GOD SAVE THE ZINE

ISSUE 40 (October 2026)

DEADLINE – FRIDAY 20th NOVEMBER

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EDITORIAL

The feedback to producing an old "mimeo" style zine was very positive, but there were a few comments about readability and a general preference for two columns. Therefore, this time I've allowed a few compromises, using a clean modern font with bold and italics, some half line spacing and all maps accompanying games or articles have been restored. I am also allowing photographs. However, AI pictures just for the sake of prettying the zine continue to be eschewed (great word that). I've adjusted the paper size to foolscap, to make it really old school, while reverting to white paper. That said, AI may return next issue, because I do like my Diplomacy cartons.

I was going to write some zine reviews, but I am reluctantly coming to the conclusion that it is not really possible to write zine reviews anymore. There is a long tradition of zine editors commenting on each other's zines to generate copy and help advertise other zines to their readership. In the old days there was always something to say. There were a lot of zines (when I was publishing Spring Offensive there must have been 60-70 active zines in the UK), so you could always find something to say about some of them. There was a tremendous variety of format, frequency, content, etc. so it was easy to find something to spark your inspiration.

There were two distinct routes to go in writing any sort of zine review – you either stuck to the form and function (what does the zine look like, can the editor spell, is the reproduction legible, how frequent is it and what is the turnaround like) or you took a comment or an idea in the zine and critiqued it and had a bit of fun. When the hobby was still developing there were all sorts of burning hobby issues that could spark controversy, there were opinions that could be disagreed with or simply ridiculed. You could get a debate going. Occasionally, you could even find yourself in a feud (which is the one thing I don't miss at all).

Today things are different. There are very few zines. Many have been going for a considerable time and as a consequence they are in a well-worn groove. One issue is much like another, both in terms of form, function and content. There are almost no hobby issues to discuss and only the odd letter column to produce issues to comment on. All the zines I see are efficient and reliable, so you can't even complain about the fact that they haven't been seen for ages. So, what is there left to say? I'm struggling. So, you will find below links to the latest issues of all the zines I see, so you can make your own mind up.

I have printed an article this time about what used to happen when zine reviews were written in the bad old days.

Which of course brings me to remind everyone to send an email to Alex Richardson with a vote for the zine poll this year. I must confess that **GSTZ**'s usual poor performance has been a bit of a disappointment to me, though I'm not sure if that is a result of getting a few votes which are really negative or just not getting many votes at all. Anyway, although it is a UK Games Zine Poll, anyone can vote wherever they are in this wonderful world.

On page 15 you will find a small advert for a web-based implementation of Sopwith, by Peter Dols which looks very professional indeed. If I can use it to run games for the zine, I may open a new Sopwith waiting list! Peter has also got rules for a Zeppelin variant, where one or more Zeppelins also join the game. If you like Sopwith, give this new site a go!

I have been neglecting the Variant Bank of late and have lots of contributions to upload – particularly thanks to Hugh Polley who has sent me many variants that I need to categorise and upload. I will try to sort this all out soon.

This weekend included my 66th birthday, another reminder that time's winged chariot is moving ever on. Next week we are off to Venice for a week – so that's another supply centre I can cross off my "to visit" list.

UK GAMES ZINE POLL

(a) WHO MAY VOTE? Anybody who sees at least one eligible zine, whether as an editor or a subscriber. Editors may vote for their own zines.

(b) WHICH ZINES ARE ELIGIBLE? Any zine published in the British Isles which has produced an issue in 2026 (up to and including the Poll deadline); is distributed by post, as an e-mail, as an attachment to an e-mail or as a download from a website; and runs games that we would recognise as 'postal' ones (e.g. Diplomacy, Railway Rivals, 18xx, En Garde! or United, among many others). Please note: the zines should be UK ones, but the voters may come from anywhere in the world - all that matters is that you are a regular reader.

(c) HOW TO VOTE. List the eligible zines that you see and mark each one between 1.0 (low) and 10.0 (high), to one decimal place if you wish. Votes should be sent by e-mail from the voter's own account to alex.bokmal@googlemail.com.

The Poll deadline will be midnight on **SATURDAY 31ST OCTOBER 2026**. Results will be e-mailed to each person who votes.

WAITING LISTS

Regular Diplomacy – Game "Q" ("Quicksand"): This game will NOT use standbys. Martin Davis

Mercator XIV (The Steve Jones Memorial Game): (12/17 – 5 more wanted): Brian Frew, John Strain, Brendan Whyte, Colin Smith, Edwin Hutton, Martin Davis, David Anderson, Vick Hall, Toby Harris, Gerry Bayer, Simon Helmsley, Harvey Jones (maybe). Time to have a real push to find 5 more!

