could have - he'd heard it was a good game so bought a copy, but when opening it he "couldn't see any dice or cards" so it just got chucked into the back of a cupboard. Muggles...

SA: The problem with Diplomacy is always that (a) it needs too many people and (b) it takes too long. I am an only child, so when I got the game there was no chance of actually playing it. That is why I replied to the flyer in the box advertising the National Games Club and the rest is history.

ALEX BARDY

Thanks once again for another issue of **God Save The Zine** — always appreciated, even if I don't always get the time to read it right through.

Ironically this time I did get a chance to read most of it (well, the bits I'm primarily interested in - generally

everything except the Diplomacy bits, tbh!) and was particularly impressed to realise the UK Zine Poll is still going strong. Wowsers! That took me back a good few years, but it's nonetheless amazing to hear that zines like **Obsidian**, **Ode** and **The Cunning Plan** are still going so strong! **Minstrel** and **Hopscotch** are others I recognised, while I still regularly receive **To Win Just Once** from Pevans (who also contributes to **Tabletop SPIRIT Magazine** every so often!)...

I was particularly intrigued to see your comment about e-zines and those readers who casually might download zines from a website and not necessarily open it up, or even if they do they're often not reading it all... I think **Tabletop SPIRIT Magazine** suffers from this (and rest assured we have several thousand readers / subbers), and happen to agree with you, perhaps primarily because we've always tried to make it accessible and free — I have had extended discussions about the 'value' modern audiences put on things that are available for free, and I don't mind admitting that it's quite depressing, to be honest, especially when you consider how much effort goes into producing these things.

SA: I think people generally don't really value free stuff, as was proved when we started charging for plastic bags. Personally, that is why I would charge for missed GP or hospital appointments (even if some people could reclaim it), as I think the incidence of people going unnecessarily or not showing up would fall drastically. I know I must have people on the GSTZ mailing list who don't read it and can't be bothered to email me to take them off the list. I could do a purge – email everyone asking them to confirm they still want it – maybe I should do that.

I'm pretty sure every issue of **Tabletop SPIRIT** isn't being read from cover to cover, even by subscribers (which is possibly why it's even more important to hyperlink the content wherever you can, perhaps?), but I do also think this is a combination of making it freely available and the direct result of modern-day living. Needless to say, I'm truly amazed that so many postal gaming zines are still going strong+, and would be intrigued to know how many readers might still be submitting orders through the general post... (I think this might be very close to zero, but it'd be interesting to know! 😊)

SA: I have no players submitting orders by post. Even the few readers who have told me they would prefer to receive a paper zine, sent orders by email.

Perchance, I actually wrote something about 'my history in fandom' (so to speak) in the most recent issue of **Tabletop SPIRIT** (issue #29 – which you can access directly from the links below), and one of the things I touched upon in that piece is just how much time I used to spend sending out orders / trade copies, writing letters, 'arguing' with people, providing feedback and general commentary for the letter-column, etc. - how did we ever manage that!?

SA: I'm not sure, but it certainly isn't the hobby I see today. Everything today is in smaller chunks spread over various odd threads on Discord.

TSM #29 as an interactive webpage in your browser: https://bit.ly/TSM_29. And as a downloadable PDF: <https://bit.ly/TSM29>

In my feature entitled 'Let's Talk About... History, Databases, and Tabletop SPIRIT Magazine' I spend a fair bit of it talking through my own personal hobby history, alongside providing links to the latest database I have of **SPIRIT** material (and the articles / features and games reviewed in each issue), and was particularly pleased to see that you seem to be doing something very similar with your UK Diplomacy Archive (and I think that's been going many decades longer than mine, albeit perhaps not necessarily in its current format as a website?). Perhaps more importantly, actually providing the relevant links to check out so much of this kind of material is a huge boon — a true treasure trove for hobby historians new and old, I suspect!

SA: My ambition is to make all UK Diplomacy zines, all Diplomacy variants and an index of all Diplomacy articles available therein online. If I can achieve that before I die, I will be happy. I have been archiving zines online since 1998.

I would dearly love to work with you (and perhaps Conrad Woodring?) in helping to publicise and generally bring more awareness of this resource for our readers – and to the UK Diplomacy website, etc. and if indeed the Diplomacy hobby is experiencing some sort of revival and still going strong, where's it all coming from, and how can people get involved if they're interested, etc?

Of course, I'm not sure how much time either of you may have to help me with it, but I'm happy to work

with you on something, whether that's Conrad or yourself writing something trying to introduce a few things to our readers, providing an overview of the website / Patreon page, or talking about the European Diplomacy Championships coming to the UK for next year, etc. Moreover, I shouldn't be surprised necessarily, but I was very pleased to see more women appearing at the most recent London Diplomacy Club, hopefully this is also a positive trend for future competitions, etc?

It's probably worth adding that I have never been a fan of Diplomacy myself but am nonetheless very interested to see that it's still going so well, and would love to hear more about it, so please don't hold that against me!

SA: I'm sure we can come up with something – I'll put my thinking cap on!

Good to see so many letters included as well – this is something I genuinely really miss and struggle with, in regard to getting feedback on the work we're doing, etc.

SA: I think to have any chance at all, you have to get people to talk about things outside the world of gaming – there is just not enough to comment on otherwise. I rarely get letters about Diplomacy! But chatty letters do create a feeling of community and encourage people to contribute their views along the way.

CONRAD WOODRING

We've got some great young UK Diplomacy players and leaders in their 20s; Isaac Juckles, Mikalis Kamaritis, Bradley Grace, Andrew Yang and George Mork. Many of them bridge the face-to-face world. In 2026, Mikalis made the top board at the UK NDC and EDC as well as the virtual world diplomacy championships. Isaac Juckles runs the virtual diplomacy league as well as the face-to-face event the Steel Showdown in Middlesbrough.

In his first tournament ever, Andrew Yang made the top board at the 2026 EDC. Bradley Grace won the 2026 VDL and single handedly restarted the UK NDC. George Mork has been instrumental in driving the London Diplomacy Club's success, going so far as to buy a Santa suit for the end of the year event.

Are these youngsters the future of the hobby? Do you see any parallels between what's happening now

and the UK hobby of the prior generation? How do you feel about the increasingly blurry lines between virtual and face to face play?

SA: I certainly hope they are the future. The old Hobby was initially led by those who started it, who were a generation older than me. Sadly, they are mostly dead now – Don Turnbull, Richard Sharp, John Piggott, Richard Walkerdine, Mick Bullock. Only a handful remain, and they are not active, save perhaps for Paul Simpkins.

What any hobby needs is enthusiasm and ideas – and that tends to be what the younger members can bring. I hope that all these online players will discover that the best iteration of the game in the original one – i.e. face-to-face. And that online players will move from platforms to Virtual to Face-to-Face. I guess all have their place. My only regret is that face-to-face Diplomacy is only ever played in a castrated form – games are unnaturally cut off in their prime. The only true game of Diplomacy is one to the bitter end, if only to prove Calhamer right when he said that no game of Diplomacy should ever be won outright if played properly.

This year two virtual events - virtual Tour of Britain and Seven Years War - were counted as part of the European Grand Prix. The Grand Prix has only ever been a face-to-face series until now. Perhaps now that the Grand Prix includes online events it will be accessible to a broader audience? Maybe someone other than Gwen Maggi will win?

It would be great to hear more from these young leaders in the pages of your zine, as well as words of wisdom from hobby veterans like yourself, Jeremy Tullett and Toby Harris.

SA: Well, Bradley sent in a great contribution this issue. And Hugh Edmonds contributed to last issue. I will try to encourage everyone to have their say, though maybe there is a generational thing going on in that I'm not sure if young people really read magazines? This zine is about as far from Discord as you can get.

MIKE ELLIOTT

As you all know, I am an American. I want to proactively apologize for the stunningly crazy behaviour of President Donald Trump. I didn't support him; I helped to campaign against him and certainly didn't vote for him in any general election. My view of him is that of a narcissistic sociopath who

is also profoundly stupid. He scares me and pretty much everyone else I know. Maybe, after the midterm elections this November, we will have a House of Representatives with a modicum of spine who can suppress his worst attempts to screw up the world.

So, please don't take it out on me.

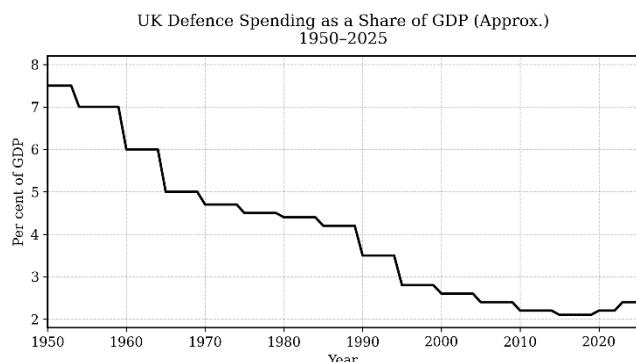
SA: It is remarkable how far Trump has moved the dial on what is acceptable. He is beyond parody. The “Board of Peace” – £1bn to join, Trump is Chairman for life, and he exclusively gets to choose his successor. Even Putin is invited to join. Haha. As I said, beyond parody.

That said, Trump’s comments about European assistance in Afghanistan consisting of troops hiding behind the front line has probably done more than any other thing to make him a hated figure here. The UK troops had a larger fatality rate than the USA. Ironically, as a percentage, Denmark lost the most soldiers. And the Europeans were only there because America invoked Article 5 of the NATO Treaty to get them there. I know people who were Trump supporters, who now can’t stand him, as a direct result of that comment.

MIKE BENYON

I've just been imagining a game of diplomacy involving the current world leaders. I'm not sure the game would even get started as Trump would probably insist on playing Russia as it starts with more units than anyone else. Putin would attack other countries for no apparent reason while Starmer would pussyfoot around doing nothing.

SA: While everyone else would just start with only 2 units each and then order them to hold rather than doing anything.



Interesting that The Times this morning reported that defence is now rising rapidly as one of the most

pressing issues voters are worried about (though issue number 1 remains immigration, which I simply don’t get). When I was growing up, we were spending around 5% of GDP on defence every year, we are currently at around 2.4%. I think we have forgotten what real defence spending looks like and have thought the post-Cold War period was the norm, rather than an anomaly. We would prefer to spend our money supporting those who don’t want to work, whereas we used to support those who couldn’t work. Still, nothing on earth will ever make me vote Tory/Reform.

TOM HOWELL

It wasn't with a crowd of Dip players, but back when I was in Seattle, I used to go to dinner with a group of acquaintances. It was always Chinese (or so preponderantly so, that I don't recall other cuisines).

Everyone would order a dish, plus the obligatory rice, which would go onto the lazy susan in the centre of the table and everyone would help themselves to whatever they fancied as the susan rotated. I usually ended up with the cheque, wrote the total on the back thereof, added ten percent, added half of that, totalled the three amounts, then divided by the number of us at the table - longhand when necessary. I don't recall anyone complaining about having overpaid for what they had eaten.

SA: Sounds like a good way of dealing with it, provided the group is fairly like-minded. I think it only gets difficult if some people just drink water or if some have 3 courses and some have 2. But life really is too short to get worked up, provided you can afford it.

On the climate change issue, the problem is that there are so many of us, that one individual probably won't have an effect. However, if all of us made the effort, then possibly yes. I live about a half hour from town and try to limit my trips in to once a week. I could consider the bus, but the places I go to in town are too spread out for me to want to visit them on foot after getting off the bus. Plus, I'm getting to the age where hauling a weeks' worth of groceries in a backpack a half mile with 200 feet of elevation gain has lost its charm.

SA: I take your point, but I am not sure even all the individuals in the world can make up for the change in US Government policy when Trump was elected.

BRENDAN WHYTE

There are two R v Bourne's: 1938 and 1952. you mean the 1952, but a google tends to produce more 1938s (with photos of Bourne) than the 1952s. I can't find a photo of 1952's Sydney Joseph Bourne, but surely the tabloids would have dogg(i)ed him for life... what a mongrel. Pity poor Adelaide....

SA: I have a subscription to newspapers.com – but can't find any reference to the case anywhere. Maybe it was too shocking to print?

MARTIN DAVIS

“One of ours, all of yours”

I've grown accustomed to the coarsening of political dialogue in the last twenty years. Both my grandfathers were life-long Conservatives (in sociological terms, one was deferential, the other aspirational). However, I cannot begin to imagine their reaction if the Deputy Leader of the party were to use the second most offensive word in common English usage in an official response to the problem of migrants in small boats. (Lee Anderson is now an MP for Reform.)



Nevertheless, when I saw this photograph of Kristi Noem, the Republican Governor of South Dakota, currently US Secretary of Homeland Security, addressing a Press Conference in the immediate aftermath of the shooting in Minneapolis of Renee Good, I thought, “That's a bit below the belt!”.

(The accompanying photograph of Good was taken by an ICE officer, less than 30 seconds before she was shot in the face). (I'm not an American citizen, but I've always felt it to be an important part of the responsibility of law enforcement agencies that official representatives should be identifiable, so that they can be distinguished from paramilitary

snatch squads or criminal abductions. Consequently, the way that ICE agents cloak themselves in anonymity has always seemed completely wrong to me.)



Nevertheless, I thought, cutting and pasting old Gestapo slogans on to contemporary photographs cheapens political debate.

Then the Irony Meter went “BOING!” and fell off the wall! **“One of ours, All of yours”** was not a Gestapo slogan from Lidice or Oradour-sur-Glane. It's not even a handwritten note on a bulletin board put together as a protest by disgruntled officers who've just lost a colleague (as in *Blue Lights*). Displayed on official news conferences, it's beyond what any civilised country should advertise.

SA: The sheer callousness of the MAGA movement in the US is truly shocking. I have been to Oradour-sur-Glane – it is a very haunting and sobering place and something I will never forget. Sadly, since you sent in your letter, ICE have killed another protestor in Minnesota. If anything, the film of the event is even more damning this time. It is tragic to see paramilitaries behaving like this on the streets of a US city.

CHRIS TRINGHAM

You don't seem to have informed us which of your houses you might have sold! I'm guessing that it's the mad one near Stansted airport and you plan to relocate to Kings Lynn? OK, you do say that at the bottom of page 10.

SA: Haha. I hope we are not making a big mistake. The nightmare scenario is that after 18 months we have to take back possession of this house. It could go

horribly wrong. But sometimes you just have to be bold if you want to move on in life. My current worry is that how on earth are we going to get all our stuff into a house half the size?

Bit ridiculous that your solicitors had missed your emails - I think IT can be a real problem for small organizations, including solicitors and accountants. It only requires very basic competence to check your incoming email and what goes to spam and other folders, but it relies on everyone doing that. It's one reason why I think email isn't really fit for purpose - what they really need is for all the information to be available to the multiple people who need to follow up or monitor progress. Instead, there are emails scattered across multiple folders in multiple email accounts.

SA: Hell, I can't even find my own emails, I have so many email accounts for different purposes. I particularly dislike the two email addresses I have for companies I do some work for, as they are Microsoft Exchange accounts which sometimes try to hijack my PC. Then I try to keep personal stuff away from Diplomacy with different email accounts. It can get very complicated very quickly. On the other hand, I do share a household gmail account with Rebecca for domestic stuff (utilities etc.) which means we both get the emails and we can both log in to everything.

One common workaround for this is that people in a team may know each other's passwords or even have access to each other's accounts, which is a whole other world of madness.

I think maybe Lotus Notes tried to solve this problem, but it seems as if most people didn't understand what it was supposed to achieve. And it was complex to set up (and probably easy to get wrong), whereas GMail is easy(ish) but not really much help.

SA: I used to use Lotus Notes at work and I think it was before its time. Microsoft just killed it by leveraging the Windows OS.

In addition, I have a general theory that most organizations are incompetent. Or perhaps it's a lot of people in most organizations. Or maybe I've been very unlucky - or I am being unreasonable?

SA: I think all organisations have their blind spots, sometimes created by having too few managers, sometimes by having too many. The more managers

you have, the more stuff they do in order to justify their jobs, the more meetings you have, the more opinions you get, the longer decisions take to make and the more risk adverse you become. At least that is my experience. But if you have too few, not enough is challenged, decisions are taken in haste and can become very risky indeed. There must be a sensible middle ground somewhere.

Accountants often don't seem to understand accounting principles, solicitors don't really check all the details, and don't get me started on IT (my chosen field) or HR (my personal bête noir).

As it happens, I came across a letter in **Filibuster 51** from Geoff Challinger, complaining that his employers at the time (an accounting firm in late 1981) expected him to prepare accounts for a company "whether or not [they] have the source information." Some things never change. I've recently had to deal with so-called accountants who have been preparing Financial Reports that are just plain wrong. They seem to have asked a few basic questions, not got much in the way of a useful response and then carried on regardless and prepared the Financial Statements that no-one seems to have understood or checked. Plus, they were terrible at replying to emails, just like your solicitors.

SA: I think that was true then, but less so today. Too many of the big accountancy firms have had some fairly chunky fines for not preparing accurate Financial Reports, particularly for listed companies. KPMG had a £30m fine for Carillion a couple of years ago. Having said that, I always thought that auditors were remarkably easy to convince of more or less anything.

I think I'd agree with 1981 Geoff that a lot of the problem is poor managers. I can only think of two or three of my managers who I really learned from, compared with quite a few who I really didn't respect - sometimes I triumphed, sometimes I didn't (and yes probably I would have lasted longer if I'd worked the way they wanted) - and a few who were OK but nothing more.

SA: As I worked for one company for almost my whole working life, I had better be careful what I say here. I think that all of my bosses over the years were intelligent people. But some of them had terrible behaviours. One would just stand next to me and shout in my face. Unsurprisingly, most people never told her what she didn't want to hear. I outlasted all

of my managers and was only made redundant in 2020 when my boss was made redundant himself at the same time.

In my experience, managers rarely seem to give meaningful, actionable feedback. I've had appraisals / reviews when my boss clearly didn't know what I had done, so I've been praised for things I hadn't done and heard complaints that came 'out of the blue' because I hadn't been told at the time what I'd done wrong (maybe because the feedback really came from someone else).

As a manager, I've read appraisals (written by someone who reported to me) that recycled the same meaningless phrases for multiple people. These days they probably use ChatGPT.

I've even been asked to write my own review! Sure, OK, I can do that, it's obviously not important.

SA: My honest belief is that for most people appraisals aren't that important. Most people are OK, you can tweak the odd behaviour here or there, but no big deal. Where it matters is (a) if someone is terrible and you need to prepare the way to get rid of them or (b) where someone is brilliant and you need to recognise and encourage them. As a senior manager at Royal Mail I wrote my own appraisal most years and let my manager approve it. At least it got done that way – and getting an appraisal completed was key to getting a bonus (assuming there were any bonuses to be got, which often there weren't).

It really baffles me. Surely, as a manager, you should know the strengths and weaknesses of your team and what they have done well and badly in the year, and you should want to know who are the good people at the next level down in the organization.

More than once, I was able to get rid of a bad manager who reported to me and promote someone else who was more capable, but it seems that's too much trouble for most people, who are happy to just leave things as they are.

Does that make me seem like a bad person or arrogant? I believe that I always made it clear to people what they were doing wrong and that they understood. And in other cases, I have seen people improve significantly, and I like to believe that my coaching and feedback helped them.

SA: Many people don't feel at ease with difficult conversations. I don't enjoy them myself, but I can

do them. What I really hated though was "forced distribution" which we had in our appraisals system for years. You had to list everyone you were responsible for in order of merit. It was compulsory to exit the bottom 5% and to give the next 15% of the distribution curve an "underperforming" rating and deny them pay rises. Even if you had a high-performing team, which met all objectives and targets, the bottom 20% got no pay rise. Totally unfair. The one time my manager tried to do that to me even though I'd met every commercial target, I complained and they backed down.

Yes, yes, but what about me? I have been made redundant several times, and for all they said about it not being about me I have to admit that I am probably a bit "difficult" and not so great at playing company politics.

At one time I knew that there was a secretish plan afoot to make me redundant and hire a replacement in another country (it was on slide 128 of a presentation that someone shared with me, presumably without checking what it contained). This duly happened but it took a long time - and at one point our HR Director sent me a screenshot that was supposed to highlight an IT problem but inadvertently showed me his email inbox with some incoming messages referring to hiring my replacement. The person they eventually recruited was completely useless and was fired within a few months.

SA: A very similar thing happened to me. The CEO often had back-to-back meetings, and often people were dialling in. It could get chaotic as often his meetings overran and you could dial in at the wrong time. I dialled in on schedule and joined what I thought was the right meeting – but it was the previous one and they were talking about me and how I would react to being moved down or out of the company. I knew if I hung up the software would announce "Stephen Agar has left the meeting", so I just kept quiet. It was rather unsettling.

DANE MASLEN

I was shocked by the Diplomacy Zines section of the Zine Poll results. Had I remembered to vote (there seems to have been an outbreak of forgetfulness by zine editors: Rob Thomasson has also admitted forgetting), I had been going to place **GSTZ** first in that section.

SA: That's really nice of you. Thanks. Zines are so much work to produce; I think all zine editors deserve an award (and their heads examined)!

TOBY HARRIS

Hoping you are feeling better now. Also hoping your spirits are in no way dampened by the Zine Poll results.

Your Zines have always been as great imho as any Zine I have known since the 1970's. And it used to always be such a great coup when a Zine editor came up with something new. For example, I recall "Grrrr-ing" and "Grumbling" (with admiration of course) when you decorated your **Spring Offensive's** Christmas issue logo (in the 1990's) with snow. Equally I dare say it was every other editor's gnashing moment of pure envy the day I released the first Freaky Fungus with the tag-line being "in **Fungi Colour**".

Lol, getting access to that first colour photocopier was a gem! And that's why we edit (or in my case, used to edit); to break barriers. And you do that Stephen. Always the perfectly presented zine.

SA: You are so good for my ego, Toby. Maybe in this issue I have gone a bit over the top?

CHRIS TRINGHAM

You may have heard about the Office of Budget Responsibility inadvertently releasing details of the budget an hour or so before Rachel Reeves stood up to deliver her speech. The OBR was deliberately created as a small independent entity rather than part of a bigger government department, but that left it with minimal admin and IT support, so they were using WordPress without fully understanding how it works. It's possible that you know more about it than they do!

The reports were put on their website in advance, and their plan was that when the chancellor sat down they would publish the main page with the links. They hadn't realized that journalists (and maybe others) knew what URL to look for. And there it was https://obr.uk/docs/dlm_uploads/OBR_Economic_and_fiscal_outlook_November_2025.pdf which is easy enough to guess based on what they released in previous years.

SA: I run a few WordPress websites. The way the work is that you have to upload all media files (such

as PDFs) to the media library, which is in a default location (that you can discern by looking at other documents on the site) and visible to the Internet. If you then call the document something very predictable then yes, you do run the risk of it leaking early. What idiots.

I think you're right that many people have an age when they can master technology and then after that it gets too difficult. My father had a laptop in his 70s and managed to do the most amazing things to sabotage it. I escaped responsibility for this by being in Hong Kong, not sure my siblings have forgiven me for that!

SA: My dear mother-in-law once sorted all her email by reverse date order and started to reply to emails six years old. Fortunately, I spotted what she had done.

One thing that tests my patience is when a short press on a button does one thing, a medium press does something else, and a long press does another thing altogether. I have managed to switch off this nonsense with the earbuds I mainly use (though I do occasionally regret this). Presumably the youth are fine with this type of UI.

SA: A shit interface is a shit interface.

Related to this, I have the problem of trying to explain technology to my wife. She's younger than me and better educated and speaks several more languages than I do. I guess I'm a bit of a geek / nerd, whereas she is more of a "people person". And, yes, since you ask, I did have a Smartphone 24 years ago.

I try to look at it from Ada's perspective, and it makes me realize that simple things are far too complicated and also that small changes to the UI (or bizarre differences depending upon how exactly you do something) can be very confusing. These types of changes make **me** a bit frustrated, but I'll (usually) keep searching for what to do, whereas Ada will often just give up.

SA: Rebecca has certainly given up on operating the TV. One of the wonders of modern entertainment electronics is the proliferation of remotes and the baffling combination of key presses on different remotes in the right order to get everything working. Whereas once you could see what was available to watch by looking at the TV Times, now you have to look at the online programme guide and then consult multiple Apps and streaming services before you can

choose what to watch. If you like football, you have to find which of the four different places to watch football the game might be being shown on. And this is progress?

I can just about see the logic of not having a smartphone, but it makes life very inconvenient. I have one friend who doesn't have one, and the main impact (for me) is that he isn't in the WhatsApp group where a group of us arrange to meetup. So, someone else relays messages to him by SMS (or we have to use Facebook, ugh).

For example, being able to take a photo of some Chinese text and then translate it (either standard Google Translate or an app) is super useful. It's also handy in other languages, of course.

SA: Smart phones have replaced cameras. And the camera on the Smartphone has replaced notebooks. Why write something down if you can just photograph it.

It drives me mad (in Hong Kong particularly) when I see people walking along looking at their phone screen, and there are amusing videos of people falling into and off things because they aren't looking where they are going.

SA: If you do that in the UK, particularly the West End of London, you just get your phone nicked by someone on a moped.

Or the parents with small children who either give the child or phone a tablet to pacify them or are on their smartphones when they should be engaging with their offspring.

SA: I used to stick my kids in front of Teletubbies.

I don't think I have quite the same experience as you do with paper vs electronic versions. I still subscribe to the print edition of **The Economist** and **Private Eye** (which doesn't put most of its content online, though there is an e-magazine format available about a week after publication). I have also subscribed to other magazines but then I realized that I wasn't actually reading them. Or, in the case of **The Critic**, that whilst it might sometimes have interesting articles (mainly from a different political viewpoint to my own) the vast majority of what they publish is unfortunately terrible nonsense.

SA: As a publisher, putting out a print edition of a zine is just a pain in the arse and very expensive. I couldn't afford to print or post something as long as

*this issue. As a reader, I like paper – I subscribe to the paper version of **New Scientist** and **History Today**. Paper is much better to keep by the loo.*

Have you seen the report that the Danish postal service has stopped delivering letters? Obviously, I don't send people letters these days, though it does remind me that I conducted a long-distance courtship of my now wife using the medium of airmail some 30 years ago. These days my main concern would be not being able to get those two print magazines!

SA: Denmark is an outlier as the Government there has been forcing the digital agenda for quite some time – everything to do with Government is online and they have relentlessly pushed for all services to go that way. Their letter volumes were never massive, and they had a very small direct mail market. The UK is a long way from that. The NHS doesn't have email addresses for most people. We don't even have a paper ID card, let alone a digital one. Everyday letters will go one day though – they will become a premium service for uses where digitisation is either impossible or undesirable.

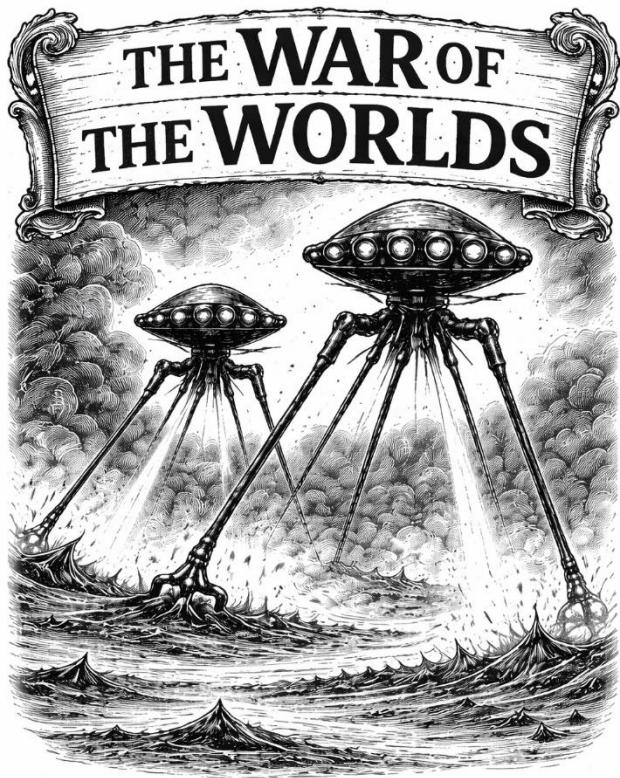


Andrew Greco, Keith Smith, Rosi Sexton

ANDREW GRECO

Vick Hall told me about the London Trophy photos recently placed on Facebook **Postal Gaming Old Duffers**. I'm not on Facebook myself but I looked them up and can confirm they were from the London Trophy at the Royal George pub by Euston Station on Saturday 21st September 1996. Colin Hobbs has a diary entry for the event. Gihan was the tournament director. I can hardly believe it will be thirty years this year.

SA: It is worth joining Facebook just for UK Postal Gaming Zine Hobby Old Duffers group alone!



by Stephen Agar

This variant is loosely based on the book War of the Worlds by H. G. Wells. In the book strange cylinders crash down onto the earth's surface having come all the way from the planet Mars. Curious noises emanate from the white cylinders, too hot for people to investigate. Eventually, out from the heat emerge great towering fighting machines equipped with a deadly heat ray with which they begin to destroy human civilization. In the book, eventually the Martians succumb to earthly disease, in this game humanity may not be so lucky.

So, the question is, can the Great Powers of Europe who are fighting each other to control Europe, simultaneously find enough common cause to save humanity?

*Acknowledgements to Martian Diplomacy (rm46)
by Jonathan Lingard*

1. Rules are exactly as for standard Diplomacy except as stated below.
2. An eighth power is present on the board at some time during the game, this is in the form of the Martians. Martians do not diplomate, they destroy. The Martian movement is controlled by the GM.
3. The Martians are not present on the board at the beginning of the game.

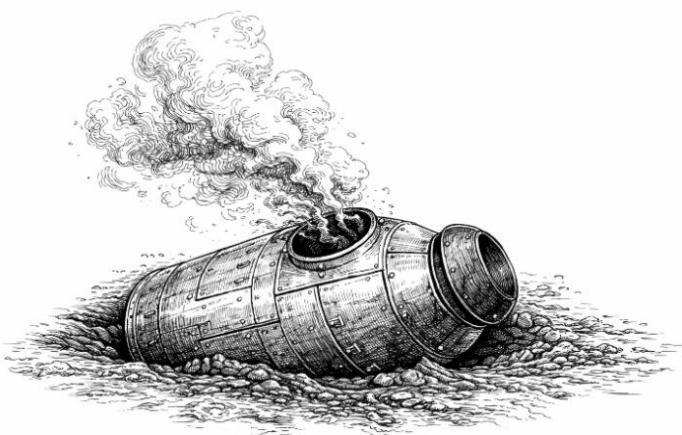
The Martians Land

4. Martian cylinders arrive in three waves, 18 months apart. The first wave of Martians land after Autumn 1901 adjustments. The second wave after Spring 1903 Adjustments. The final wave after Autumn 1904 Adjustments. Each wave consists of eight cylinders.

5. For one season after arrival a cylinder is inert and has a combat value of 1 for the purposes of defending itself and will be destroyed if dislodged. However, while a cylinder is inert any regular unit can simultaneously occupy the space without needing to dislodge the cylinder and thus prevent Martians emerging (see below). After the initial season is finished (i.e. after retreats/adjustments) the cylinder will convert into a Martian unit, provided the cylinder is not being contained by the presence of a conventional unit.

6. Before any season when a wave of Martians is going to land, players can submit with their orders suggestions as to where they think Martians should land. The landing point for the cylinders will then be determined by the GM in accordance with the totality of these player votes, save that one cylinder **must** land in the home territory of each Power, while the eighth cylinder **must** arrive in a space that is initially neutral. In the event of a tie, Martians follow the alphabet. Cylinders will not land in home SCs. Cylinders do not land in sea spaces (or at least if they did, they sank).

7. While a cylinder is inert, it may be contained by any unit in or moving into that space. Thus, players may stop Martians from emerging. However, should that space ever be left vacant for whatever reason, then a Martian unit will emerge at the end of the turn in which the centre becomes vacant.



Martian Units

8. One a Martian unit emerges it has a combat value of 1½, thus a single Martian unit can dislodge an unsupported conventional unit, but two conventional units can destroy a Martian. Martians can also move on land or sea (as per the original novel).

9. Martians just want to destroy. If they occupy a SC, they instantly annihilate it. However, they are solitary creatures and do not support each other, nor can they receive support. If a Martian unit is dislodged it is always destroyed.

10. Before any season when Martians are on the board, players can submit with their orders suggestions as to where they think the Martians should move. However, Martians move according to the following algorithm.

Martians always move in the following order:

- (a) to an adjacent SC (if more than one adjacent, GM decides based on the player votes, alphabetical for ties)
- (b) to a non-SC space which is itself adjacent to an unoccupied SC (if more than one, GM decides based on the player votes, alphabetical for ties)
- (c) to a non-SC space which is itself adjacent to an occupied SC (if more than one, GM decides based on the player votes, alphabetical for ties)

However, all of the above is subject to the overriding rule that Martian units always push forward, so they will never move back to the space which they came from the previous turn – and will always move to a fresh space in preference to a space they have occupied before.

Victory

Should all Martians be destroyed, all remaining players share equally in a victory for humanity.

Should any player at the end of any season control more than half of the SCs still on the board they win the game, even if Martians are still active.

Commentary

The Martians arrive all over the board and inconvenience everybody. They can immediately be neutralised by occupying the space, but then that unit is tied up. That means there are difficult choices about how to allocate your resources. Obviously, the need is to grow, but you might find that by taking a

centre off a neighbour, he has to remove a unit and thus free a Martian. Martians are hard to kill.

In keeping with the spirit of Diplomacy, I have attempted to remove all randomness – everything is under the control of the players or predictable.



by Richard Hucknall

The following is an edited version of Richard Hucknall's report of the peculiar activities that took place in game 79DE ('FOE 21') as published in Fall of Eagles 43 (April 1980) with comments from other people as reported in Fall Of Eagles 44, Richard is the GM, Bruce Foster (Austria), Sam Moore (Turkey) and John Lee (France) are the players involved.

Bruce Foster and Sam Moore are personal friends. Bruce contrived to obtain Sam's signature at the bottom of a sheet of paper. Sam thought he was signing a birthday card, but in fact this was a cleverly planned coup on Bruce's part. However, having written Turkish orders, Bruce was not prepared merely to post the sheet, and decided to drive up from South Wales to Nottingham on the day of the deadline and give me the orders at the last possible moment (to ensure that Sam couldn't countermand the orders).

After an eventful journey which included writing-off his car in an accident in Birmingham and a visit to hospital, Bruce arrived at my house 124 minutes before the deadline with what I considered to be a valid set of orders bearing Sam Moore's undoubtedly genuine signature. Bruce had kept me informed of

every development of the sting, but I could see no reason why the orders should not be allowed.

[The 'Turkish' orders including a convoy for an Austrian unit into Ankara, plus strategic withdrawals from four supply centres! Turkey moved from 8 centres to 3]

Naturally, Sam phoned to find out what the hell was going on. After discussing it at great length, he grudgingly accepted my ruling. Then, John Lee discovered what had happened, and the following season I received from him a set of orders for the Italian units, "signed" by Richard Marsh. However, the signature was at the top of the orders and appeared to have been torn from the bottom of a letter - the few inches below the signature being blank paper. John admitted that this was what he had done, as a protest against my allowing the 'Turkish' orders ((he explained all this at great length in his zine, *Voice*)).

The nub of the problem is whether one player can give another a blank sheet of paper with his signature that could be validly used to order his units, and whether he should inform the GM. If the GM is told, why bother with the signature?

STUART DAGGER: John's orders had to be illegal. But having decided that, it seems that the only difference between these orders and Bruce's is that the latter was clever and the former crude. Sam was the victim of a bad, if understandable, decision.

ROB CHAPMAN: I think you were wrong to accept Bruce Foster's Turkish orders. You were well aware of what was going on and knew the orders delivered to you were not Sam Moore's intended orders for Turkey. He had not given authorisation for Bruce Foster to order his units: a signature is not authorisation. A player should not be able to order another player's units without proper authorisation.

PAUL VANE: Letting one country write another's orders, whether with their permission or without it is not at all desirable, and should be cut out by the GM.

MIKE CLOSE: Sam Moore made two mistakes - the obvious one was to sign a blank page whilst a fellow Diplomacy player was holding it: The other mistake was to get involved in a game with a close friend.

RH: Hmm. So where does that leave us? A quick count of heads shows John Lee as misguided as ever. Eight saying I was right, eleven saying I was wrong. Everyone agreed that John Lee's Italian orders were

illegal. I stand by my decision, and I would do the same again. However, the occurrence does highlight the shortcomings of postal rules for Diplomacy, not that I think there is anything that can be done to rectify it. When GM's can't agree over Spring 1901 NMRs unordered disbands, draw proposals, standbys or anarchy etc., what chance have we of producing basic standard house rules? There will always be disputes over adjudications from time to time and there is no way that house rules can cater for every eventuality. My advice is always to contact the GM if you're not sure how a certain situation will be adjudicated, whether in FOE or any other zine.

SA: Analogous situations can happen even now, with the possibility of spoofed emails or even AI generated voice calls handing over control of units. That said, I think the position is straightforward – no GM should ever accept orders in the knowledge that the player did not authorise them. And deception of the GM should always be unlawful. Where I think Richard erred, is in accepting orders he knew were not those intended by the player.



by Stephen Agar

0. All the usual rules of Diplomacy apply.
1. Two of the players in a game of Diplomacy will be informed privately that they are Traitors, but they will not be informed of each other's identities. The other five players are Faithfuls.
2. Traitors can communicate with each other via the GM, but the GM will take care not to disclose their identities to each other.

3. **“Banishment”:** After every Autumn adjustment phase, all players (including the Traitors) vote to identify a player as a Traitor. The player who receives the most votes is the banished. The players are then told if they have indeed identified a Traitor. The banished player NMRs for the following move, all of their units standing un-ordered and then rejoins the game the season after. In the event of a tie in the vote, no one is accused of being a Traitor. An identified Traitor loses their “Traitor” status and becomes a Faithful

4. **“Recruitment”:** Provided there are at least five players remaining active in the game, the GM will then (at his discretion) choose one of the other players to become a Traitor and thus ensure there are two Traitors in the game. Players can be a Traitor more than once in the game, but not consecutively.

5. If a Traitor is eliminated from the game through losing all his centres, his Traitor status is lost with him and he is not replaced. Any remaining Traitor must then work alone. However, if a Traitor drops out of the game, his Traitor status is disclosed, and another Traitor will be appointed as per rule 4.

6. **“Murder”**: After every Spring adjustment phase (apart from 1901) the Traitors can vote to annihilate any supply centre on the board permanently. Only where there is agreement will a SC be removed.

7. Traitors may reveal their status to any one they choose, but players may also lie about their Traitor status. It is not usually in the interest of Traitors to be revealed.

8. In addition to winning the game in the usual fashion:

(a) any Traitor included in any draw agreed between surviving players automatically wins the game (if both Traitors are present inside the draw they share victory) to the exclusion of all Faithfuls; and

(b) if after any Autumn adjustment phase the Traitors between themselves own a majority of the SCs on the board, then they jointly win the game.

9. A Faithful will win the game if he owns a majority of the units on the board at the end of any turn.

10. All surviving Faithfuls will share in a draw if there are no Traitors left on the board at the end of any turn.

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The Right Honourable Mr. S. White is empowered to dispose of the numerous islands in Her Majesty's Consideration at present, and Her Majesty's Government guarantee the neutrality of our said Colonies. The Secretary of State for the Colonies guarantees the neutrality of our said Colonies. The colonies and dependencies may be reduced by 65 per cent in cost and trouble, the purchase or acquisition of the dependency on various island bases facilitating the spending on various island bases, of which shall be identified, the spending on various island bases, of which shall be identified. Vendors shall regard my proposal without notice.



Golden Years

ENDGAME REPORT

	1901	1902	1903	1904	1905	1906	1907	1908	1909	
Austria (Mike Pollard)	5	7	7	7	9*	7	7	9	11	=1 st
England (Colin Smith)	4	6	6	7	7	8	10	13	15*	=1 st
France (Icalar Black)	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	3*	1*	Dropout A08
Germany (Nathan Deily)	6	7	7	7	6	6*	5	3	0	Dropout A09
Italy (Ian Bond)	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	5	7	=1 st
Russia (Hans Swift)	6	4	4	3*	4	5**	4	1	0	4 th
Turkey (Martin Davis)	3	1	1	1	0					7 th

* Indicates a unit short.

Golden Years: 2024BA

Started February 2024 (GSTZ #13)

Ended December 2025 (GSTZ #32)

GM: Stephen Agar

Austria (Mike Pollard) (=1st)

I think Austria's only chance of getting a good result is to somehow discourage the juggernaut and get either Russia or Turkey to side with Austria instead. I only heard later on that one of them (I think it was Turkey) wanted to form the juggernaut, but it didn't quite work out. Maybe Martin's health problems at the start of the game, which interfered with his correspondence, was a factor. Either way, Hans

seemed friendly and we agreed a DMZ in Gal, while Italy was happy to remain at peace.

But then it all started going wrong. Russia made hostile moves against Germany, England and Turkey, which I think secured his demise, as you can't make that many enemies at once. I don't know whether this forced England and Germany into their long alliance, or whether the three western powers had planned their alliance from the start, but I guess we'll hear soon enough. Certainly, France never showed any sign of deviating from their alliance and contented himself with attacking Italy from the start.

From my point of view, a strong eastern alliance had to be formed asap, and there were good opportunities to help either Russia or Turkey against the other.

Unfortunately, neither one agreed to my suggestions and were more intent on attacking each other. So, I decided to attack both of them and try to emerge as the dominant eastern power, relying on Italy to hold back France while I held back Germany and England. My big mistake at that point was to support Germany into War, which was a desperate move to hasten Russia's downfall. It quickly became obvious that I was going to get nothing in return from Germany, and the western alliance was looking more ominous each season.

I thought our only chance was to make peace between all four eastern powers and form a stalemate line, but this proved impossible to do, mainly because Russia and Turkey's units were so madly out of position and we didn't have time to convert Russia's ineffectual units into useful ones. After the Spring 1904 adjudication, it was obvious that the western alliance would eventually win. The best we could hope for, if we played on, was to successfully outguess them every season on 50/50 chances, as their alliance didn't look likely to crack. I suppose one could question whether it's in the spirit of the game to establish a 3-way alliance that's never going to be broken, resulting in an almost guaranteed 3-way win? The only other possible outcome is an equally strong eastern alliance which results in a stalemate and an even larger shared win. Both outcomes seem rather pointless, but maybe that's the state of Dip after all these years with the same pool of experienced players.

However, the western alliance made a mess of their orders in 1905, enabling us to make their task a bit trickier. They were still heavy favourites to win, but it was worth fighting on for a while. For some reason, Russia unnecessarily took Sev from Turkey, and followed that by sailing into Rum, which was mine. It almost seemed like Hans was trying to help the western alliance to win! At this stage, it was really useful and fun to discuss tactics with Italy, as we tried to come up with unexpected combinations.

Hans continued to disrupt the eastern position, making me wonder whether he'd been recruited by the western alliance, although surely, he couldn't expect to get anything in return? When our defences looked completely compromised, I decided it would be worth abandoning the front line and eliminate Russia instead. Maybe a petty revenge, but so worth it! However, the western alliance's orders continued to be faulty; England grew frustrated and decided to

stab his partners. At first, we were sceptical of Colin's promises, thinking that he already had a great result in the bag without taking such a big risk. But he turned out to be genuine, which totally saved our skins.

We agreed a different 3-way draw in principle, but first eliminated Germany, France and Russia. We (Italy & Austria) were still very cautious about England, as he could easily have tried for an outright win, but we kept it tight and got what felt like a most unlikely draw. I would never have stabbed Italy just to get a 2-way win, because Ian had been such a good ally in the most dire circumstances.

Many thanks to all players, especially Ian and Colin, and to the GM.

England (Colin Smith) (=1st)

I hadn't played England in a game of dip for a long time but had always wanted to try and form a 3-way alliance of England, Germany, and France, but it had always failed early if it had started at all. But this time all of us seemed to be up for the idea, and off we went! My dream of an English land invasion of Russia and an Army in Ankara seemed possible, and for the majority of the game the plan seemed to be working, and to be honest I would have followed the plan to game end!

But then Germany started telling us he would be ordering ABC, but actually ordered XYZ, so many plans were failing, apparently, I or France hadn't got the updated plans.... So I started to make overtures to Austria, and he was obviously very wary of any suggestions I was making, but I was able to show my conviction, without raising suspicion, by letting him know the German plans before time, which allowed me to build trust, then we had a few NMR's in the western alliance, and I was able to take advantage, and swap sides! Then the plan was to work with Austria, remove Russia and finish off the others, Italy was a friend of Austria, so I felt I should let him stay, even though he started pushing his own agenda in Iberia!

Sadly, some health issues on my part added to the feeling a draw was the best result, and Austria deserved his part in that, and although to be honest I would have preferred just a 2 way, Italy got a spot.