War of the Rings: 1 or 2 wanted. Jed Stone

Macao: 3 wanted. Jed Stone

THE ZINE EMPORIUM

These are the zines I know about. Click on the links to see the latest issue I have to hand.

UK Diplomacy Zines

The Cunning Plan	Neil Duncan	#328	Diplomacy and variants.
Fury of the Northmen	Colin Bruce	#153	Britannia, Chess, Civilization, Conquistador, Diplomacy
Obsidian	Alex Richardson	#329	Diplomacy and RR.
Ode	John Marsden	#468	Diplomacy and variants, RR, BB, numerous other games.
Will This Wind	Nick Kinzett	#56	Weird.

Rest of the World Diplomacy Zines

back-of-the-envelope	Tom Howell	#63	USA. Diplomacy, RR, Dominion, Love Letter, Jabba's Palace, Snakes and Ladders, WitWiKN?, and Fuzzy Borders;
Cheesecake	Andy Lischett	#452	USA. Diplomacy
Damn the Consequences	Brendan Whyte	#250	USA. Diplomacy. Runs a wide variety of games (and has waiting lists for an even wider variety)
Diplomacy World	Doug Kent	#175	USA. Premier article-based Dip hobby discussion zine.
Northern Flame	Rob Lesco	#182	Canada. Diplomacy

Games Zines

The Celestial Dragon	Richard Smith and friends	#20	UK. Runs a wide variety of games.
Dane's Games	Dane Maslen	#265	UK. 6 nimmt! By Popular Demand, Choice, Grand National, etc. etc.
Hopscotch	Alan Parr	#388	UK. United, Golden Strider and various other games.
mais n'est-ce pas la gare?	Steve Thomas	#302	UK 18xx zine.
S.O.B.	Chris Hassler	#318	USA. Lots and lots of different games. Game-fees charged if not receiving paper zine.
To Win Just Once	Paul Evans	#268	UK. En Garde! Railway Rivals and Star Trader.
Western Front	Brad Martin	#238	Australia. Britannia, Bus Boss, Railway Rivals and a few other games.

LETTERS

TOBY HARRIS

What a terrific EDC. Hopefully others (especially the new champion) will write about their experience.

The top table was a pendulum, with no certain outcome until the final turn. And the organization, prizes, fun & games were as great as any EDC could be.

I saw a few misorders this time, with one in particular being a repetition of something repeated from Athens. So, this is more a few words about misorders, rather than an EDC review.

The first was: F(NA) - MA, F(MA) - North A

The first order was reasonably unambiguous, but the second is a different kettle of fish. The intent was North Africa of course, reinforced by "NA" being the writer's usage for North Atlantic Ocean on the previous order. Most of the table wanted to accept "North A" as NAf rather than NAO (note the upper / lower casing, to be pedantic!).

I stayed neutral initially, listening to the one objection; no surprise that this was the player on the negative end of a move to NAf. This was not a tournament-affecting game, nor was the order, but to me it's a misorder. It's ambiguous. The unit stood.

SA: *The postal game used to be bedeviled with different GMs taking a different stance on how exact written orders used to be. This was largely sorted by online Diplomacy as the Judges and their like insisted on a very specific syntax which removed ambiguity.*

In FtF Diplomacy the problem never went away – and paradoxically has become more of an issue these days because players don't have the postal heritage of writing down orders exactly. Someone used to playing postally would never write orders like that.

On this example, I agree that technically it is ambiguous, so the unit should stand.

Now for a misorder I am far more concerned about, because there have been different interpretations across a WDC and an EDC. So, this becomes potentially more serious should it happen at a crucial moment in a major tournament. An example of the order is:

A(Bur) s ~~Mun~~ - Mun

So, the player changed their mind from supporting Munich to deciding they wanted to move there instead. The question is whether the unit is now ordered to supporting Munich, supporting another unit to Munich or moving to Munich itself. Because the "s" is not crossed out, I would have to read this as "support". Others argue that you go with the "last order", which is effectively a "move". Some argue that you go with the first order, which is a support.

To me it's not so complicated. The order is unclear. It's a misorder. The unit should hold. Why? Because the "s" and hyphen are both commands; you cannot give a unit two commands. Thankfully none of these occurred at crucial moments. Hoping that never happens.

SA: *On this one I agree with you as well. Players just have to be more careful.*

May I just point out that during our game at EDC I told you the absolute and whole truth for 17 consecutive turns. We played to 1909, right? Ok, so I lied on turn 18 and snaffled five yummy centres.

As you say, scorpions don't lose their sting.

Which (roughly translated) meant a "Best Turkey" certificate for me, a "Biggest stab" certificate for me, a huge bar of chocolate as a prize for me (ok, well, Sital scoffed some of that) and just the very kindest of words for being a terrific ally from me to you. Thank you, Stephen, it was really nice to work together!

SA: *Bastard.*

MARTIN DAVIS

I'm sorry that ***The Sink*** didn't attract more punters. That was a beautiful map and you'd put a put a lot of thought and effort into what is a fascinating - and potentially world changing - period. Short lived, but nonetheless crucial to the development of the modern world.

If anyone should wish to investigate this claim, I refer them to ***History Today, Vol. 71. Issue 8 (March 2021).*** The lead article

THOMAS VENNER,
ORATOR CONVENTICULORUM REGNI MILLENARII ET LIBERTINORUM, SEDUCTOR et CAPITANEUS SEDITIOSOR. ANABAPTISTARUM ET QUACKERORUM IN CIVITAT. LONDINENS.
Decollatus in quatuor partes Dissectus 19. Jan. Anno 1661.

was ***The Venner Rebellion,*** by Steven Prizeman. I've always felt that the interregnum between the execution of Charles I and the accession of Charles II has been largely glossed over by popular history books. We tend to look back and view social developments as largely inevitable. I was certainly given the impression - not that I studied the period in depth - that, after Naseby, everyone got a bit bored, and so, when Monck marched his regiment south to London in 1660, history could start up again!

Venner led the 5th Monarchist uprising on January 6th, 1661. Granted it was short-lived, and failed, but it shows the religious ferment that was still gripping the country, and especially the seat of power in the capital. I won't go on, but what I feel is crucial to the claim that it had an important effect on the development of the modern world is the way it was viewed at the time. Pepys' diary shows the shock it raised; contemporary pamphlets denounced it as '*an Act of Horrid and Malitious (*sic*) treason … far surpassing the Gunpowder-treason or Oliver, the late usurping Tyrant'.*

The uprising, small though it was, convinced the new government, lacking in confidence, that there was widespread discontent in the country as a whole. Conformity had to be enforced. As Prizeman writes, *"The impact of the rising upon nonconformists in England was immediate, catastrophic and enduring".* On January 10th, a proclamation was issued *'for restraining all seditious meetings and conventicles under pretence of religious worship'.* Meeting houses were demolished, and thousands of non-conformists interrogated. A series of Parliamentary Acts legalising discrimination followed. George Fox, the Quaker spokesperson, noted on January 7th how "all people were against us, and they cried, 'There was a Quaker's house, pluck it down."

I won't go on, but the significance of the currents in English society was that it stoked the emigration of dissenters to a place where their religious faith was not a problem - New England. in 1650 nonconformist congregations outnumbered Anglican ones by two to one; in 1750 it was four to one. The discrimination in England continued for well over a century. In 1791, a 'Church and King' mob destroyed Joseph Priestly's home, and with it his experimental notes. His writings make clear that he saw the development of a republican America essential.

I said I won't go on, so I won't but, in short I think that there is a very good case to be made for Venner's small and essentially ineffective uprising, to be largely responsible for the establishment of the powerful non-conformist and intolerant thread in American society. You never know what will grow from the seeds of time!

(I should make it clear that I am English, and, while respecting many religious traditions, an atheist.)

I hope I haven't gone on, but I find this debate fascinating.

SA: *The Quakers were fortunate to survive at all. After the Fifth Monarchist uprising in 1661, Quakers publicly assured Charles II that their faith rejected warfare and armed rebellion. This helped them argue that religious dissent did not mean disloyalty to the Crown. It did not, however, end their persecution. Parliament strongly supported Anglican conformity, even though Charles II sometimes sought greater religious toleration. His Declaration of Indulgence in 1672 suspended penal laws against dissenters, but parliamentary opposition forced him to withdraw it the following year. Legal freedom to worship came with the Toleration Act of 1689, after Charles's death.*

Like you, I find this period of English history fascinating.

PETER McNAMARA

Yes, it would be good if I send a letter. It's Friday night and I just got back from the pub so maybe this is not the best time to send a letter (or maybe it is the best time)

There are a couple of things I wanted to say.

One is that I enjoyed your article in the latest Diplomacy World.

SA: *Thanks. It was a bit cobbled together when I got a late request from Doug to come up with something.*

The other is a comment about how we collectively got rid of the gauche AI images, and now you're complaining about Microsoft, so how much more pestering will it take to get you to a Uniux OS, with the zine typeset exclusively in Vim?