Italy (Ian Bond) (=1st)

Playing Italy, my default is to support Austria from the beginning and otherwise wait and see what

transpires. Austria and I quickly established trust, and I turned my attention to the west. Remarkably, particularly in such a slow-paced game, I received silence from both England and France, and Germany wasn't interested in my overtures of a joint move against France. The opening moves clearly signalled that France was moving towards the Med, and as the first year or two panned out, it became clear that we were facing a very solid E/F/G (an alliance that lack of engagement with other players suggested might have carried forward from pre-game relationships, I don't know?). Against such a powerful alliance, the A/I could only do our best to hold the line as best we could, and look for chances to sow some discord (which didn't really arise). Tactically, my game was uninteresting with the usual France vs Italy logjam of fleets in the western Med; with England lending France naval support and Germany moving an army down into the Alps, my position steadily worsened. We were doomed and heading for the inevitable three-way E/F/G, unless her allies turned on Germany.

My position was rescued by a French NMR that turned into disappearance from the game, allowing me to recover and start to send fleets west. With England then disappearing, the only player then with a credible path to the solo was Germany, and my alliance with Austria held firm as we both looked to close off Germany's route to the 18. Had the game continued, it might have been a close-run thing, but on balance I think we had both the position and relationship necessary to force the draw; in the event Germany recognised this and the game ended with the A/I/G; a draw I don't feel I did a huge amount to earn.

Overall, I found this a disappointing game - it is my first longform one (being used to online games with multiple moves a week), and it had neither diplomatic nor tactical complexity, and players not really willing to engage and who eventually walked away. My apologies if this differs from the usual "good game, everyone" EOG, but in this case, aside from very friendly and positive correspondence I had with Austria, the honest summary is that this game sadly had little to commend it.

Turkey (Martin Davis) (7th)

As far as I'm concerned, the game was memorable for two reasons. In the first place, I found it impossible to think about any move in the game

without (IMHO) Bowie's catchiest riff (F#7 apparently!) going through my head - and staying there for the rest of the day! Damn, there it goes again!

Secondly, I was stitched up like a kipper (as they say in the best British B movies of the 1950s). I was Turkey, I thought that I had a good relationship with Hans's Russia - and he double crossed me good and proper from the start. Fair enough - I should have mobilised allied support, but I didn't. Something distracted me, and I was lost. But then, so was he a little later, to my satisfaction!

So, congratulations to Mike, Colin and Ian - and many thanks to Stephen for giving the game a home and GMing it. I do love the Great Game!

GM (Stephen Agar)

I think Ian's comments are entirely reasonable, in that I got the impression that a couple of the players were not that engaged in the game (you can always tell when people are routinely late with their orders and make careless errors). So, in many ways this was not the perfect game. But, from my point of view it did get more interesting the longer it went on. I hope you try again sometime Ian.

Big alliances that just stick together no matter what seem to be not unusual in FtF Diplomacy, where the game is artificially time limited anyway. I'm not a fan of them in a zine-based game, as played to their natural conclusion they just make the game dull. I think you should always play to win and I don't see the point of playing for 18 months with the intention of getting a draw. If you are in a game like this, sometimes the best you can do is get a stalemate line in place and see if you can get the alliance to collapse. There are many minority stalemate lines where you can hold (say) 14 centres, which means an alliance can't win and will then either implode or include everyone in a draw.

I now just play in zines as a way of participating in the zine and having a stake in the zine when it arrives. An email game to 4/5 deadlines is not too much of a commitment, but it is disappointing that some players still disappear. Maybe I should use standbys for all games?

I am not sure if Martin came 7th (because he was eliminated first) or 5th (because players who drop out without explanation maybe shouldn't count at all). Any views? I don't suppose it matters as no one rates these games anyway.



TWEET LOUDLY AND CARRY A BIG STICK



22-24 May 2026, Saronida, Athens, GREECE

We are less than 4 months away from World Diplomacy Convention 2026, and the pieces have started to fall into place:

The Venue:

Well, the venue has been upgraded to “the venues”, as people’s interest made me really stressed about the space we had available. When WDC2026 was awarded to Athens, back in 2024 in Milan, I thought: “If I have 30% more people than Milan, it would be a great success”. That brought my initial estimate of participants to 80 and the venue I booked was sized accordingly. But then, riding the hobby’s explosion, and campaigning hard to all the tournaments I could travel to, the best estimate I now have is for well over 100 players, and action needed to be taken. So, we have secured a second venue to make sure we will have all the space we need.

The second venue is very close to the main one, next to the sea (of course) and also has a pool!



The Players:

As of 25/1/2026, 63 players have already registered. The participation from the Americas and Oceania is mind-blowing. I am confident that WDC2026 will set the record for “most total miles travelled” for any Diplomacy tournament in recent history. Here are the registrations so far:

- [Stephen Agar](#)
- [Sabi Ahuja](#) (Chicago, IL, USA)
- [Theodore Ananiadis](#) (Athens, Greece)
- [Bernard Andrioli](#)
- [Shane Armstrong](#) (Canberra)
- [Gavin Atkinson](#) (Brisbane)
- [Brandan Austin](#) (Canberra)
- [Edi Birsan](#) (Concord, CA, USA)
- [Maaike Blom](#)
- [Clare Bradbery](#) (Canberra)
- [Noam Brown](#) (San Francisco, CA, USA)
- [Zoe Cameron](#) (Melbourne)
- [Davide Cleopadre](#)
- [Yann Clouet](#)
- [Francesco Conte](#)
- [Joshua \(the Beast\) Crowther](#) (Canberra)
- [Emmanuel duPontavice](#)
- [Brandon Fogel](#) (Chicago, IL, USA)
- [Tom Garretty](#) (Verenigd Koninkrijk)
- [Tanya Gill](#) (ON, Canada)
- [Darijan Gjukovikj](#)
- [Bradley Grace](#) (United Kingdom)
- [Katie Gray](#) (Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA)
- [Toby Harris](#)
- [André Ilievics](#)
- [Jack Johns](#) (UK)
- [Phil Johns](#)
- [Inge Kjol](#)
- [Karthik Konath](#) (San Diego , CA, USA)
- [Jelte Kuiper](#)
- [Piotrek Kulagowski](#)
- [Dan Lester](#)
- [Nathan Lester](#)
- [Justin Loar](#) (Los Angeles, CA, USA)
- [Alex Maslow](#)
- [Jason Mastbaum](#) (Santa Monica, CA, USA)
- [Craig Mayr](#) (Corvallis OR, USA)
- [Emeric Misztl](#)
- [George Mork](#)
- [Darcy Morris](#)
- [Adam Ni](#) (Germany)
- [Frank Oosterom](#)
- [Craig Purcell](#)
- [Matteo Russoniello](#)
- [Matija Saljić](#)
- [Cyrille Sevin](#)
- [Nat Shirley](#)
- [Alexander Styles](#) (UK)
- [Anastasia Styles](#) (UK)
- [Ed Sullivan](#) (Houston, TX, USA)
- [Tianyu Sun](#) (Canberra)
- [Peter Sympragos](#) (UK)
- [Caden Towlson](#) (USA)
- [Babis Tsimoris](#)
- [René Van Rooijen](#)
- [Max Wanji Roe Banks](#) (Canberra)
- [Christopher Ward](#)
- [Philipp Weissert](#)
- [Simon Wesendrup](#)
- [David Wigglesworth](#)
- [Conrad Woodring](#)
- [Dave Wreathall](#) (UK)
- [Andrew Yang](#)

The UK and USA will battle it out until the last moment for the most sizable “national team”. They are expected to come in at about 25 players each! From experience, Greek players will not register until the last minute, but I expect 12-15 players from the Athens Diplomacy Club to compete.

The Group Activities:

Thursday 21/05/2026 will feature a full day of group activities, broken in two parts. On the first leg, embarking from Saronida early in the morning we will visit the Acropolis, downtown Athens (Thission, Plaka and Lycabettus hill), and have (late, as it is common in the South of Europe) lunch by the sea.



The Acropolis of Athens

We will return to Saronida in the afternoon, from where the second leg will set off, including people that may arrive to Saronida during Thursday, to visit Sounion in the southern tip of Attica peninsula, maybe an afternoon swim and return to Saronida for drinks by the sea in the night.



Sounion: We will be reminded why the Aegean Sea is so called.

Wednesday 20/5/2026: If there is participants' interest, we will take the boat to the nearby idyllic

island of Hydra and spend most of the day there, returning late in the afternoon.



Hydra

The Tournament Schedule:

The tournament will be played across three days, with four rounds of play.

These rounds will be:

Friday evening - 5pm

Saturday morning - 9 am

Saturday afternoon - 5pm

Sunday morning - 10 am

The Sunday morning round will include the top board and team round. The top board will determine the top 7 places in the WDC, and the team round will be played for both tournament score and a separate team competition.

The scoring system and other novelties: The scoring system will be “Olympic” but I can get into details yet. It will be a modern scoring system which respects the European scoring systems tradition. Also we will introduce the “Athens Draw Method”, an attempt to remedy some of the side-effects of calling for a draw, making our lives as TDs a bit easier as well.

You can find all available information for WDC2026 at wdc2026.gr. As we are getting closer to the event, our site will be enriched with suggestions of making the most of your stay in Athens and Greece if you decide to make this event an excuse for a vacation.

As an epilogue, on the practical side of things, recent international tensions and uncertainty make this period an excellent opportunity to book cheap flights! Greece in general and Saronida in particular is peaceful and super safe for all, and we will be happy to have you with us!

For more details go to the WDC 2026 website at:
<https://athensdiplomacy.club/wdc2026/>



by Stephen Agar

I thought that this topic was worthy of an article as it is really the essence of the fuss which I helped create over the “bribery” allegations bandied around at MasterCon. The issue which has troubled us isn’t really whether it is morally acceptable to bribe players in a FtF game – it is whether it is morally acceptable to indulge in what has been called “meta-gaming”.

So, what is meta-gaming? Gary Pennington, a subscriber to *rec.games.diplomacy* has put forward the helpful definition that meta-gaming is “the process of trying to force someone to behave in accordance with your wishes by using threats of actions which will be taken/not taken outside the context of the current game.”

As Gary said, an extreme example would be “You must support my attack on Warsaw with your army in Galicia or I will call round your house later and kill you.” A less extreme example would be “You must support my attack on Warsaw with your army in Galicia in this game or I will not support your defence of Moscow in game X (where X is a different game in which both players are participating) “ In both examples, the protagonist is using knowledge that lie outside the domain of a game to try and influence results inside a game.

My personal view is that players who indulge in meta-gaming are too competitive for their own good and have an unhealthy attachment to winning at all costs - but I may be in a minority in holding that view. In email games on the Internet meta-gaming is fairly universally condemned and being caught doing so is to risk being thrown out of the game. In

the history of Diplomacy in the UK hobby there have been many instances of “meta-gaming”, but usually they all reduce to three simple scenarios:

1. Come Up and See Me Sometime

Bribery has always been tolerated in postal Diplomacy to an extent, as it appealed to the anarchic spirits who truly believe that all is fair in love and Diplomacy. Bribes have not only usually been pretty small beer, but usually were beer. Of course, there isn’t much scope for this in the postal game anyway, as bribery suggests a slightly closer degree of acquaintance than that usually enjoyed by the majority of postal Diplomacy players. In any event, as the “bribery” was often frivolous, it was more a case of someone being able to save face by saying that they were actually helping Mr X because he bought them four pints of Wadworths, rather than admitting that Mr X would have got their centres anyway. I know of no instance of “serious” bribing, because winning a game of Diplomacy isn’t sufficiently special in itself to warrant all the effort. That said, I seem to remember that Richard Sharp bought, for cash, the use of Sandra Bond’s units in Armagnac in **Megalomania**, a game he went on to win. And there are rumours about another postal game featuring John Boocock and Richard Sharp. No doubt all will be revealed in time.

If John Boocock is to be believed, Mark Wightman, Steve Jones and Toby Harris have all had occasions to give him money for favours in FtF Diplomacy games – though I know not if such incidents were the result of implicit threats from John or active bribes from the others. Steve Thomas also related that Toby once offered him cash for help in a FtF Diplomacy game, though for all I know that may have been done with jovial, non-serious, intent.

2. The Big Stick

By which we mean threats such as “I’ll tell your wife you’re having an affair” as opposed to “let me have Lon or I’ll take Bel and Hol.” Real threats are, as you would expect, very rare indeed and not acceptable. In his book, Richard Sharp recounted how one player (who was a solicitor) once sent him a £10 note as payment for agreed co-operation and threatened to sue him if he backed out of the deal (both bribery and threats!). However, that was almost certainly light-hearted as well, part of the friendly banter that can mark such games. In any event, it is hard to make real

threats against other players in postal games because of the distance between the players.

We now know that John Boocock has turned this into a fine art by demanding a surety for good behaviour from players next to him in a game. In a sense this is a threat as non-payment presumably means war, though if one of the threatened players then comes back to him and offers him more cash for specific favours then it is an example of bribery. We know that Shaun Derrick thought that this behaviour was OK, and I would assume that is because he believes that meta-gaming isn't against the rules of the game and therefore must be tolerated.

In the latest **TCP** there are a couple of allegations that Toby Harris has been known to employ this tactic in FtF games, though others have as well. First it was alleged that he threatened to devote a whole issue of his zine to rubbishing the character of another player unless he handed some centres over. Later in the same issue, Gihan Bandaranaike recalls that Toby once threatened not to give him a lift home unless he helped him in a game of Dip. I make no moral judgement as to whether this sort of behaviour is right or wrong, and in particular if you were not there you can't tell if it was serious or in jest. I only mention it as an example of meta-gaming.

3. You Scratch My Back...

The classic "You help me in *this* game and I'll help you in *that* game." Generally frowned upon, witness the general antipathy to the infamous "Karma League" in the early 70's. The idea behind the Karma League was that members would guarantee never to break agreements with each other in a Diplomacy games, and the names of the other Karma League members were only made known to initiates. Universally condemned and somewhat lost its purpose when the League was promptly infiltrated and the names of members published. There was also the (alleged) deal between Mick Bullock and Richard Walkerdine whereby they helped each other to victories in Dip games or agreed an 18/18 split right from the beginning – known to readers of **Dolchstoß** as the "Walkerbullock".

It is not difficult to see why this sort of behaviour is thought to be unethical, as it cuts across the general presumption that each player starts the game with the same chances of winning as Allan Calhamer

intended. Obviously in a Tournament situation, this sort of behaviour is even more damaging as there is more at stake than a postal Diplomacy rating (something very few people would ever really concern themselves with).

The most frowned upon example of this sort of meta-gaming was the behaviour of some of the French players at WorldDipCon IV, where some players helped other French players to outright victories for no other reason than they were both French. Such antics were roundly condemned by many, but most noticeably and most loudly by Toby Harris, James Hardy and myself. As I said at the time, I think Toby, who this time was on the receiving end of the complained of activity, was quite right to condemn the French meta-gaming in this instance (which gave rise to the EDA Ethics Oath – see later).

So Is Meta-Gaming All Right?

That is the difficult question. I think that you really need to make up your mind on this one – if meta-gaming is OK, then cross-gaming, bribery and threats (provided they are within the law of the land) should be permitted. Therefore, mutual help in different games is OK (though difficult to achieve in a Tournament with a random draw), bribery is OK and threats are OK. If you think that the game should only be decided within the boundaries of the game activity itself, then meta-gaming is not OK, and neither is cross-gaming, favours or threats.

I don't think it is logically possible to distinguish a middle ground – if buying someone a pint is an acceptable bribe (£2), why not a £5 note? If threatening not to give someone a lift home is an acceptable threat, why not threatening to abuse and/or embarrass him in front of his friends? If helping another player just because you often socialise with them at weekends is OK, why not help them just because you're both English/French/Swedish.

The answer, of course, is that it is not OK. Mark Wightman reminded me of the following excerpt from François Rivasseau's Final Report on World DipCon V.

"Quality of Games and Ethics"

"The quality of the games played was quite high, this being illustrated by the fact that no 18 centre victory was achieved in either the WDC or the Nation's Cup competition. Although only playing until 1907

certainly does not help when you play Austria or Italy, it is worthwhile to note that the best players did get their most significant results when playing one of these countries: Bruno-André Giraudon managed to win with both Austria and Italy, and the number of first places achieved with central powers was uncommonly high.

“Three reasons may account for this satisfactory situation: the general level of the players, the homogeneity of the level of the tables of each round (except the first, of course), which was reached thanks to our player scheduling software, and, last but not least, the ethic of play which we succeeded in promoting.

“One word about this; we made public during the WDC the oath of ethics designed within the European Diplomacy Association for the next European DipCon (reproduced below). Every player was warned that the referees would closely watch the ethical aspect of play and would not accept playing for others rather than for one's self. Particular care would be given to possible 18 centre victories which could have been attributed to ethical irregularity in the competition. It was not necessary to do anything; merely making this announcement proved sufficient. As a consequence, all players fought until the end as they are expected to do at this level of competition, and we had no "collective plays" to observe.

“The conclusion I draw from this experience is that advising the players in this manner as to the ethical aspects of the game improves both the level of the games and the atmosphere of the tournament, particularly for the travellers who, as a result, should not fear a savage and uninteresting coalition of local players against them. This is why I personally recommend, in my capacity of Chairman of WDC V, to the incoming WDC Chairman, to adopt a similar position regarding ethics in Ohio.”

EDA Ethics Oath

1. You should always play so that you maximise your own score and ranking in the tournament, or in the game you are playing.

2. You should not engage in cross-gaming. That is, you must not give favours to another player in exchange for assistance in earlier games or for the hope or promise of assistance in later games. Every game is a new one and should be treated as such.

You should not try to take revenge for a stab or elimination that occurred in any other game.

3. You should act properly when conducting diplomacy with other players and must not cheat or complain at the least provocation. You should act the statesman you are supposed to be.

4. You should never attack or ally with any other player for purely ethical or geographic reasons.

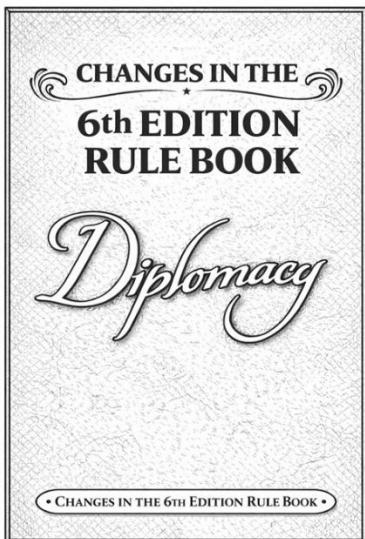
Now I accept that this Ethics Oath doesn't expressly mention bribery, but John Boocock can scarcely claim to have always been playing so as to maximise his own score and ranking in the Tournament.

My position is that meta-gaming is not acceptable in FtF games or postally. That said, I accept it is likely to be tolerated in a mild and good-humoured way in a postal Diplomacy environment where winning isn't really that important unless you have an unhealthy obsession with winning.

One final point. Some people will say, you can't stop meta-gaming – if people want to do deals like this, then they will. That is true. But it is a sorry state indeed if we fail to prohibit behaviour that we think wrong, only because to do so will not reduce the incidence of the offence to zero. On that basis the whole of the criminal law is a waste of time. I think such behaviour should be outlawed because to fail to do so will make it a legitimate tactic and encourage some to indulge in meta-gaming who would not otherwise do so. A refusal to say that such behaviour is unacceptable is tantamount to saying it is acceptable.

For the sake of completeness, I would make a further distinction between what is described above, which I will call “external” meta-gaming (involving two or more players) and “internal” meta-gaming (which only involves one player). For example, if you decide to attack Stephen Agar because you perceive him to be a weak unreliable player, or to attack Richard Williams because he stabbed you last time, then you are indulging in a type of meta-gaming in your head, in that your decisions are based on events from outside the game. Meta-gaming on your own is really human nature and totally undetectable. I suspect we all do it.

Reprinted from Spring Offensive #60 (April 1998)



by David E. Cohen

I have performed a comparative analysis of Renegade's 6th Edition (2023) rule book and the previous 5th edition (2008) rule book. Disregarding cosmetic and non-substantive changes (such as changing the colours of the example maps or dropping a reference to the CD-Rom version of the game), there are a handful of substantive changes, as follows:

1. The rule book has added to the traditional outcomes of a solo win and Draws Include All Survivors, possible results for time-limited or turn-limited games.

"A game of Diplomacy can end in one of four ways: Control 18 Supply Centres: As soon as one Great Power controls 18 supply centres, it's considered to have gained control of Europe.

Draw Involving All Survivors: All players who still have supply centres agree to share equally in a draw.

Turn Limit: game ends after a number of predetermined turns (e.g., after Fall 1907) and the winner is the player with the most centres. Tied players share in victory.

Time Limit: game ends after a predetermined number of hours (e.g., 4 hours, 8 hours) and the winner is the player with the most centres. Tied players share in victory."

Leaving aside the question of whether a victory can be shared, this change does not really have a practical impact for other than "friendly" FTF games. Unless you are in a tournament, online or

otherwise, games are very rarely either time-limited or turn-limited. If you are in a tournament, those outcomes are too simplistic and will be superseded by the tournament scoring system.

2. Rather than a vague statement that units "farthest from the country are removed first", there is now a clear methodology:

"In the event of a power going into civil disorder or when a power does not order a required removal, (a) No unit on a supply centre is to be removed unless there are no viable options and (b) Unit precedence for removal starts with furthest from an owned supply centre, by counting absolute adjacent provinces regardless of the ability of the unit to move into it, are removed first. Fleets are removed before armies, and then units are removed in alphabetic order of the name of the province on the map."

Perhaps not the most elegantly written rule, but certainly serviceable and since it is unambiguous, a big improvement over the previous rule. Most, if not all platforms will need to revise their code to comply with this rule.

3. The previous rule book clarification about impossible orders being hold orders if further, unequivocally clarified with capital letters, no less):

"A unit given an impossible order results in the unit HOLDING so it can be supported in place. For example, "A Burgundy—Moon" or "A Bohemia—Edinburgh" are impossible moves."

At least one platform is not compliant with this rule.

4. The next change is a clarification (and tightening up) of "matching" in support order for units with multiple coasts, so that a player may now specify support to a particular coast:

"The specification of Support to a specific coast in a split province such as Spain must match the move of the piece ordered to that province. For instance: France: F Portugal S F Mid-Atlantic - Spain (sc); F Mid-Atlantic - Spain (nc)

The movement is valid but the support order is invalid because it identified an incorrect coast. If the order was F Mid-Atlantic - Spain (sc), then the support order would be valid."