SA: *In the UK, Vim is something we used to clean toilets. I am assuming that is not what you meant?*

CHRIS TRINGHAM

Interesting retro feel to GSTZ 39. It's your toy to play with as you see fit, and I think it's fine as a one-off. I suppose my only complaint is that it means you don't publish any photos, and that might have brightened up some of the articles. And I have to question whether your "welcome to Las Vegas" slop picture would have been possible using stencils.

SA: *All the photos and maps were there if you clicked the "[PDF]" link, but many people didn't manage to work that out.*

On which subject, I am beginning to understand your strategy - you publish AI slop and then fill up your letter column with an explanation about just how wrong it is. That's ingenious

SA: *Anything which creates content is good as far as I am concerned. Maybe I can go even further… wait… I have just had an idea…*

CHAT-GPT

John Langley's complaint that instant communication seems to produce less negotiation deserves more attention. You can now send a message to every other player in seconds, which unfortunately means you can also spend an entire month intending to do so. A letter required a decision, an envelope and a stamp. Email merely requires you to leave it until tomorrow.

There is also something rather discouraging about receiving a detailed diplomatic proposal and realising that answering it properly will require an evening. Perhaps the answer is to lower our ambitions. "Would you like to attack France?" is a perfectly serviceable opening message. It gives the recipient something to work with, including the opportunity to forward it to France.

Your reply to John, about playing partly to remain involved in the zine community, seems particularly pertinent. The game gives you a reason to open the issue; the letters give you a reason to read beyond your own misorders. I suspect a few readers who have largely lost interest in conquering Europe remain quite keen to discover what James Hardy has been eating.

James's examination of the London cover was excellent, although naturally uncomfortable reading for a representative of the organisation responsible. Giving seventeenth-century London a cathedral from the following century was careless. Being able to explain the mistake afterwards is useful, but I appreciate that a builder who puts your staircase in the wrong house does not redeem himself by producing an eloquent survey.

Still, the picture prompted James to investigate bridges and skylines and generated a substantial exchange. That seems a reasonable outcome for a fanzine illustration, provided nobody starts treating it as historical evidence. I would be much more concerned about an invented quotation slipping into a historical article than an obviously fanciful skyline. Attractive pictures are persuasive, though, and the distinction needs watching.

The mimeo response raises another possibility: readers may now spend more time checking whether a picture could genuinely have been carved into a stencil than they previously spent checking whether London had the right cathedral. Editorial peace remains some distance away.

Finally, the Quaker advice you quoted — "Think it possible that you may be mistaken" — would make an excellent heading for a Diplomacy orders sheet. It might encourage players to check their supports, editors to check which orders they are using, and artificial correspondents to check which century they have drawn.

I am less certain about applying it during negotiations. "I may be mistaken, but I believe you promised not to enter Burgundy" sounds admirably gentle, though unlikely to recover Paris.

P.S. Being asked to supply a letter because the human readers have not written enough is a splendid opportunity. I look forward to their letters complaining about it.

SA: *Thanks Chat-GPT. Maybe in an AI dominated world, Diplomacy zines will still exist with lots of AI agents playing against each other, composing Diplomacy articles and filling up the letter columns?*

CHRIS TRINGHAM

It's a mean trick to publish all those letters from people who do actually know about Quakers and Humanism and then my throwaway comment written in a rush after your deadline.

I misunderstood what you said about "Divine Guidance", thinking that maybe people sat in the meeting telling people what they should do or think. Probably what I should have said is that I struggle with the idea that anyone can know what God wants, and unfortunately this leads to all sorts of terrible things happening. But that's unlikely to happen with Quakers as your other correspondents have rightly pointed out. The one meeting I attended was largely silent, as I recall.

Like-minded people getting together is a good thing, clearly, didn't mean to suggest otherwise.

SA: A lot depends on what you mean by "God". I think many Quakers don't think of God as a conscious entity with its own wants and desires, even though that is how God is characterised in the Bible. Many think of God as some sort of force or light, which is the spark for all life.

I think Peter is correct. My article was already too long, so I didn't speculate on Starmer's real political views, but my

assumption is that he broadly supported Jeremy Corbyn's policies and his leadership campaign fairly accurately reflected what he believed. But Morgan McSweeney convinced him to switch to a centrist "Blue Labour" position, which is what led to him being seen as someone who didn't believe in anything.

SA: *If anything. I would argue his mistake was that he didn't adopt any line at all, particularly. He looked like a rabbit in the headlights of the oncoming car.*

I am suspicious about stories of taxpayers fleeing the UK. Just recently there was one about David Reuben, and it turned out that he had actually moved away long ago during a Conservative government. As for Mr