The concept of "matching" was undefined in previous editions of the rule book, and while I can understand the opinion of those that wanted matching to be limited to a province, rather than a coast, I feel that

this clarification aligns more with the overall spirit of the rule. I believe multiple platforms are not compliant with the rule.

5. The last change relates to a conflict between two rules in previous editions, with one rule forbidding a retreat by a unit to "the province from which its attacker came" and the rule which permits two units to switch places if one or both are convoyed, the issue coming up when a convoy from an adjacent province succeeds and dislodges a unit. The new edition resolves the conflict:

"A dislodged unit can retreat to the position of the attacker when there is a convoy to an adjacent province. For example:

England: A Edi-Yor; F Nth C A Edi-Yor; A Lon S A Edi-Yor
Germany: A Yor H

The German army is dislodged from Yorkshire. If the army in Edinburgh had attacked via land to Yorkshire, then the German army could not retreat to Edinburgh. Since the attack is coming from the convoy in the North Sea, the army in Yorkshire can legally retreat to Edinburgh."

I have always been of the opinion that if a unit could have moved to a province successfully in the movement phase, the unit could be legally ordered to retreat to that province in the subsequent retreat phase. I think there are multiple platforms which are not compliant with this rule.

Thanks David. Taking your five points in turn:

1. That's fine as far as it goes, but the difficulties always come when you are comparing one result with another for Tournament purposes. Unfortunately, it doesn't help with that.

*2. Strangely enough that is the same House Rule for removals that I used in my first zine back in 1977. I think I nicked in from Greg Hawes's zine, **Turn of the Screw**, so it must have been pretty standard even then.*

*3. Totally agree. I had that in the **GSTZ** House Rules a few months before the new rulebook was issued.*

4 and 5. Totally agree. Have always done this.

So all in all, very sensible.



The Variant Bank has undoubtedly suffered in 2025, as all my energies have gone into **GSTZ** and the Archive. However, I am hoping that 2026 will see a big push forward in adding more variants from the likes of Discord, if I can ever get my head around how Discord works.

Then I need a systematic plan of action – maybe start with variants implemented on established sites and go from there.

One thing I will have to get used to is that in the old days, when a variant was modified, we gave it a new number and preserved the design history. On Discord, new variants are continually changed as they develop (something impossible by post) and it is not always clear when/if a design is "final". I guess I will just have to do my best.

David E. Cohen was kind enough to send me copies of all his designs, for which many thanks.

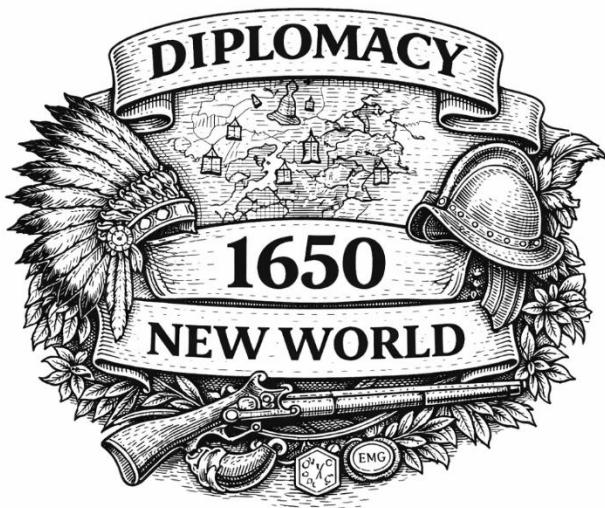
The DiploStrats Discord server has just held a Diplomacy variant contest which saw 80 new variants being submitted, so I can see I really have my work cut out for me. So, I've downloaded and saved all 80 of them and I am slowly categorising them and adding them to the Bank. Some of them look a little bit incomplete in places (maps without names, no starting positions, that sort of thing), but I won't edit, just capture them as they are.

Back to the DiploStrats Diplomacy variant contest. The winner of the popular vote was *1650: A New World* by Brandon Custer, which I have reprinted below. It's a moderately complicated variant, which looks very well thought out and could be a very interesting game to play.



NEW WORLD

1650



by Brandon Custer

This variant is set in the mid-17th century North American eastern seaboard. The variant seeks to depict early European colonial powers and Native American cultures and nations as they vied for hegemony in the region.

New World 1650 follows standard Diplomacy rules except for the rules described in this document.

Rules

All territory, with or without a supply dot, is captured only after Autumn retreats.

Powers are divided into two types: European and Native American powers. They differ in supply rules, build rules, and win conditions. When the variant uses a smaller player pool of just 5 players, each player controls one colonial power and one native power. A player wins if either of their nations reaches its win condition.

European Powers' Rules

Supply: Any territory with a supply dot on it counts as one full supply, capable of supplying an army or fleet if owned.

Builds: European powers may build fleets in the Atlantic Crossing territory. See the below section “Atlantic Crossing” for details.

Europeans may also build in “Controlled Territory”. See “Controlled Territory” for details.

During winter orders, European powers may transform any fleet to an army that occupies a

territory with a supply dot that is not captured in the same phase – i.e., the territory with the SC must have been captured a previous year.

To transform a fleet, a European power must simply order an army built in a controlled territory with a supply dot that is occupied by a fleet. A Swedish power could transform a fleet in the controlled territory of Fort Elfsborg (Elf) with the order: *Build A Elf*.

Win Condition: A European power wins a solo victory when:

1. it controls the majority of the European-controlled supply dots – i.e., if the power's dot count is greater than all other European dots combined, AND
2. the total European supply is greater than the total Native supply.

Native American (i.e., First Nations) Powers' Rules

Supply: All capturable territories count as 1/2 supply. Therefore, a Native power treats territories with and without supply dots as equal in value.

Builds: The end of fall marks the time for big-game hunting. As such, all units of the Native powers disband after Autumn phase. During the adjustments phase, Native powers may build on any owned and vacant territory that is also adjacent to at least one other owned territory. During adjustments, the number of units should equal to the amount of supply rounded up. For example, a Native power with 9 territories coloured in have 4.5 supply. Rounded up, this power should have 5 units after adjustments.

Win Condition: A Native American power wins a solo victory when:

1. it controls the majority of the Native American-controlled supply – i.e., if the supply count is greater than all other Native American supply combined, AND
2. the total Native supply is greater than the total European supply.

Atlantic Crossing

Atlantic Crossing's (ATL) serves as a Build territory for all European powers, and it also serves as a High

Seas territory with 10 territories. It is possible for a single power to build multiple fleets in the territory, as well as all five European powers to build fleets here. Any Build orders that occur at the same location within the Atlantic Crossing fail. There be pirates.

A fleet in the Atlantic Crossing may move to any of the adjacent territories with the movement being adjudicated normally. A fleet in the Atlantic Crossing may contest or even bounce another fleet that is also in the Atlantic Crossing if they have the same destination. A fleet in the Atlantic Crossing may also support other fleets according to standard rules.

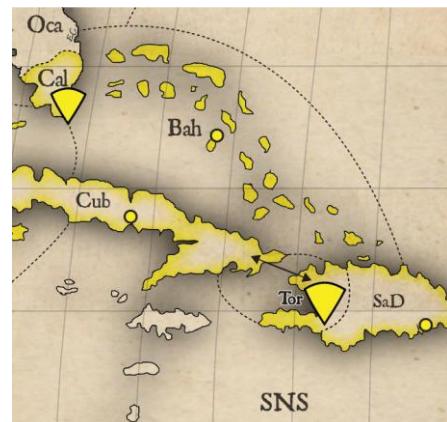
Fleets may also move from the surrounding territories to the Atlantic Crossing and back out again the following season. For example, a fleet could move from Tortuga in the spring, and then back out into Labrador Sea in the Autumn, assuming the latter move is not bounced.

Any fleets that remain in the Atlantic Crossing after Autumn are force disbanded. Fear the winter seas! These forced disbands do not interfere with normal adjustments during winter. Powers that have their units force disbanded do not lose the supply and can immediately build new units in the Atlantic Crossing or Controlled territory.

Controlled Territory

Controlled territory is territory that has all adjacent capturable territory under control of the same power. A European power may build a unit in a territory that is controlled in this way, is vacant, and has a supply dot.

In the below image, Spain *can* build in Cuba (Cub) or Santo Domingo (SaD), since they satisfy all three requirements. Spain *cannot* build in Tortuga (Tor) since it is occupied by a unit and does not have a supply dot. Spain *cannot* build in the Bahamas (BAH) because it is not controlled: the adjacent territory of Ocale (Oca) is not under Spanish dominion. Calusa (Cal) is not a valid build location either, since it satisfies none of the requirements. Please note the map below does not reflect new map edits.



Cub and SaD are the only valid build locations for Spain shown (map of v1)

If a power does not have any controlled territory (and none of the European powers begins with any), it may always build fleets in the Atlantic Crossing.

Trading Posts

Each Spring, Native American and European powers can agree to set up European trading posts in Native American territories that have a neutral supply dot. This functions as an order but is not attached to any specific unit.

If successful, the supply dot would change to be the colour of the European power. This trading post would give one supply to the European power for as long as the trading post remains. However, the territory would still be owned by the Native American power. The Native American power in return would receive +1 build in that year's builds only.

To be successful, matching orders must be given in Spring by both powers, with the supply dot remaining neutral and the territory controlled by the Native American power. If successful, the trading post is set up and all players notified in Spring adjudication.

Each Native American power may only establish one trade post in their territory a year.

Example of Successful Order

For example, the Wendat Confederacy and Swedish Empire may agree to set up a Swedish trading post in Petun (Pet).

The Spring orders for both powers must be:

Swedish trading post Petun

The orders only fail if Petun is occupied by a third party in the same Spring.



A Swedish trading post successfully established in Petun. The trading post functions as 1 supply for Sweden as long as the post exists. It gives the Wendat +1 build the year it was established. Petun continues to function as 1/2 supply for Wendat.

Map Notes:

Abe (Abenaki): Functions as a coastal province with a single coast. Armies may move directly to Atikamekw (Ati).

Ati (Atikamekw): Functions as a coastal province with a single coast. Armies may move directly to Abenaki (Abe).

ATL (Atlantic Crossing): A sea territory that functions as a valid build territory for all European powers. It may be simultaneously occupied by any number of fleets from any power. See the “Atlantic Crossing” section in “Rules” for more details.

BAH (Bahamas): A capturable sea territory. May be captured in winter 1/2 supply for NA powers. As BAH functions as a sea territory, it may not transform fleets to armies or build armies. It may, however, build a fleet for a Native power. Its ownership counts for or against Control of surrounding land territories.

CHP (Chesapeake Bay): A sea territory that extends up into the Chesapeake Bay and river areas. Along with obvious adjacencies, the territory is adjacent to the Colony of Maryland (Mar), Piscataway (Pis), and Fort Casimir’s west coast (Cas).

HUD (Hudson Bay): A sea territory that is adjacent to Labrador Sea (LAB) through an off-map route.

LAB (Labrador Sea): A sea territory that is adjacent to Hudson Bay (HUD) through an off-map route.

Iut (Innuit): A coastal territory with a single unbroken coast extending beyond the map. A fleet occupying the territory may directly move to any of the following: Iyi, HUD, LAB, Beo, GSL or Inu.

LEy (Lange Eyland): Functions as a canal province, much like Constantinople in the original map. Armies may move to and from the mainland according to arrows on the map.

Mon (Montreal): Functions as a canal province, much like Constantinople in the original map.

NAm (Nieuw Amsterdam): Functions as a canal province, much like Constantinople in the original map. It is not directly adjacent to Devil’s Belt (Dev).

Neu (Neutral Confederation): Functions as a coastal province with one long single coast, much like Sweden in the original map.

Org (Fort Orange): Functions as a coastal province. Fleets may only enter from and exit to Nieuw Amsterdam (NAm).

Que (Quebec): Functions as a canal province, much like Constantinople in the original map.

SOB (South Bay): A sea territory that extends up the South River (now called the Delaware River). Along with obvious adjacencies, the territory is adjacent to Fort Casimir’s east coast (Cas), Fort Christina (Chr), and Munsee Lenape (Mun).

TDL (The Disputed Lands): Functions as a canal province, much like Constantinople in the original map.

Tor (Tortuga): Functions as a canal province, much like Constantinople in the classic Diplomacy map.

Choice of Nations and Historical Context

I chose the year 1650 as it included a larger pool of European countries; New Sweden and New Netherlands were around for only a short period (especially the former). After choosing the approximate date, I then built it out from here based on conflicts. List of conflicts that impacted power selection and map territories:

- Beaver Wars (Five Nations defeat of the Huron, Susquehannock and others sparked by trade for Dutch firearms)
- Susquehannock victory (supplied by the Swedes) over the Colony of Maryland

- Apalachee & Timucua uprising against the Spanish
- New Netherland's defeat of New Sweden
- Formation of the New England Confederation in response to the war with the Pequots (helped by the Mohegan) and the Dutch threat
- Muscogee and Yamasee (supported by the English) attacks on the Apalachee to deprive Spain of military allies and slave labour (southern theatre of Queen Anne's War)
- Peach Tree War (Susquehannock attack on New Amsterdam in response to the loss of their trade partner, New Sweden)
- Acadian civil war (leaving St. John's in Acadia as neutral)
- Esopus war

Ideally, I would have included the Wabanaki Confederacy, since they played a large role in the early "French and Indian" wars. I also hoped to include the Powhatan Confederacy, since they were mid-Atlantic hegemons a couple of decades earlier, but their military and political power was broken by 1650 and their territory overlaps with the Virginia colony.



HOW I WON THE VIRTUAL DIPLOMACY LEAGUE



by Bradley Grace

As a brief introduction, the Virtual Diplomacy League is in my opinion one of the more prestigious events that our hobby has. It is played in the virtual face to face format which was created during the pandemic as a way to play the game online, but unlike a play by email setting it is done over voice chats in a live setting. Essentially replicating an in-person game as closely as is possible, meaning games are done in around 7 hours maximum.

The league, which started its first season in 2020, begins in March and ends in December and has one game day per month. On that day there are three rounds of play, so that at least one is accessible to every time zone in the world. And at the end of 10 months of hard-fought games, there is a top board played in January between the top 7 to decide a winner. The scores are basically done by adding up your 3 best results and then the average of the rest, so a good mix of rewarding strong results and consistency.

Back in January 2023, I had qualified to play in the top board, and it was my first top board experience of any kind. Predictably, I was surrounded by sharks who had far more experience than I had, and after being handed Austria as the 7th seed, I was wiped out by the end of 1904 and didn't even have more than three centres at any point in the game (including 1901).

Despite becoming a much better player than I was back then, I hadn't qualified for the VDL top board again since, due to finishing 8th in 2023 or not playing enough games to really contend in 2024. In 2025, over the course of the year there were a total of 107 players who played at least one game in the league, and a total number of 49 boards! There is a great mix of players ranging from first time players to the absolute best players in the world.

I can hear you all reading this thinking hey, this is supposed to be about Diplomacy, tell us how the games were. Okay enough preamble.

Game 1

I ended up playing 5 games across the year, the first of which was in May, and there isn't much to talk about in this one. I was randomly awake in the early hours of the morning so decided to hang out with a friend who was running the games, and suddenly a player on 1 centre needed to be replaced, so I jumped in and survived. Funnily enough, I didn't know this result counted towards my end result until months later, it wouldn't have mattered score wise either way, but a funny start to the season.

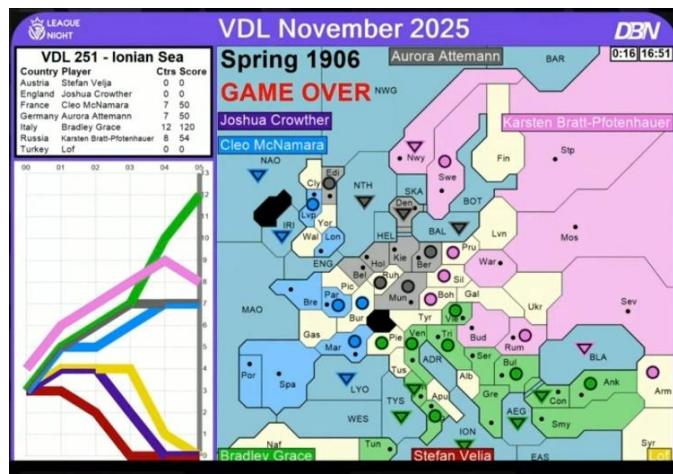
Game 2

Then my second game was in November, and at this point you might have noticed that I've only just decided to wake up at the last second while people have spent all year grinding away at the league. This isn't for any reason other than I was busy this year running three different events as well as wanting a break from committing heavily to playing. But after missing out on success at the EDC earlier in the month I had a fire under me to play again.

I played Italy and had some friendly new faces in this game. In fact, I think I hadn't played with a single player on the board before. Some were more

experienced than others as is natural, I started by wanting to do an IT alliance as the guy in Turkey seemed cool and built an army in 1901, but then randomly he decided to help Austria defend and refused to attack Russia. So unfortunately, I had to turn Turkey all green.

Russia and I cleaned up the east quite quickly, as did France and Germany on the other side of the board. I had a great peace pact with France while Russia/Germany had been fighting a little, so I had a relatively large positional advantage. There was a moment where Russia didn't accept me board topping by agreement, so I decided to just take it. Ending up with a 12-centre top when we agreed to draw in Spring 1906.

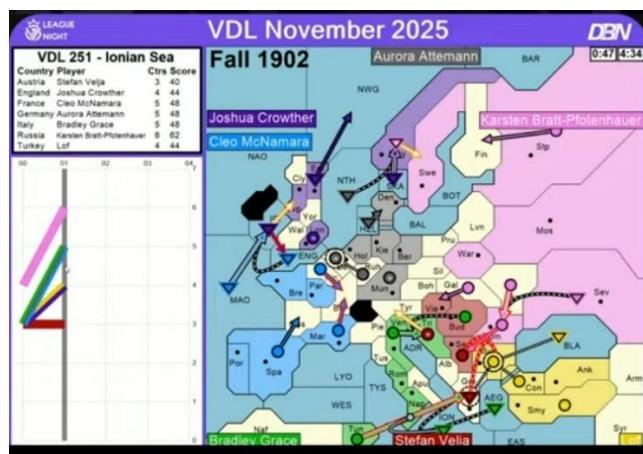


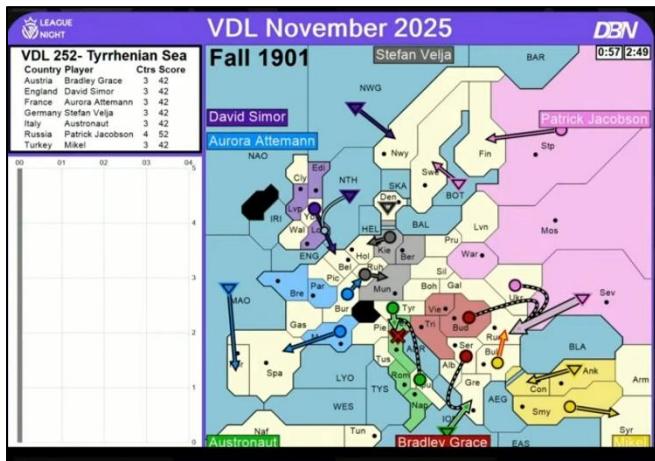
Game 3

Well, if one good game in November wasn't enough, I decided to try and make it two. This one was very different but equally as fun.

I drew Austria and had a similarly fun bunch of players that I didn't have much experience with once again. With one exception, who is Patrick Jacobson in Russia, who will come up again in this league story, so it's worth highlighting.

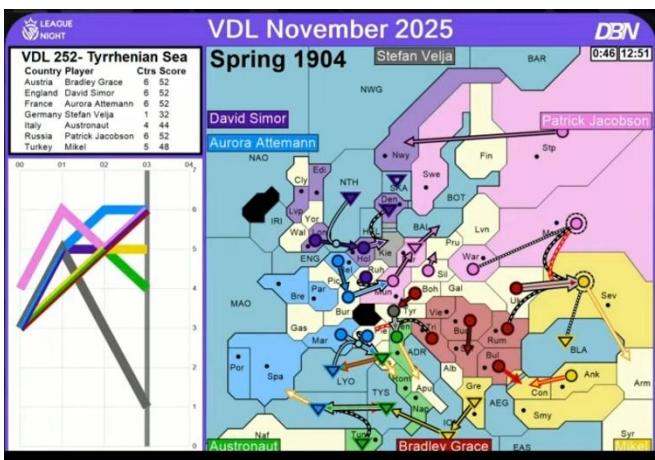
I did my thing of trying to play all sides while making the game fun. Stole an opening that I've seen used but wanted to test it out for myself and put my own spin on it. All of a sudden, I've got good news everywhere, Italy wants to go west, France wants to attack Italy, Russia wants to fight Turkey as long as I'm in, and Turkey wants to fight Russia. What a fabulous range of options. I chose Turkey as my ally due to Russia building armies that felt like a long-term issue despite having the ability to build fleets, and we were off to the races.





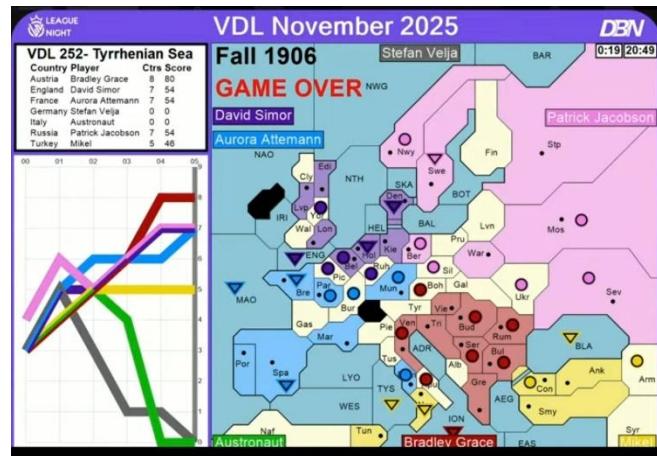
And then I ran into an issue, an AT no matter how efficient cannot easily win a race against a fast-moving western alliance. This lesson was definitely something I learned from Conrad Woodring as he cruelly ran a good alliance that got both him and his ally onto the EDC top board leaving me out to dry in almost the exact same Austrian position.

So, this time, I did something about it. I had a good working relationship with the player in France, and I recognised that Russia had a great working relationship with England, so strangely the person I'd been attacking all game was my only option to break up the west. I made a move on both Turkey and Italy taking the lead on 8 by the end of 1904. But more importantly, as soon as I made the move in the spring, Russia convinced England to turn on the EF and stab in the fall.



A misordered convoy making England's stab fall flat, and a bit of cheeky balance of power on my end got us in a position where I was topping the board on 8. Russia, England and France all had 7, and Turkey had 5 by the end of 1905. Everyone sort of

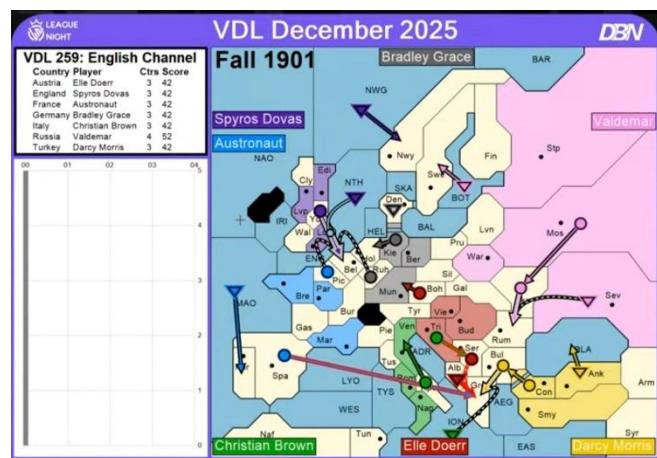
accepted the result of the game strangely and in one day I'd gone from completely irrelevant in this league to 15th and within reach with a month to go!



Game 4

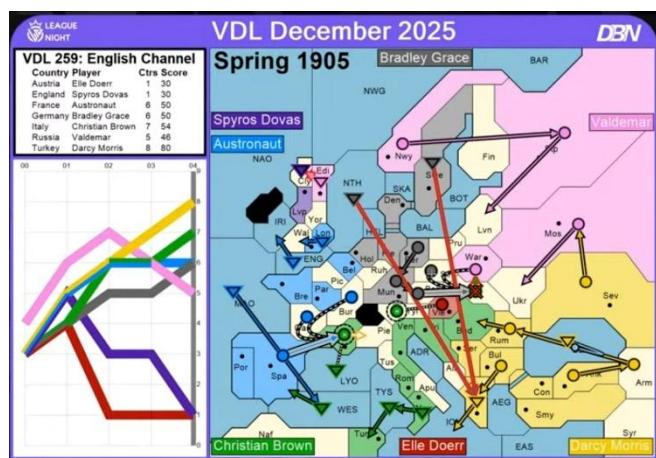
December is here, one day to decide who will make it. And you'll never guess how I start the day, by oversleeping and missing round 1. No big deal there are two rounds left and as long as I get one strong result I'm in contention but it was a funny start to the day.

I drew Germany, a nation I haven't always loved but recently had some more success with it. At this point you're probably thinking I have another fast start and cruise to victory again. Well, you would be wrong, Austria decided to open up to Bohemia and then despite one of the more obvious IT alliances of all time they then moved into Munich!

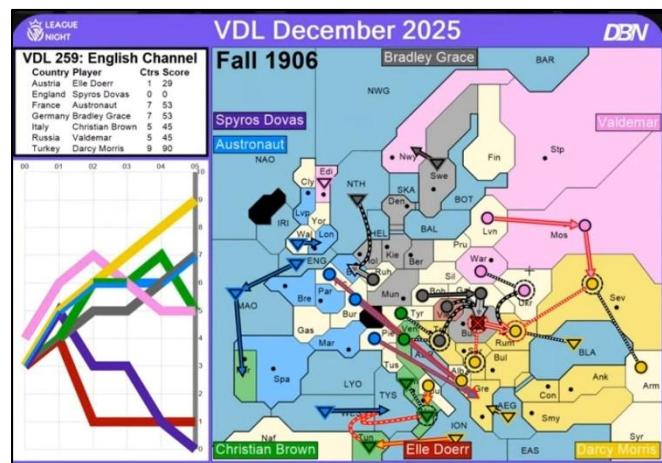


Unfortunate, but manageable. As soon as 1902 starts I lock in an alliance with both France and Russia and essentially throw them at England while I deal with the pesky Austrian. And by year end Russia had been stabbed by the IT and was completely in my corner.

I played it patiently for the next few years, getting a little bit of growth here and there through negotiations with my allies and then the game exploded open thanks to Turkey stabbing Italy. All of a sudden instead of FGR vs IT, it was FGIR vs a big Turkey and I was in control of my alliance both diplomatically and strategically (sorry Darcy).



In 1905 I managed to get myself in Budapest, and then in 1906 took Trieste and Vienna thanks to Italy, and at the same time I asked my allies to help me win so that I could make the top board, which since they weren't in contention and I'd been good to them all game they were happy to do. So, I took Belgium from France and Norway from Russia, and went plus 4 that year going to 11 before we agreed to draw.

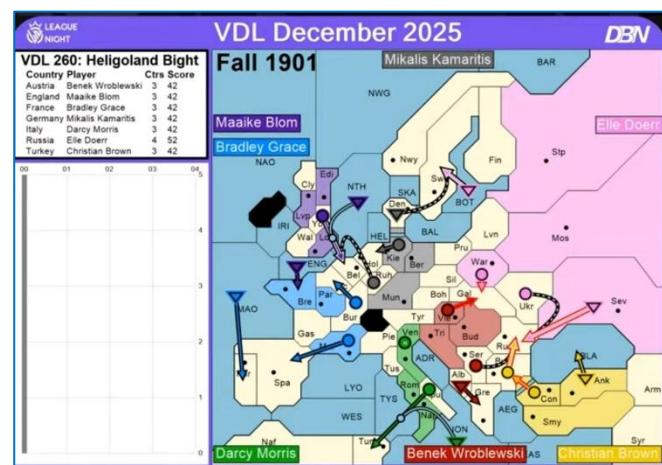


Game 5

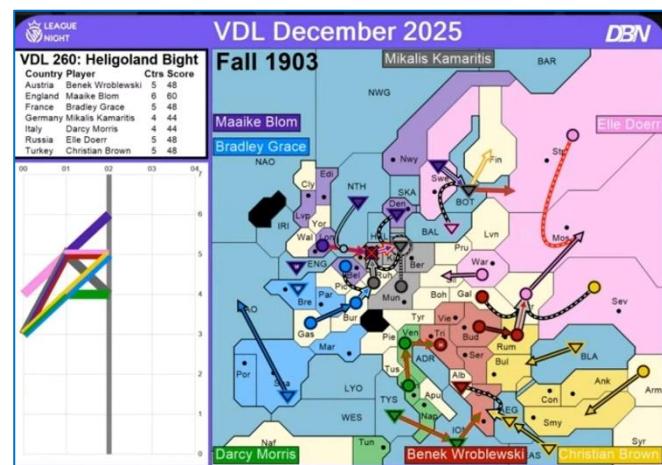
So that's it, I'm in 6th place and on the top board right? Well I had been in this exact spot in 2023, and in the last game of the season two people overtook me so I wasn't making that error again. I was playing through the night to secure it.

I drew France, yay amazing. With me in the west was Maaike Blom in England and Mikalis Kamaritis in Germany, oh shit...

Two of the best players in the world who both need a result to make it, surely I'd make a perfect ally of choice given I'm already in 6th and could in theory help someone onto the top board. Well unfortunately no, not at first anyway, they did a very fast EG and I lost Brest to an English fleet at the end of 1901 and it looked like I was quickly going to be eliminated.

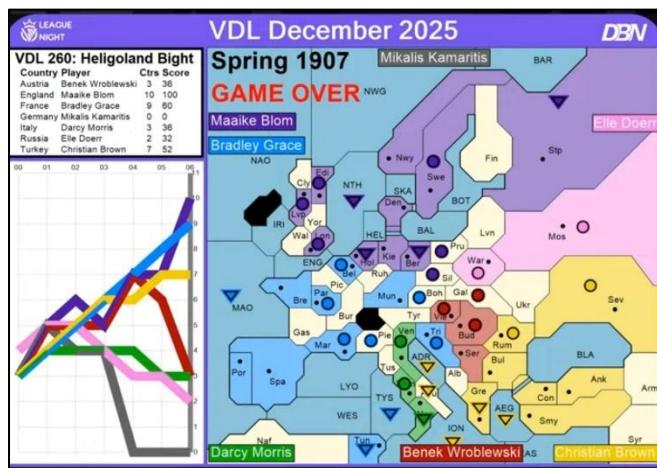


Luckily, Maaike decided to make a change and we got rolling. I made sure we took out Germany in a way where England slowly lost their advantage over me. And then we just decided to roll the board.



There were points in the game I could have made a move for the board top and I knew it, but I chose to keep it going and the conversations kind of slowly turned into England calculating what scores they needed to make it to 7th, getting more allies on board as the east was kind of inefficient and messy and getting more and more excited about the prospect of making it.

Diplomacy is a tricky moral game sometimes and there were definitely arguments for going for the big score again. But ultimately I didn't like the thought of stabbing my ally just to take something from them with no real gain for myself. Maybe I would have done it another day or another time, who knows, but it was around 2am and I was happy to call it. Finishing with a 9 centre second place.



The Top Board

Given the amount of detail I've gone into with just the regular league games, I'm sure you are worried I'm about to write a novel. Don't worry, that's not my plan, but I probably will let's be honest.

What I will do first of all is point you in the direction of the coverage done by the diplomacy broadcast network on their YouTube channel (this is also the place I got all of the images for this article from). There you can find some amazing commentary on every single move of the game, the live recorded Paris method country selections and pregame interviews with all the players. And then the best part, sideline coverage done by people who were listening into our negotiations and reporting on the game. So you don't even need my biased write up a week after the game because you can find out exactly what happened on the board directly.

The board was unsurprisingly full of extremely talented players:

Justin Loar (USA) was the first seed for the second year in a row and was on a bit of a hot streak after winning the Tour of Britain crown.

Jamal Blakkely (Australia) was in second and if you don't know Jamal by now I'd be surprised, one of the absolute best players in the world over the last handful of years and the 2023 world champion.

Clare Bradbery (Australia) was in third, super new but diplomatically savvy, definitely a threat in the right circumstances for sure.

Jason Gray (Australia) ended the regular season in fourth and is certainly the best poker player in the hobby. Very solid all around player and certainly dangerous.

Patrick Jacobson (USA), as previously mentioned Patrick made the top board as the 5th seed. A newer player who made rapid improvements over this year.

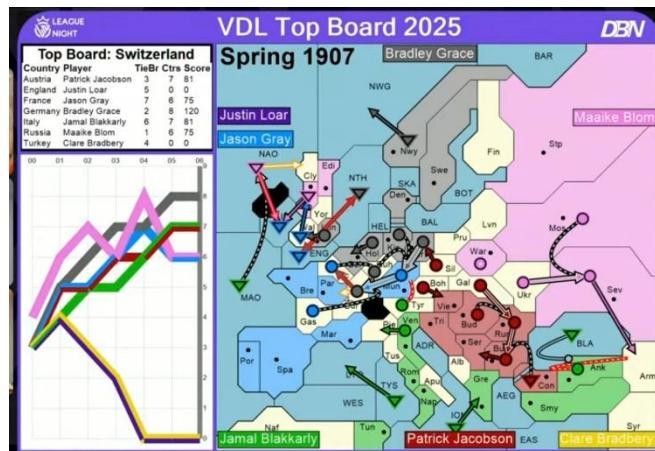
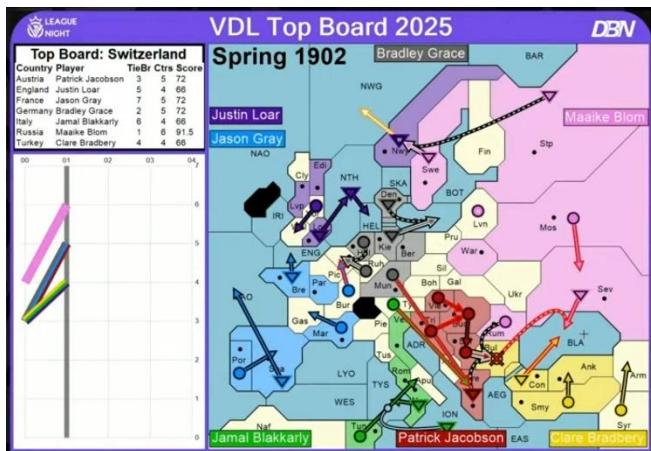
Maaike Blom (Netherlands), also as mentioned Maaike made it in as the 7th seed. Is she the best player in Europe right now? Three tournament wins in the last 12 months and a European Grand Prix crown looking likely would say yes.

The Paris method was fascinating with Austria and Turkey being selected much earlier than usual. Leaving me with the choice of Germany or Russia. Only Maaike picks after me, so I can send a message with my pick. We played a game together at the London Christmas game in December where I was Russia and she was Germany and two things became obvious to me right as I had to make a choice, she knows I like a GR alliance, and I know she hates playing Germany.



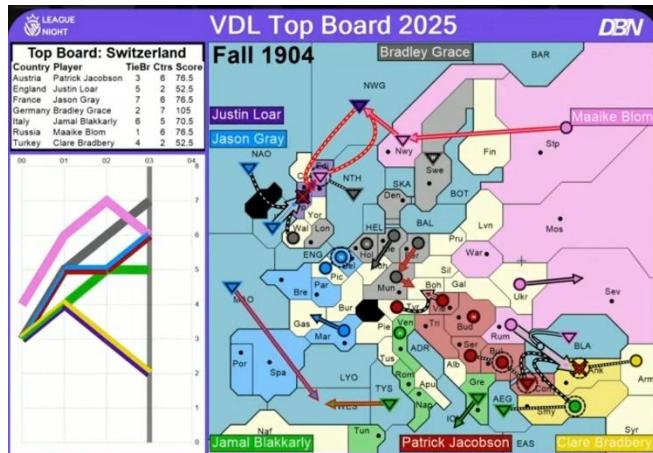
Easy selection, I'll take a Germany game with practically an alliance already without even starting the negotiations!

I highly recommend watching the YouTube stream of this game for all the twists and turns but here are the game highlights. I avoid getting jumped on immediately and just as England attacked me in 1902, France and Russia attack England.



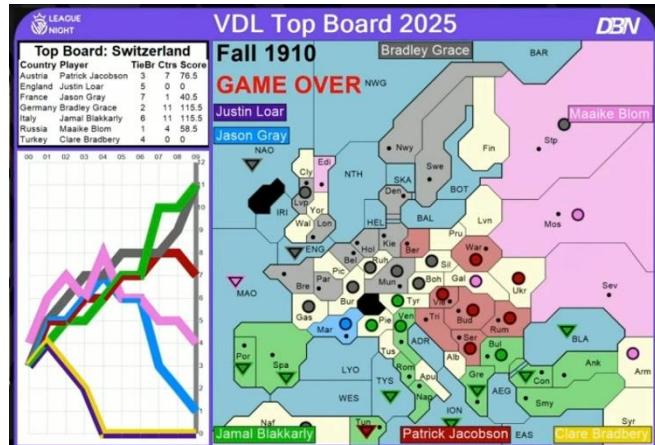
Things progress as usual until 1904 when Jason in France tells me he's not going to go south and attack Italy even though England is already dead. I make my one big mistake in this game and effectively take this as a declaration of war.

I stand by my read, but unfortunately it gave a massive advantage to Italy and I truly thought that Jamal was about to start walking away with the game at one point. Russia was stabbed by her ally in Austria which meant northern disbands. Yay!

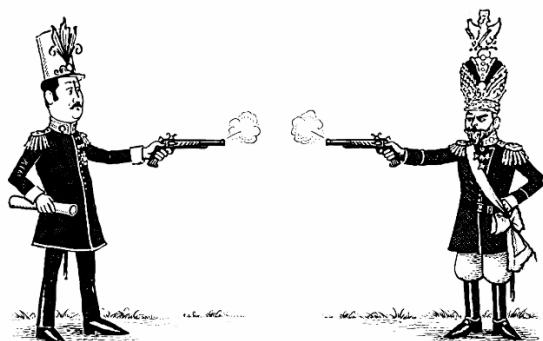


Spring 1907 I pull Austria into a conversation immediately and put my entire game on the line. As best as I could explain why Italy is about to win and that if we don't do something now it's over. Luckily, I had the truth on my side, something had to be done, maybe not a stab but I wasn't going to say no when it worked.

And then the endgame was all about holding diplomatic control while extending my strategic position, which should be easy, I've done this a million times. But when you are going head-to-head against Jamal in a diplomatic game, you have to be near perfect. And luckily, I did enough. We drew when we were both on 11 with me holding the tiebreak thanks to picking later in the Paris method, but if the game had carried on I probably would have been on 14 while Italy would have been on 10.



A big shout out to Isaac Juckles for running the league and all the effort that goes into it! I can't wait to see what you have in store for us at the Steel Showdown!





by Alex Lebedev

An astonishing number of two different Diplomacy versions/editions have been published in Italy over the years, though due to a big mistake, there is also a second variant of the second edition.

The Mondadori Giochi Edition



The first Diplomacy release in Italy is the one from Mondadori Giochi. It is uncertain when exactly it was released, but for sure after 1979, since this is the only reference to a date on the box. From that we know that this edition is compliant to a 1979 Italian law.

Un grande gioco di strategia e politica
DA 2 A 7 GIOCATORI A PARTIRE DA 14 ANNI
MONDADORI GIOCHI
DIV. DI AUGURI DI MONDADORI
QUESTO GIOCO È CONFORME
ALLE NORME DI SICUREZZA DEI GIOCATTOLI
D.M. 31-7-1979.
IL PRODOTTO NON È ADATTO
AI BAMBINI DI ETÀ INFERIORE AI 3 ANNI

The Board Games Dictionary (2009) states the game was published in 1980, but the Christmas catalogues of Mondadori Giochi do not list it until 1982. So, I would consider 1982 as the year of release which is when the game was actually available in stores. (thanks Imago Recensio - <https://imagorecensio.blogspot.com/2022/04/diplomacy-il-gioco-della-diplomazia.html> for this useful info)

In the Mondadori Giochi 1980 catalogue there is nothing about a Diplomacy boardgame, though it is mentioned in the 1982 Christmas catalogue.

This edition has the same design from the 1977 German Parker edition and is a clone of it with same box, map, wooden units and conference map (accordingly translated in Italian). Also, the rules manual has some images to explain the moves, and in this photos they used the German map, so it is easy to guess where this clone comes from.



On the front of the box there is a big word "DIPLOMACY" written in light blue (with 2 shadows underneath the name itself), and the translation of the word Diplomacy in several languages.

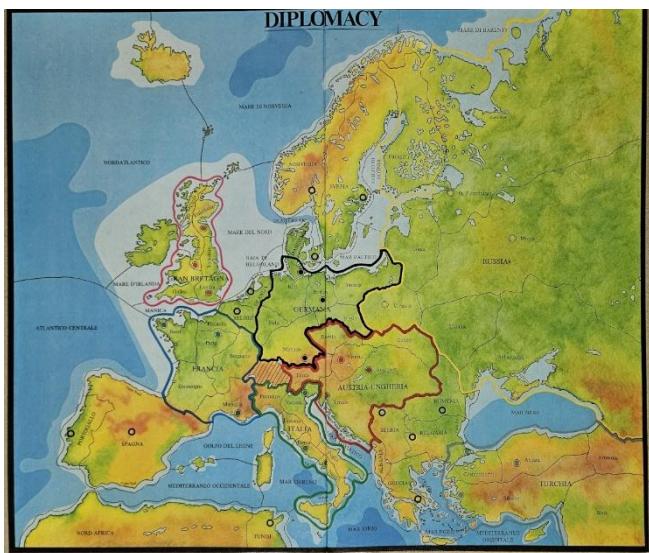
The Greek translation is wrong: first letter is a Theta instead of a Delta as it should be, and this is the same for all Parker "black box" editions and clones.

There is the Mondadori Games logo in the left bottom corner and the words "Il gioco della diplomazia" (the game of diplomacy) in the middle. In the right corner the reference to a games compilation by Mondadori (Biblioteca giochi socio culturali N.4), and Diplomacy is the 4th in the list of the games.

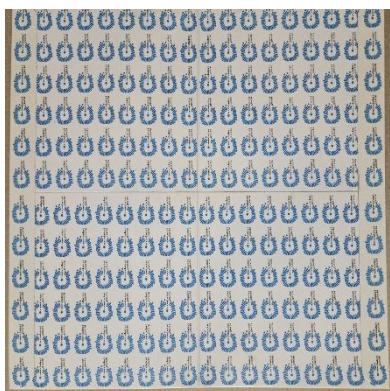


The 4 sides of the box are all the same with publisher logo, world Diplomacy and the legal references. Only on the top side there is a code reference: Cod. 15456/7. There is nothing on the bottom if the box.

The map has topographic shadings with thin black lines for provinces, and colored outlines for the 7 countries. The seas has three different shades of blue. The border is black.



On the back side of the map the Mondadori Games logo is printed over the whole surface.



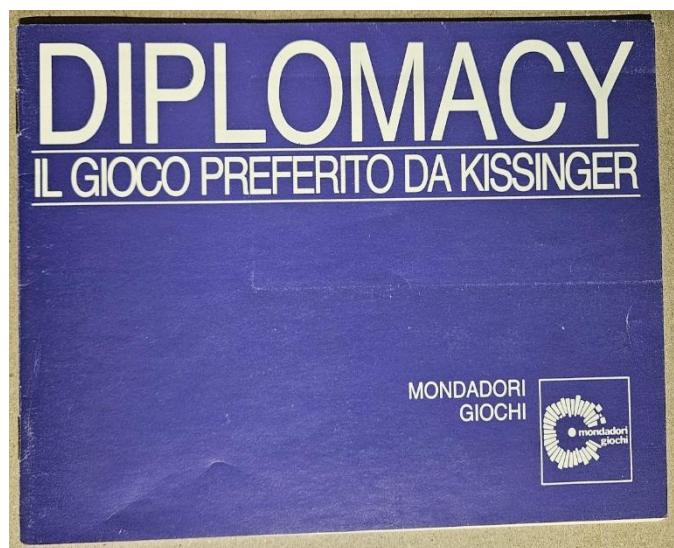
Units and markers are made of wood: square blocks for armies, prismatic ovoids for fleets and circles for center markers. Interestingly, for those of you who are familiar with older (pre- plastic-piece) editions of game Risk, these are the same kinds of pieces used in Risk. When Parker needed pieces to include with its editions of Diplomacy in France (first sold by Miro and then by Parker) and Germany, it simply used the pieces that were already being produced for Risk. An interesting side connection is that Risk was originally developed by a game designer who worked for Miro. Miro sold the rights of the game to Parker, which was the company that really

popularized the game. In addition to the armies and navies, this edition also came with a third useful kind of piece — colored wooden “dots” used to mark supply center ownership on the gameboard as the game progressed.

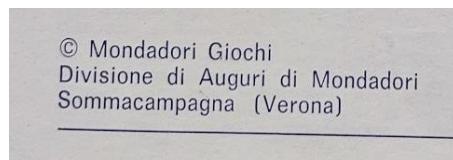


Colors for units, markers and outline of the countries on the map are: Austria – red; England – pink; France – blue; Germany – black; Italy – green; Russia – yellow; Turkey – grey

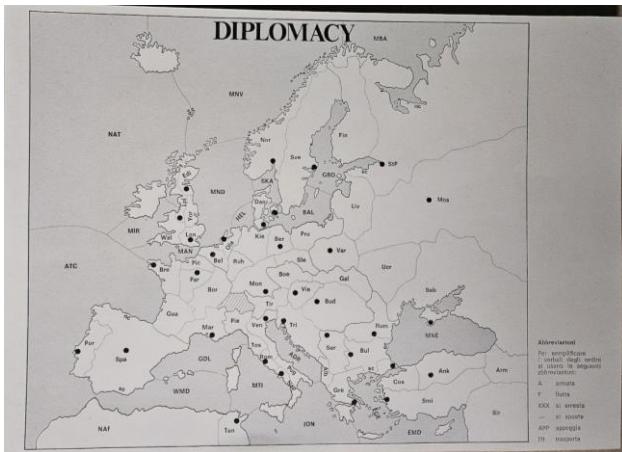
The rulebook states on the cover that Diplomacy is Kissinger's favourite game. There is no reference to a date or rules version, so we can expect to have a translation with several mistakes or inaccuracies.



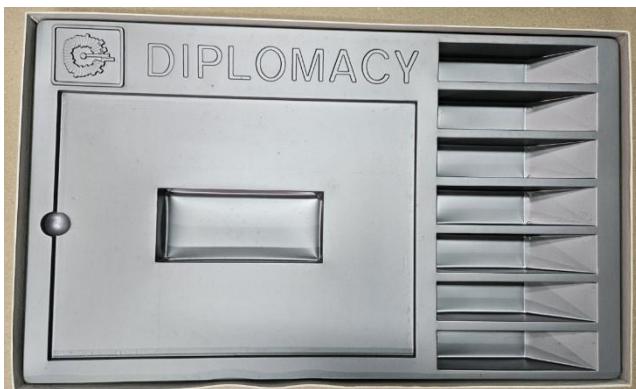
There is a postal address where players could write asking for questions and clarifications. There is also a reference to the facility where the game was printed, but nothing about any release date. On the last page the Copyright belongs to Mondadori Giochi.



The conference map is the same from other black box editions with the names translated in Italian.



Inside the box, there is a grey plastic insert, with Mondadori logo and the word Diplomacy. There are 7 separate spaces for the units on the right side, and on the left the place for conference maps.



The Editrice Giochi. Edition

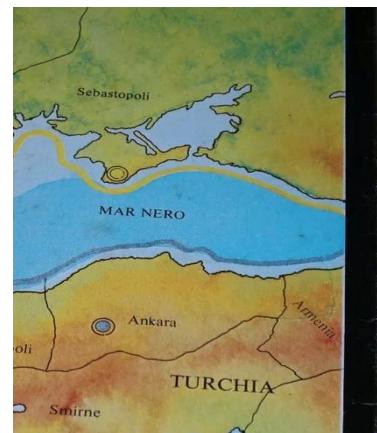
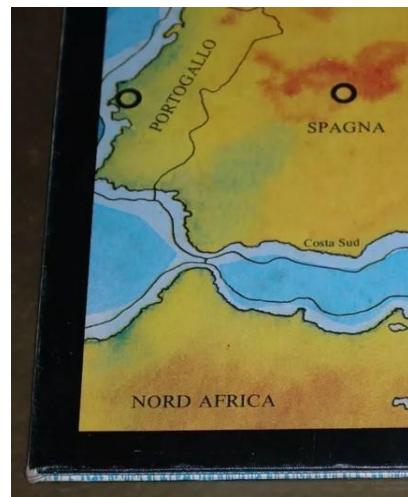
Again there is no certain date when this edition was released. The company bought the rights to Diplomacy from Mondadori Giochi after 1983 and started to publish the game after that date.

On the box there is a reference to a 1983 law compliance. So, we definitely are later than that.



The company was already printing several square-map boardgames, so they decided to make their

Diplomacy map squared too, and they badly screwed this up. They just brutally cut some portions of the map from the left and from the right side to meet their printing limits, and this resulted in some major issues. MAO is not connected to WES anymore, and on the other side SEV does not border with ARM. Great job.



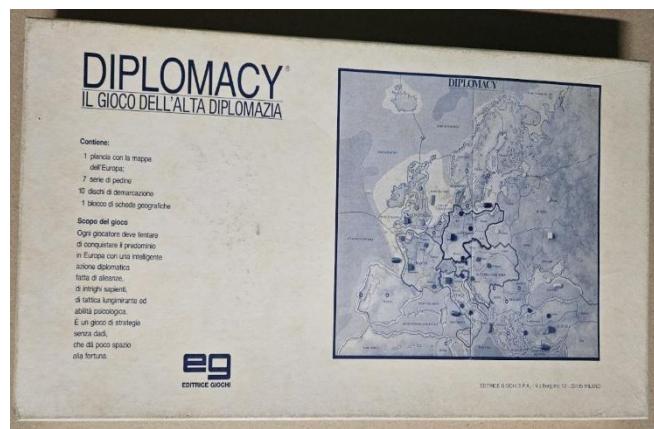
The map has a black border.



On the backside of the map, we have chaotic blue lines on a white background.



Interesting to see, that on the back of the box there is a picture with the correct map with Italian names on it. Probably they did the photo from a sample they got from Mondadori edition while preparing their own design.



The box itself had some changes from the Parker clone published by Mondadori. Now "Diplomacy" is written in the middle in white colour with two shadows.

Under that, it is written "Il gioco dell'alta diplomazia" – "The game of high diplomacy". In the right bottom corner there is the Editrice Giochi logo.

The sides of the box are also slightly different. There is the new 1983 law reference, the new publisher code 1215 and a bar code. In the rulebook the reference to Kissinger disappears, and we now have the same slogan as on the box: Diplomacy – the game of high diplomacy.



The rulebook itself has been reworked and in this edition there are no images at all to explain units movement. Just plain text. Again, it is not stated any year or rule version. And now there is no reference to a Copyright anywhere.

The pieces and the conference map are the same from the previous edition.

Inside the box we have a blue plastic insert with 7 different places for the units on the right, and the place for conference maps on the left.

Since the box is smaller, the place for the word "DIPLOMACY" is now much smaller than in Mondadori edition.



This edition is smaller than the previous one in both length and width. Later there will be a comparison between the two versions.

The Corrected Version

After complaints from players, Editrice Giochi corrected the map mistake.

This correction changes only the map itself, leaving everything else the same, so it is not a proper new version/edition of the gameboard, but just a second variant.

The map is again square, but this time it is enlarged and correct. It is also not just a correction of the previous map, but we have a completely new design, and it seems inspired by the US bookcase Avalon Hill edition.

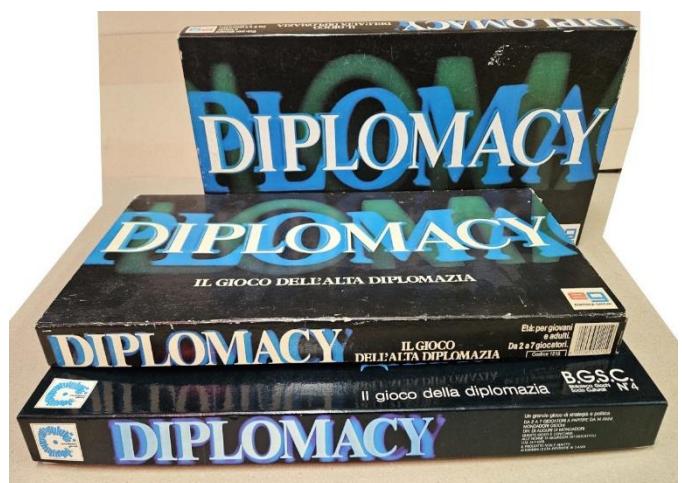
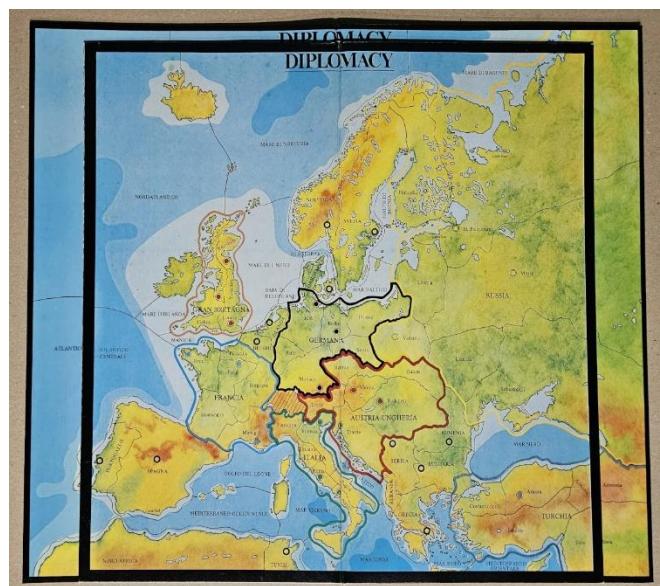


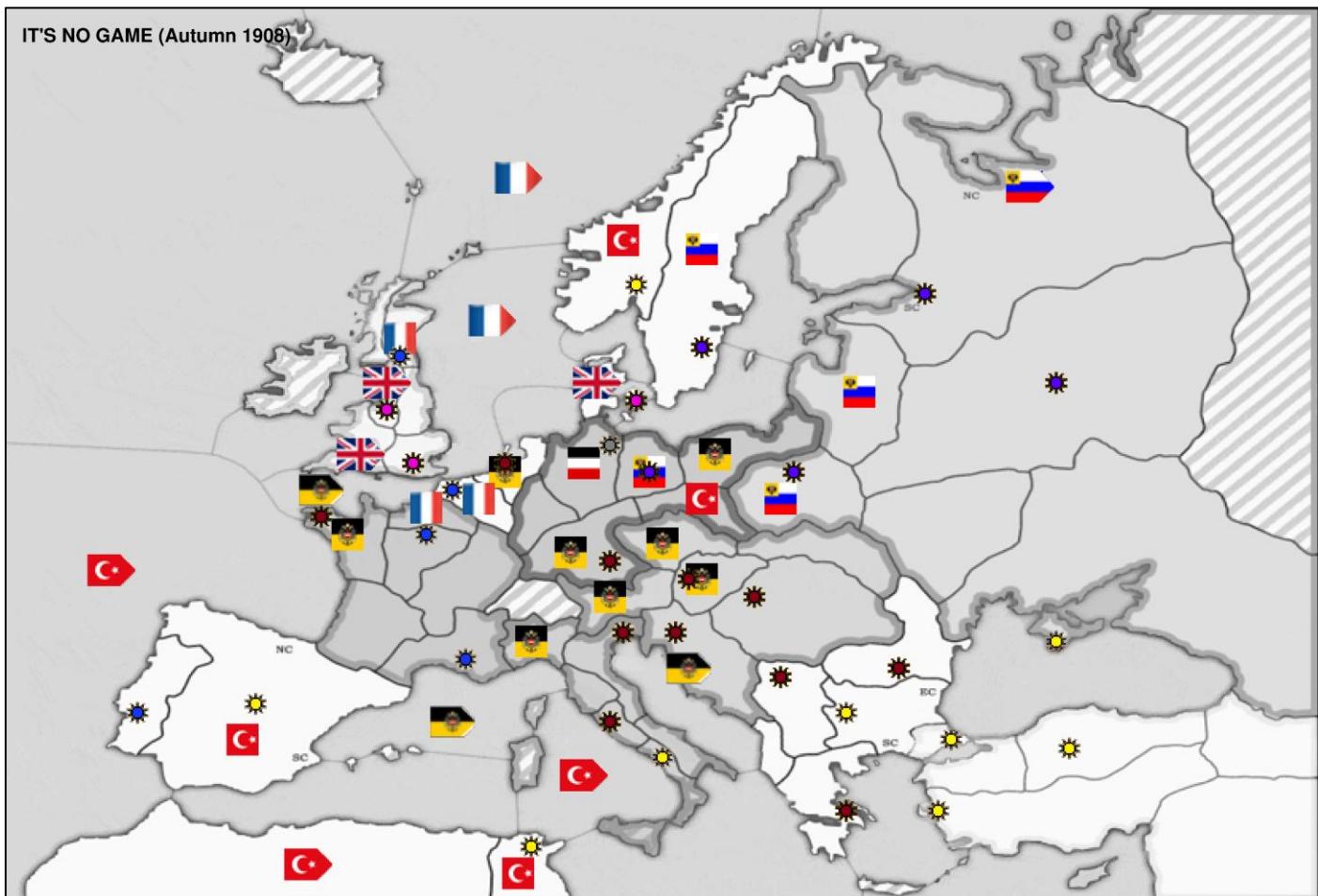
There is a dark purple frame around the names of countries. The sea colour is just one shade of light blue, and the physical map colours are greener and darker.

The colour for Turkey here is brown, while the other unit colours stay the same (so grey).

The back side of the map and conference map remain the same.

Here are some images with size differences of the two edition boxes and the three maps.





IT'S NO GAME (24BB)

(Spring 1908)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Edwin Hutton)

F(MAO) - ENG; A(Bre) Stands; F(GoL) c TURKISH A(Nap) - Spa; A(Ven) - Pie; A(Ruh) - Hol; A(Mun) - Kie (FAILED); A(Boh) s TURKISH A(Sil) - Mun; A(Pru) s RUSSIAN A(Ber); A(Tyr) s TURKISH A(Sil) - Mun

ENGLAND (Sean Cable)

F(NTH) - Den; F(IRI) - Wal; F(Lpl) - Yor (MISORDER)

FRANCE (Will Haughan)

A(Cly) - Edi; F(NWG) s A(Cly) - Edi; F(ENG) - NTH; A(Pic) s A(Bel); A(Bel) s AUSTRIAN A(Ruh) - Hol

GERMANY (Leif Kjetil Tvbberg)

F(BAL) s A(Kie); A(Kie) s A(Hol) - Ruh (CUT); A(Hol) - Ruh* (FAILED, DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRP)

RUSSIA (Gerry Bayer)

A(Ber) s AUSTRIAN A(Mun) - Kie; A(Lvn) Stands; A(Fin) - Swe

TURKEY (Ron Fisher)

F(TYS) c A(Nap) - Spa; A(Nap) - Spa; A(Tun) Stands; F(Spa) sc - MAO; A(Sil) - Mun (FAILED); A(Nwy) s RUSSIAN A(Fin) - Swe; F(NAf) s F(Spa) sc - MAO

Autumn 1908 Adjustments:

A: +Bre, +Hol, Mun, Tri, Rom, Ven, Vie, Gre, Bud, Rum, Ser = 11; Gains 2. Builds F(Tri), A(Vie).

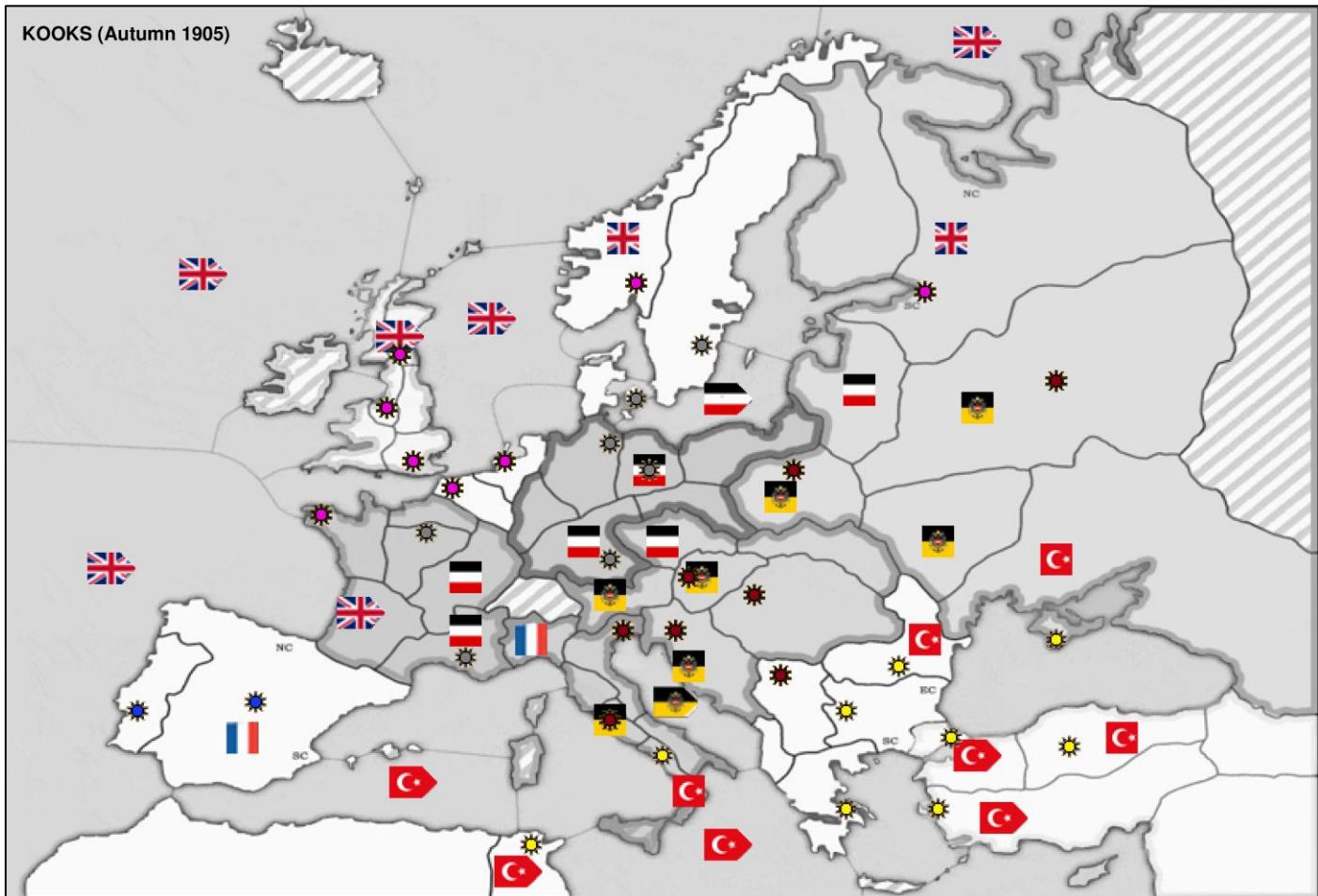
E: +Den, Lpl, Lon, -Edi = 3; No change.

F: +Edi, Bel, Par, Mar, Por, -Bre, -Spa = 5; Loses 1.

G: Kie -Swe, -Hol, -Den = 1; Loses 3. Removes F(BAL).

R: Ber, +Swe, StP, Mos, War = 5; Gains 1. Builds F(StP) nc, A(War).

T: +Spa, Tun, Nwy, Nap, Sev, Bul, Con, Ank, Smy = 9; Gains 1. No builds ordered, 2 short.



KOOKS (25BA)

(Autumn 1905)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Simon Hemsley)
A(Gal) - War; A(Ukr) s A(Gal) - War; A(Mos) s A(Gal) - War (CUT); A(Vie) - Boh (FAILED); A(Tyr) s A(Vie) - Boh (CUT); A(Ven) - Rom; F(ADS) Stands

ENGLAND (Vick Hall)
F(MAO) - Spa sc (FAILED); A(StP) - Mos (FAILED); F(BAR) Stands; A(Bel) - Nwy; F(NTH) c A(Bel) - Nwy; F(Bre) - Gas; F(NAO) - Lpl (FAILED); F(Edi) - Cly (FAILED)

FRANCE (Ron Fisher)
A(Mar) s A(Spa)* (CUT, DISLODGED TO Pie);
A(Spa) s A(Mar) (CUT); F(Cly) - Lpl (FAILED)

GERMANY (Martin Davis)
A(War) s A(Boh) - Gal* (DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRO); A(Boh) - Gal (FAILED); A(Mun) - Tyr (FAILED); A(Gas) - Mar; A(Bur) s A(Gas) - Mar; F(BAL) c A(Ber) - Lvn; A(Ber) - Lvn

ITALY (Elle Doerr - NMR!)
F(TYS) Stands (UO); F(Nap) Stands* (UO)
(DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRP)

TURKEY (Mike Benyon)
F(WMS) s FRENCH A(Spa); F(Tun) - TYS
(FAILED); F(ION) s A(Apu) - Nap; A(Apu) - Nap;
F(BLA) - Con; A(Sev) s AUSTRIAN A(Mos);
A(Rum) - Gal (FAILED)

Autumn 1905 Adjustments:

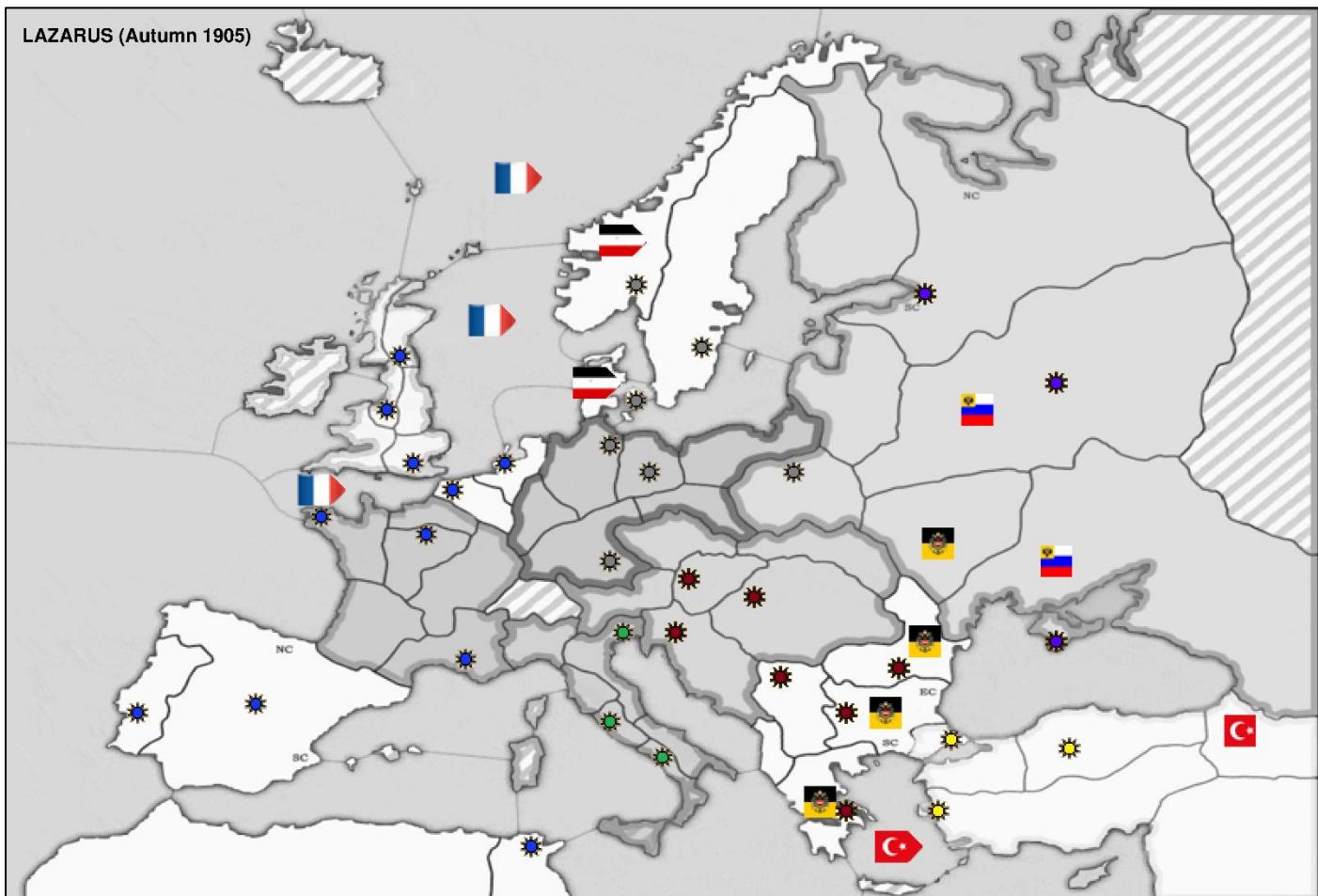
A: +War, Mos, Vie, +Rom, Ven, Bud, Tri, Ser, -Rum
 \equiv 8: Gains 1. Builds A(Tri)

E: StP, Nwy, Edi, Bre, Bel, Hol, Lon, Lpl = 8; No change

F: Spa, Por -Mar = 2; Loses 1. GM removes F(Cly).
G: Mun, +Mar, Par, Den, Ber, Swe, Kie, -War = 7; No
change. Builds A(Ber).

I: -Nap, -Rom = 0; GM removes F(TYS). Loses 2. OUT!

T: Tun, +Nap, Con, Sev, +Rum, Ank, Gre, Bul, Smy
 $\equiv 9$: Gains 2, Builds E(Smy), A(Ank)



LAZARUS

GUNBOAT STAB! (Autumn 1905)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Noris The Brain)
A(Gre) s A(Bul) (CUT); A(Rum) s A(Ukr) - Sev;
A(Ukr) - Sev (FAILED);

FRANCE (Griffin)
F(NWG) s F(NTH); F(ENG) s F(NTH); F(NTH) Stands

GERMANY (Fraternal Order of Belligerent Pacifists)
F(Den) - NTH (FAILED); F(Nwy) s F(Den) - NTH;

ITALY (The Ugly)
 ???

RUSSIA (Mangelwurzel)
A(Sev) - Ukr (FAILED); A(Mos) s A(Sev) - Ukr;

TURKEY (Bismarck)
F(AEG) - Gre (FAILED); A(Arm) - Sev (FAILED);

Autumn 1905 Adjustments:

A: Ser, Bul, Gre, Rum, Tri, Bud, Vie = 7
 F: Bel, Hol, +Tun, Par, Mar, Lon, Edi, Spa, Por, Lpl, Bre = 11
 G: War, Kie, Mun, Den, Nwy, Swe, Ber = 7
 I: Ven, Nap, Rom, -Tun = 3
 R: Sev, Mos, StP = 3
 T: Con, Smy, Ank = 3

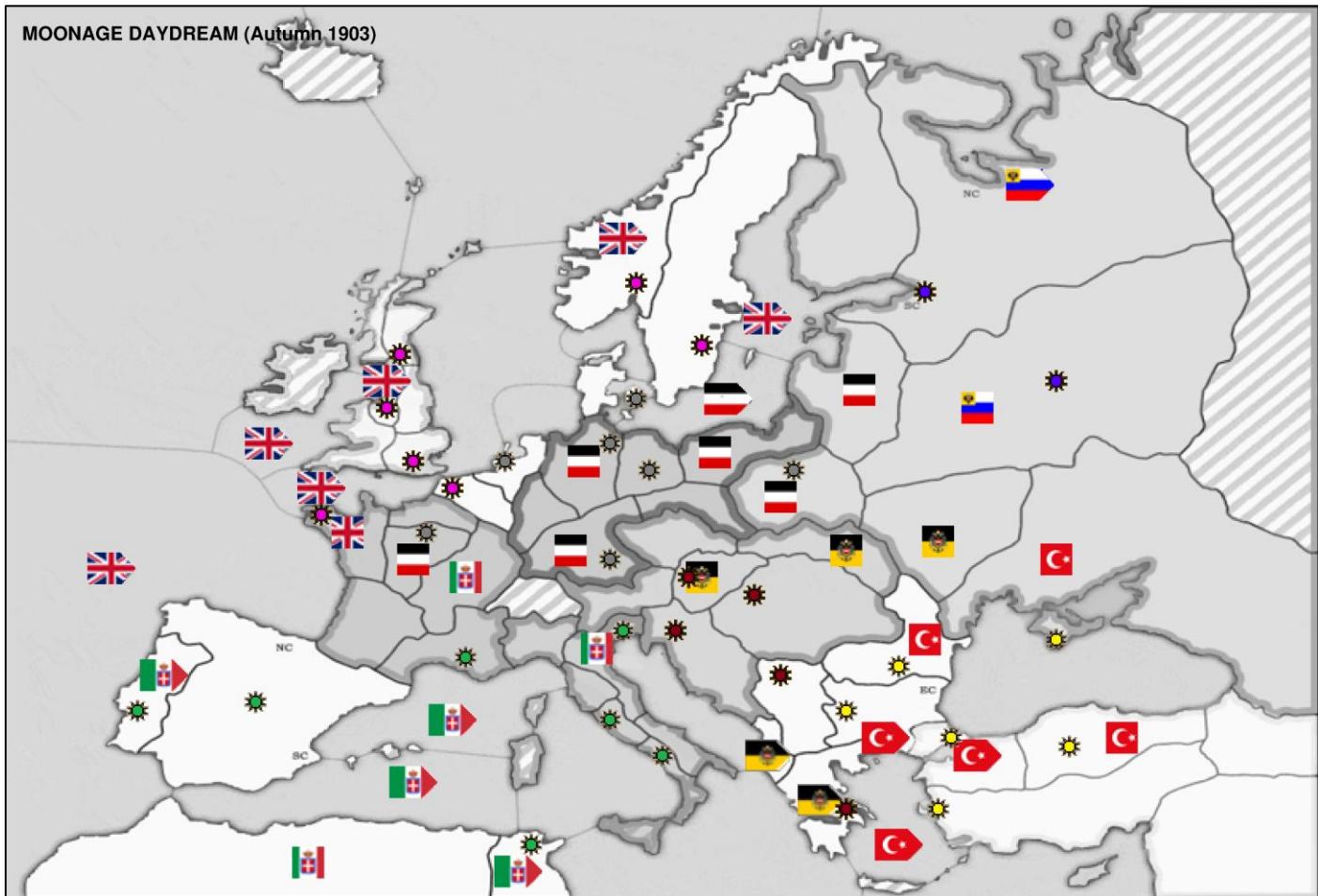
Versailles: Remember the map is pre-adjustments.

Press:

Griffin – FOBP: As we are unlikely to progress against each other, I propose a truce with both sides holding and supporting. Is that acceptable to you? it will enable us both to go eastwards.

Turkey: AH, Any time you can send support to F Con to hold, or Support of Arm to Sev, it would be appreciated and reciprocated.

Griffin - The Ugly: Sorry about the incursion into Tunis but you left it open and it was too tempting.



MOONAGE DAYDREAM (25BE)

(Autumn 1903)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Lindsay Jackson)
 A(Bud) - Vie; A(Gal) s A(Ukr); A(Ukr) s TURKISH A(Arm) - Sev (CUT); F(Alb) s F(Gre); F(Gre) s F(Alb)

ENGLAND (Edwin Hutton)
 F(IRI) - MAO; F(Lpl) - IRI; F(ENG) s F(IRI) - MAO; A(Bre) Stands; F(Nwy) s F(GB) - StP sc; F(GB) - StP sc (FAILED)

FRANCE (ex-Gracen Shepherd - Anarchy)
 A(Pic) Stands (UO)

GERMANY (Patrick Lafontaine)
 F(BAL) c A(Kie) - Lvn; A(Kie) - Lvn; A(Pru) s A(Sil) - War; A(Sil) - War; A(Bur) - Par

ITALY (Mike Elliott)
 F(ION) - Tun; A(Mar) - Bur; A(NAf) Stands; F(Spa) sc - Por; F(Tun) - WMS; F(TYS) - GoL

RUSSIA (Paul Simpkins)

A(Mos) s F(StP) nc; F(StP) nc Stands; A(War) - Ukr* (FAILED, DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRP); F(Sev) Stands* (UO) (DISLODGED - DISBANDS)

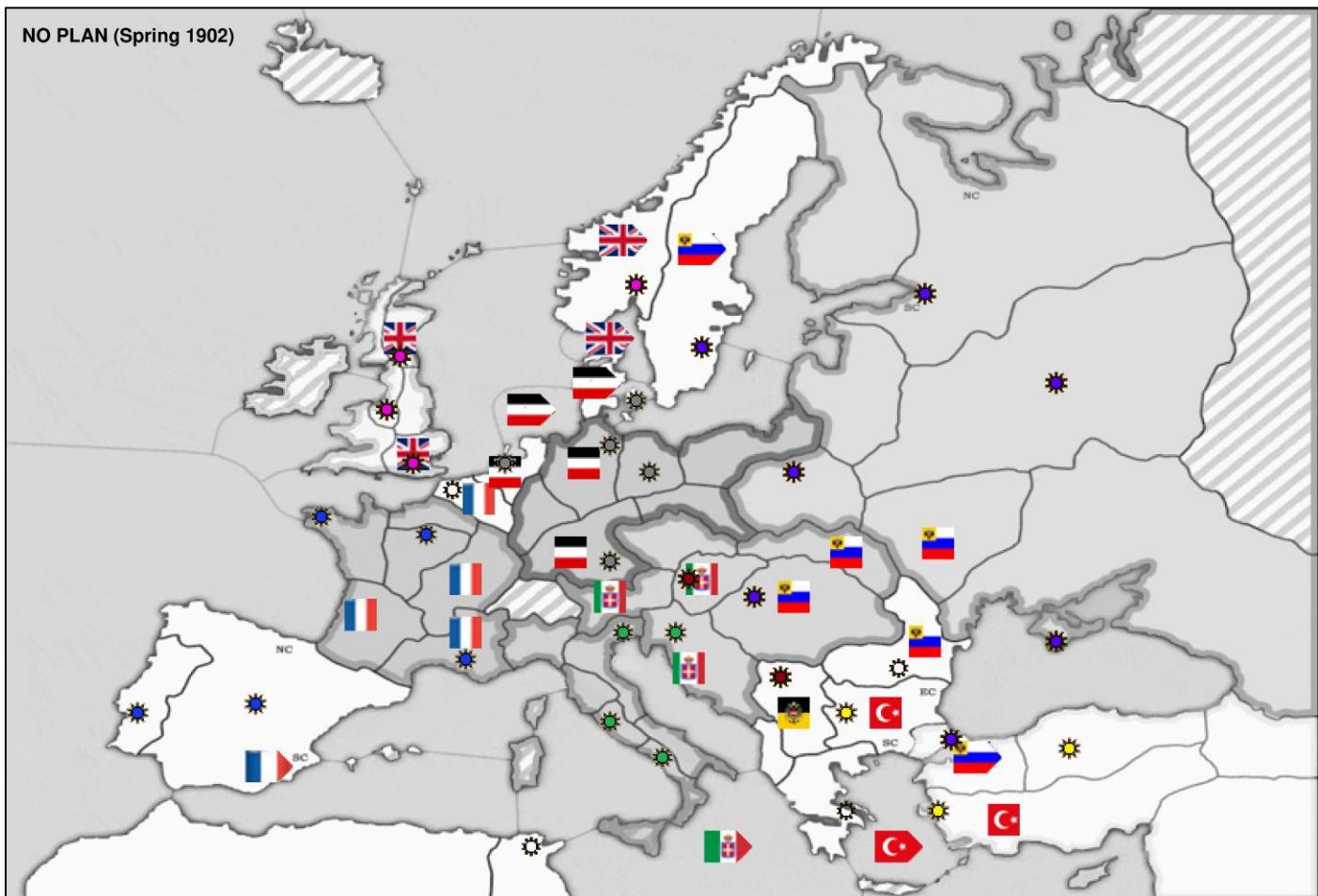
TURKEY (Gerry Bayer)

A(Arm) - Sev; A(Rum) s A(Arm) - Sev; F(Con) Stands; F(Bul) sc Stands; F(Smy) - AEG

Autumn 1903 Adjustments:

A: Vie, Gre, Bud, Ser, Tri = 5; No change.
 E: +Bre, Nwy, Swe, Lon, Bel, Edi, Lpl = 7; Gains 1. Builds F(Lpl).
 F: -Bre, -Par = 0; Loses 2. Gm Removes A(Pic).
 G: +War, +Par, Hol, Den, Ber, Kie, Mun = 7; Gains 2. Builds A(Mun), A(Kie).
 I: Tun, +Por, Spa, Mar, Ven, Nap, Rom = 7; Gains 1. Builds A(Ven).
 R: Mos, StP, -War, -Sev = 2; Loses 2.
 T: +Sev, Rum, Con, Bul, Ank, Smy = 6; Gains 1. Builds A(Ank).

Versailles: We had endgame proposals: (1.) A 5-way A/E/G/I/T draw, Russia 6th; (2.) A 6-way A/E/G/I/T/R. Both failed. 1 in favour, 5 abstentions.



NO PLAN (25BE)

(Spring 1902)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Ron Fisher)

A(Vie) - Bud* (FAILED, DISLODGED - NVRO, DISBANDED BY GM); A(Ser) s A(Vie) - Bud (CUT)

ENGLAND (John Langley)

F(Nwy) - SKA; F(NTH) - Nwy; A(Lon) Stands; A(Lpl) - Edi

FRANCE (Leif Kjetil Tvbberg)

A(Pic) - Bel; A(Par) - Bur; A(Mar) s A(Par) - Bur; F(Por) - Spa sc; A(Spa) - Gas

GERMANY (Mike Pollard)

F(Den) s F(Kie) - HEL; A(Ber) - Kie; A(Hol) s FRENCH A(Pic) - Bel; A(Mun) - Bur (FAILED); F(Kie) - HEL

ITALY (Geoff Wilde)

F(ION) Stands; A(Tri) - Ser (FAILED); A(Tyr) - Vie; A(Ven) - Tyr

RUSSIA (Charles Welsh)

A(War) - Gal; A(Bud) s ITALIAN A(Tyr) - Vie; F(Swe) Stands; A(Mos) - Ukr; A(Sev) - Rum; F(Con) Stands

TURKEY (Martin Davis)

F(AEG) - ION (FAILED); A(Ank) - Smy; A(Bul) Stands S ITALIAN A(Tyr) - (MISORDER, No action specified)



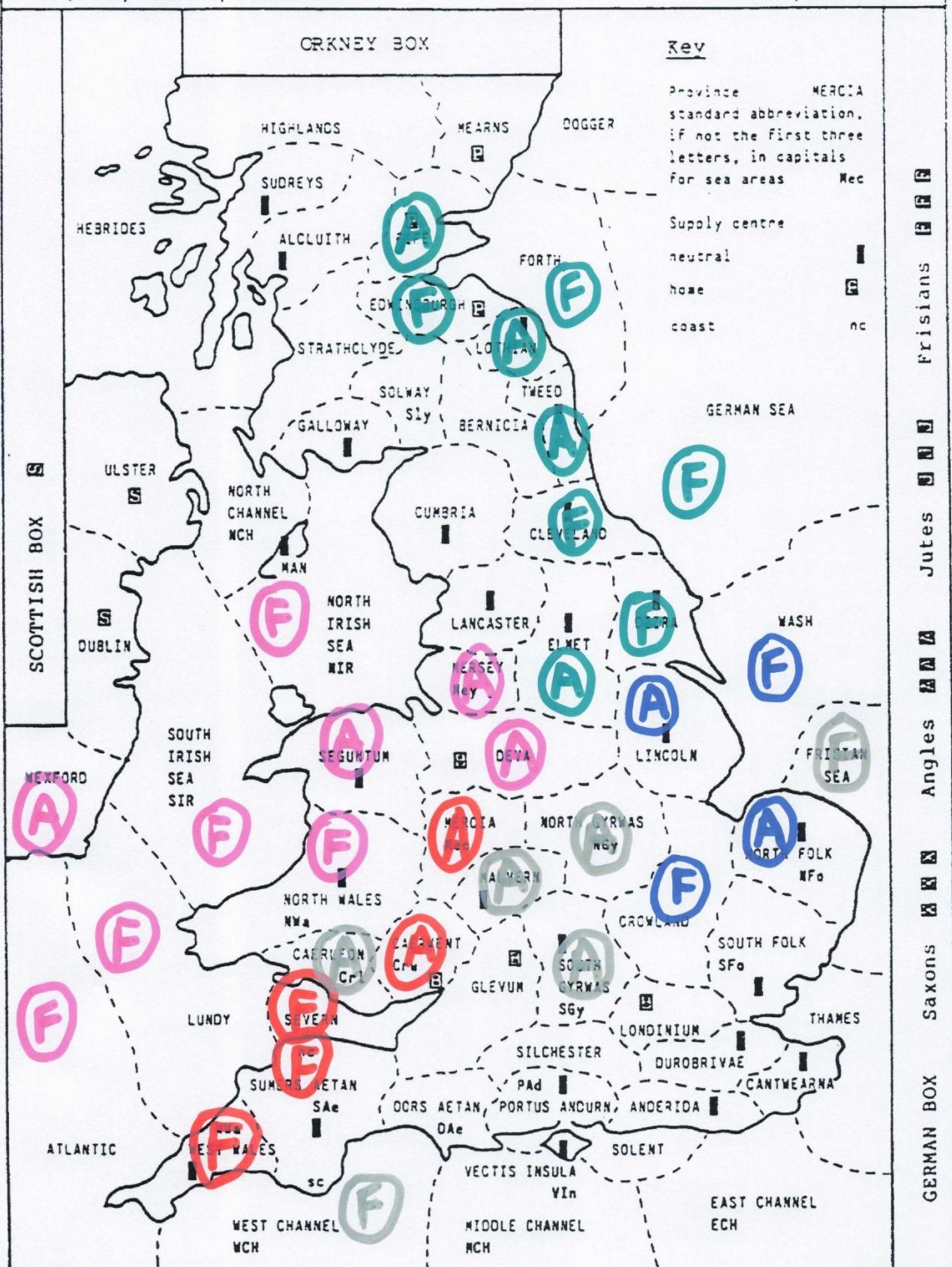
orders@godssavethezine.com

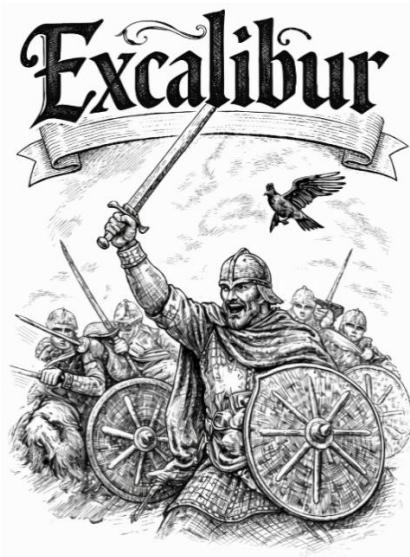
SPRING 456 AD.

EXCALIBUR

A Diplomacy variant by Kenneth Clark

This map by John Morris





JEAN GENIE

(Spring 456AD)

PICTS (Martin Davis): A(Tweed)-Cleveland [FAILS]; A(Lothian)-Tweed [FAILS]; A(Elmet)-Lincoln [FAILS]; F(Deira)-WASH [FAILS]; F(Cleveland)-Deira [FAILS]; F(GERMAN SEA) S F(Deira)-WASH; F(FORTH) Holds; F(Edinburgh)-Lothian [FAILS]; A(Fife)-Edinburgh [FAILS]

SCOTS (Kevin Wilson): F(North Wales) S F(LUNDY) [CUT]; F(North Irish Sea) S A(Deva); A(Deva) S PICTISH A(Elmet)-Lincoln [CUT]; A(Seguntum)-Mercia [FAILS]; F(SOUTH IRISH SEA) S F(North Wales); F(LUNDY) S F(Wexford)-ATLANTIC; A(Lancaster)-Mersey; F(Wexford)-ATLANTIC; A(Dublin)-Wexford

SAXONS (Graham Tunnicliffe): F(WEST CHANNEL)-ATLANTIC [FAILS]; A(North Gyrwas)-Deva [FAILS]; F(FRISIAN SEA) S ANGLES F(WASH) A(Caerwent)-Carleon; A(Silchester)-South Gyrwas; A(South Gyrwas)-Malvern

ANGLES (Neil Duncan): F(Crowland) S A(Lincoln); F(WASH) C A(North Folk)-Deira; A(Lincoln) S A(North Folk)-Deira [CUT]; A(North Folk)-Deira [FAILS]

FRISIANS (Andrew Greco): F(SEVERN) S SAXON A(Caerwent)-Caerleon; F(ATLANTIC)-West Wales; A(Mercia)-North Wales [FAILS]; F(West Wales)-Sumers Aetan nc; A(Glevum)-Caerwent

GAMESTART



“Oh! You Pretty Things

REGULAR DIPLOMACY

AUSTRIA: Paraic Reddington
paraic87@hotmail.com

ENGLAND: Edwin Hutton
edwin.hutton55@gmail.com

FRANCE: Kevin Wilson
ckevinw@gmail.com

GERMANY: Simon Hemsley
simon.hemsley@gmail.com

ITALY: Mike Elliott
diplo99@m79.net

RUSSIA: Theo Fox
fox.theo@yahoo.co.uk

TURKEY: Colin Smith
cardadvantage@hotmail.com

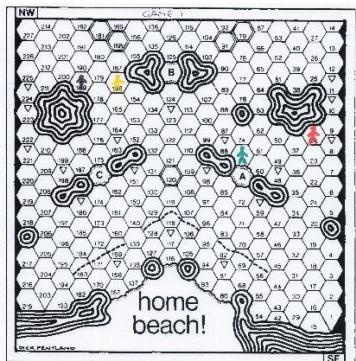
A big hello to fellow *They Might Be Giants* fan, Theo, who is playing his first game here. I have taken people at their word when they said they didn't have any preference. This game does not use standbys, so please don't drop out!

Oh! You Pretty Things was of course the second track on *Hunky Dory* (1971), David Bowie's fourth album. The song itself was first released by Peter Noone (lead singer with Herman's Hermits) as a solo single in April 1971 which made it to number 12 in the charts. It is a pretty dark song, reflecting images from the works of Aleister Crowley, Nietzsche, Arthur C Clarke and Edward Bulwer-Lytton's novel "The Coming Race".

I think it is one of Bowie's best.

A copy of the current Diplomacy House Rules can be found [HERE](#).

Man-Eater



[\(for a large map just click\)](#)

Game 1

Red (2 legs) (Mark): (10) - 24

Blue (Mark): RIP

Green (2 legs) (Jed): (87) - 73

Yellow (2 legs) (Jed): (180) - 166

Shark (Patrick) (223) - 189

Shark = 3 points.

Red (1 leg) (Patrick): (123) - 122

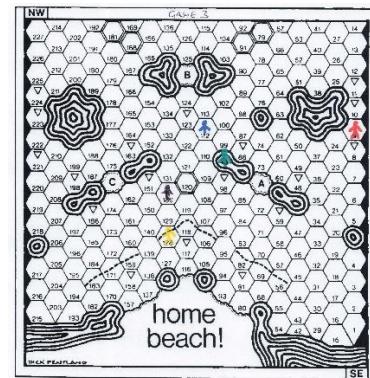
Blue (1 leg) (Patrick): (128) - 117. Tide in your favour, you are carried forward 2 spaces - HOME!

Green (2 legs) (Mark): (9) - 37

Yellow (Mark): (Beach C) - continues to snooze

Shark (Jed) (184) - 185

Shark = 2 points.



[\(for a large map just click\)](#)

Game 3

Red (2 legs) (Jed): (11) - 9

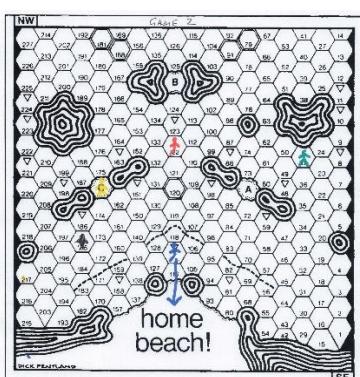
Blue (0 legs) (Jed): (113) drifts to 112

Green (0 legs) (Patrick): (99) - stuck on rocks

Yellow (Patrick): (150)-128

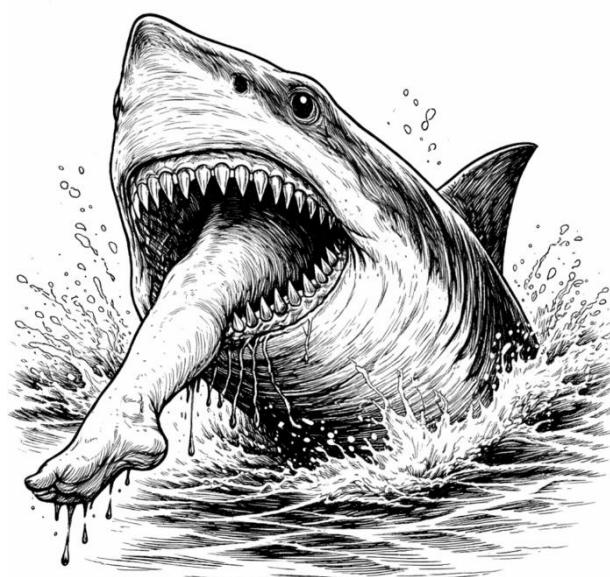
Shark (Mark): (112) - 130

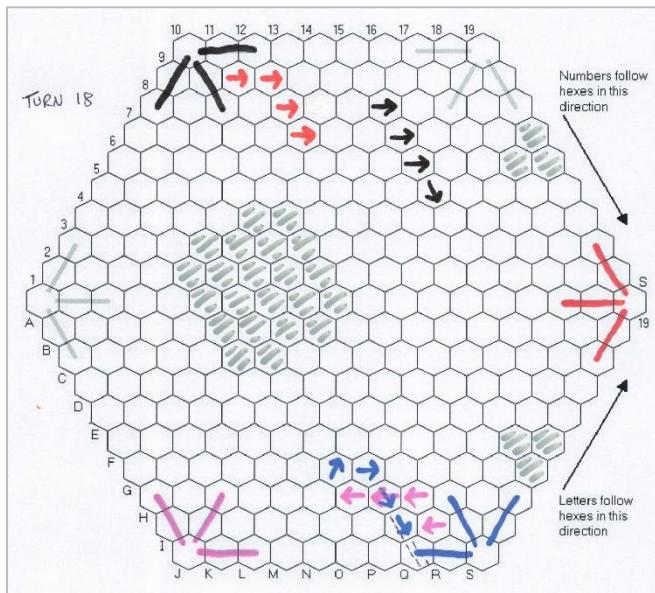
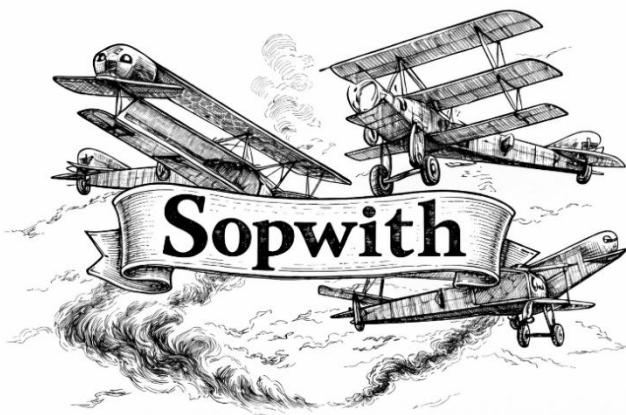
Shark = 4 points.



[\(for a large map just click\)](#)

Game 2





[\(for a large map just click\)](#)

Turn 18

Cliu Petre (Mog Firth)

Starts: H15 (facing I16)

Ammo = 12; Damage = 8; Points = 17

Turn 1: RS

Turn 2: RS

Turn 3: RT

Ends: K15 facing L15

Ammo = 12; Damage Left = 8; Points = 17

The Red Byron (Alex Richardson)

Starts: C11 (facing D12)

Ammo = 10; Damage = 3; Points = 12

Turn 1: A

Turn 2: RS

Turn 3: RS

Ends: F12 facing G13

Ammo = 10; Damage Left = 3; Points = 12

Baron Von Stinkhoven (John Langley)

Starts: M7 (facing M8)

Ammo = 13; Damage Left = 3; Points = 9

Turn 1: RT

Turn 2: RT (fires ahead)

Turn 3: A (fires ahead)

Ends: P8 facing Q8

Ammo = 11; Damage Left = 3; Points = 9

Carrion (John Tait)

Starts: Q9 (facing P8)

Ammo = 0; Damage = 11; Points = 12

Turn 1: RS

Turn 2: A

Turn 3: A

Ends: N7 facing M6

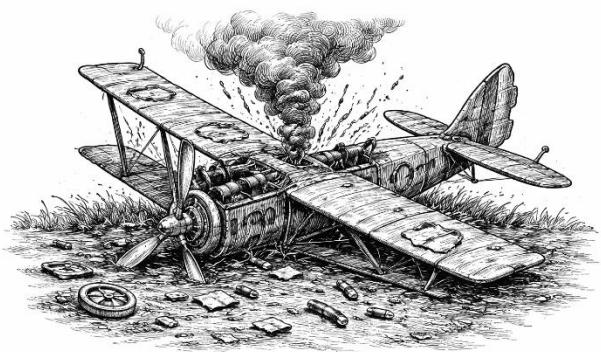
Ammo = 0; Damage Left = 11; Points = 12

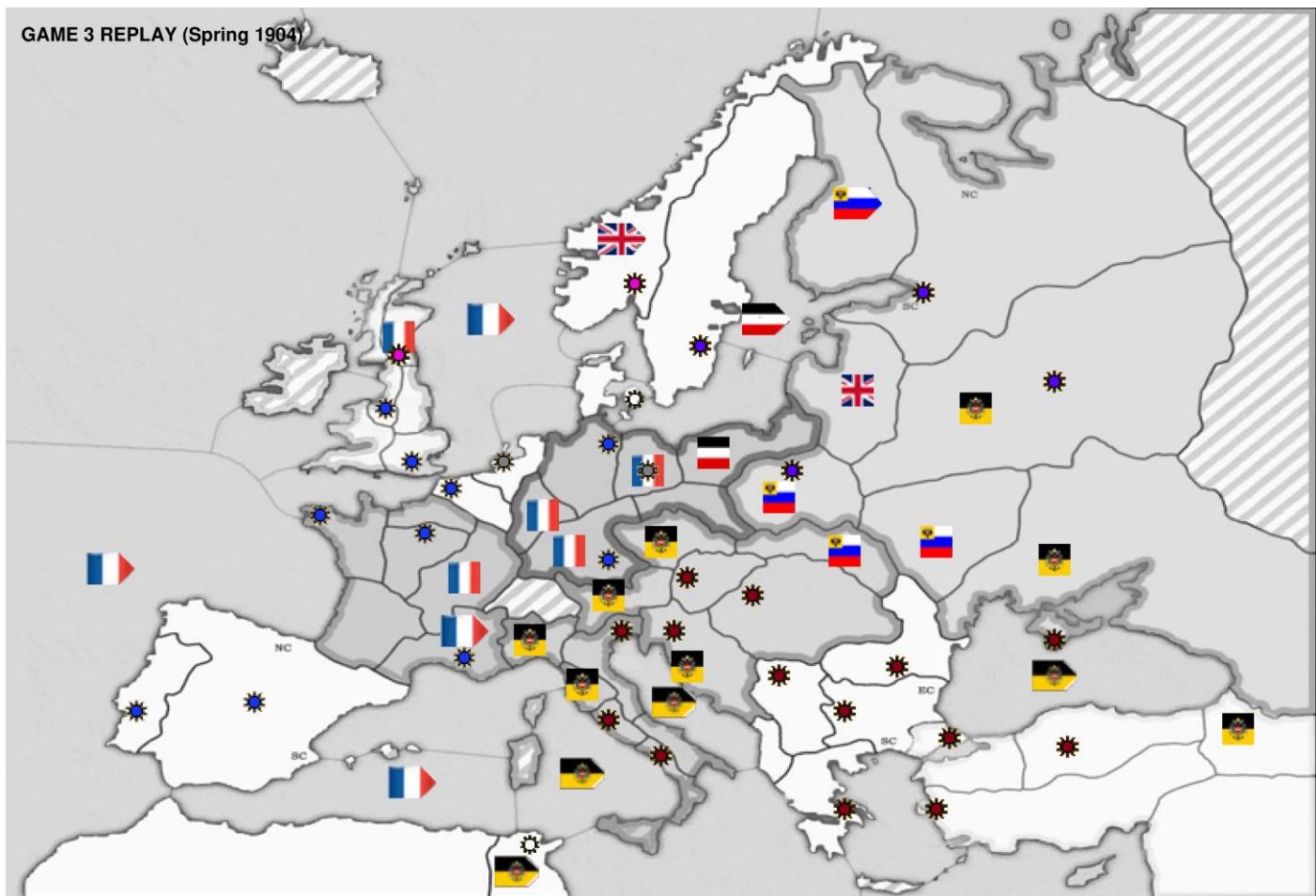
Ground Control: All clouds push east. Remember, for every full move (3 turns) spent at an airbase you repair 2 damage points. If you do notice any more mistakes, please let me know ASAP.

Biggles Flies ... Undone!



"Any landing you can walk away from is a good landing!" - RFC Mess Greeting





Intimate Diplomacy Tournament

GAME 3 REPLAY

(Spring 1904)

Richard Williams vs. Brian Frew

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Richard Williams)

F(BLA) c A(Bul) - Sev; F(Nap) - TYS; F(ION) - Tun; F(Tri) - ADS; A(Rom) - Tus; A(Pie) - Mar (FAILED); A(Bul) - Sev; A(Smy) - Arm; A(Sev) - Mos; A(Vie) - Tyr; A(Bud) - Tri; A(Boh) s A(Vie) - Tyr

ENGLAND (Mercenary - Richard)
F(BAR) - Nwy; A(Lvn) - Pru (FAILED)

FRANCE (Brian Frew)

F(MAO) - WMS; F(Mar) - Pie (FAILED); F(Bre) - MAO; A(Par) - Bur; A(Bur) - Ruh; A(Mun) s GERMAN A(Pru) - Sil; F(Lon) - NTH; A(Lpl) - Edi; A(Kie) - Ber

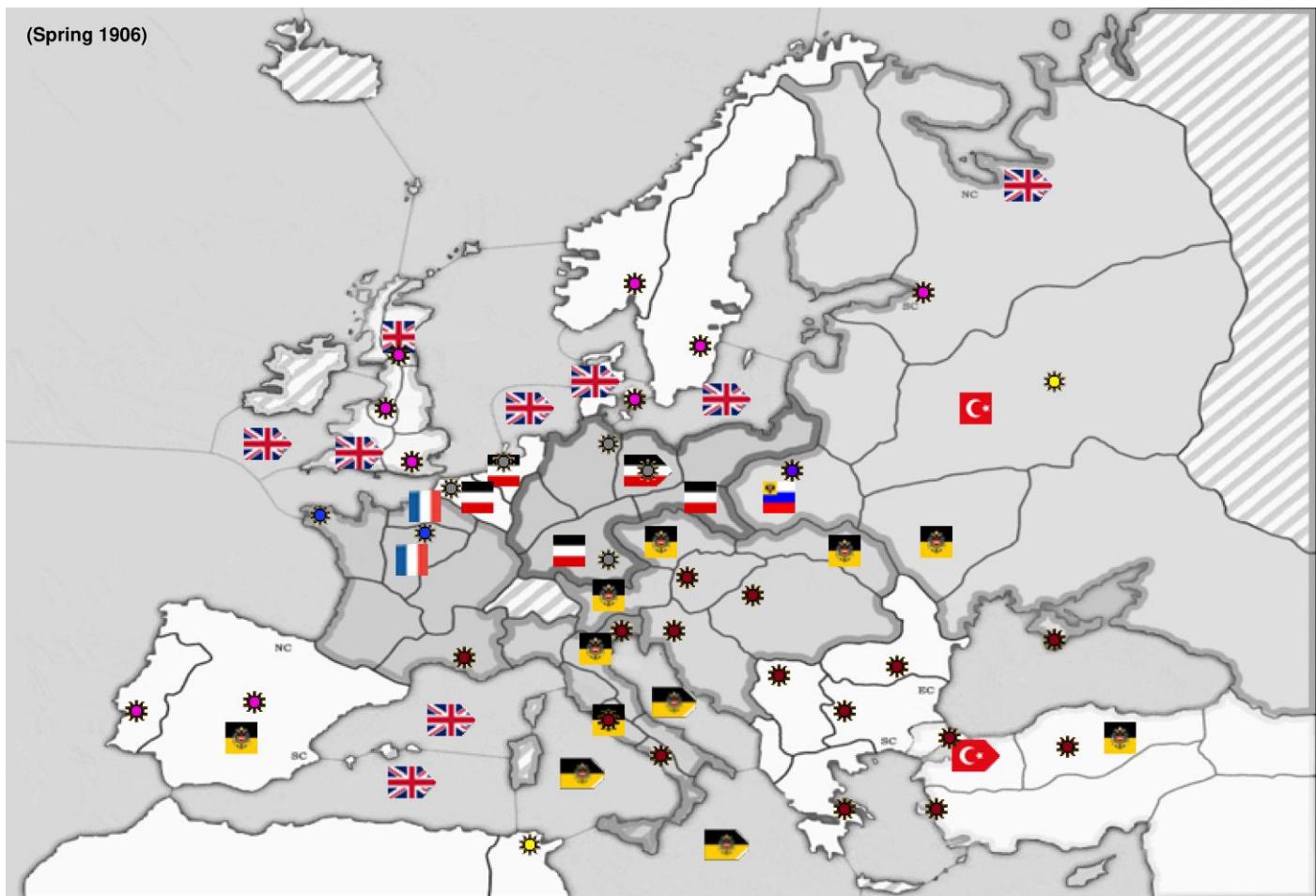
GERMANY (Mercenary - Brian)

A(Pru) - Sil (FAILED); F(BAL) - GoB

RUSSIA (Mercenary - Richard)

F(StP) sc - Fin; A(Mos) - Ukr; A(War) - Sil (FAILED); A(Gal) s A(War) - Sil

The winner of this game will play James Hardy in the Final.



BINGO (Spring 1906)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Kaiser Franz-Joseph)
 A(Con) - Ank; A(Rom) - Ven; A(Vie) - Boh;
 A(Nap) - Rom; A(Mar) - Spa; A(Tyr) - Mun
 (FAILED); F(EMS) - ION; F(ION) - TYS; A(Rum)
 - Ukr; A(Bud) - Gal; F(Tri) - ADS

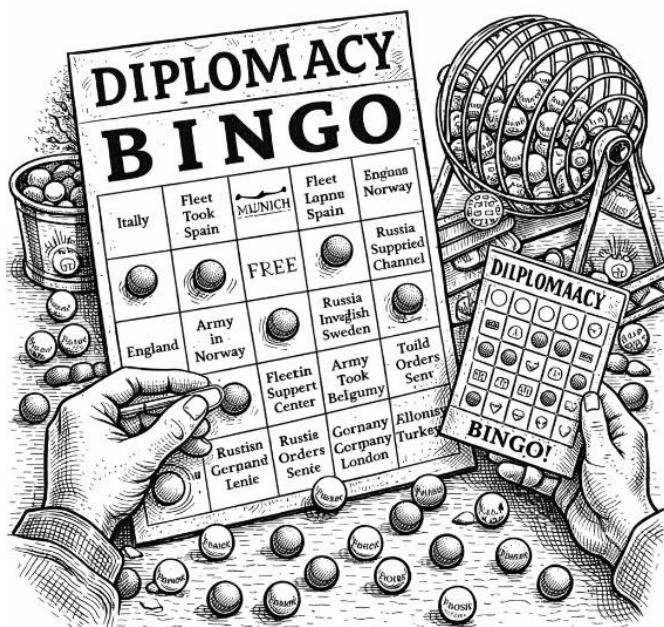
ENGLAND (King Edward VII)
 F(Lon) - Wal; F(MAO) - WMS; F(Den) - Kie
 (FAILED); F(Swe) - BAL; F(StP) nc Stands;
 F(HEL) s F(Den) - Kie; F(Spa) sc - GoL; F(Lpl) -
 IRI; A(Edi) Stands

FRANCE (President Emile Loubet)
 A(Bre) - Pic; A(Par) s A(Bre) - Pic

GERMANY (Kaiser Wilhelm II)
 A(Boh) - Sil; F(Ber) - Kie (FAILED); A(Hol) s
 F(Ber) - Kie; A(Mun) Stands; A(Pic) - Bre*
 (FAILED, DISLODGED TO Bel)

RUSSIA (Tsar Nicholas III)
A(War) - Mos (FAILED)

TURKEY (Sultan Abdul Hamid II)
A(Mos) - War (FAILED); F(BLA) - Con



BINGO – The Scores on the Doors

		This Turn	Total
1st	Toby	20	210
2 nd	Dane	20	204
3 rd	Niall	29	198
4 th	Mark	14	186
=5 th	James	20	183
	Kevin	20	183
=7 th	Jed	20	182
	Vick	20	182
9 th	Brian	20	180
10 th	Ian B	11	177
11 th	Edwin	20	175
12th	Richard W	9	159
13 th	Simon	20	148
14 th	Ian W	11	142
15 th	Sandra	7	141
16 th	Brad	0	139
17 th	Colin	13	133
18 th	Nick	10	130
19 th	Andy	7	126
20 th	Patrick	13	108
21 st	Neil	20	100
=22 nd	Conrad	20	98
	Eddy	0	98
24 th	Peter	16	85
=25 th	Alex L	0	60
	Bernard	20	60
	Jeremy	20	60
	Richard B	20	60
=29 th	George	0	40
	Maaike	0	40
	Theo	0	40
	Thomas	20	40

Versailles: 26 sets of orders received. No less than 16 players managed 20 points this round. The most popular order with 22 votes was F(Swe)-BAL. No one submitted any orders for A(Tus). There were tied votes for A(Tyr), A(Edi), F(Lon), F(Spa)sc, A(Mun), A(War) and F(BLA). F(ION) was the most popular unit to order with 24 votes. A(Vie), F(HEL) and A(Hol) only had one vote each.

Two players passed the finishing line of 200 points this season... in second place with 204 points we have Dane Maslen, but in first place we have our winner,,, **TOBY HARRIS!**

Congratulation to Toby, certainly the player who put the most effort in. I would love to have some game-end statements on the Bingo, particularly comments on the way the game was manipulated most cleverly by Toby. Ideas for improving the game would be welcome – Dane has already sent me some ideas. So please, let me know your thoughts for next time!



Regular Diplomacy – Game “P” (“Panic in Detroit”): This game will NOT use standbys. Martin Davis, 6 needed.

The War of the Worlds (Rules inside). I am willing to run this Gunboat if that would enable me to get a game going. I think it could be fun. 7 needed.

Fokker: Diplomacy with Planes. Rules in issue 29. 4 needed. Mike Pollard, Ian Bull, John Langley. Sorry, but if there is no movement I will have to can this one next time. I'll see if anyone on discord is interested.

Mercator XIV (The Steve Jones Memorial Game): (9/17 – 8 more wanted): Brian Frew, John Strain, Brendan Whyte, Colin Smith, Edwin Hutton, Martin Davis, David Anderson, Vick Hall, Toby Harris. More than halfway!

Mercator 5-Up: Rules in issue 32 – 5 player version of Mercator. Edwin Hutton, David Anderson. 3 needed.

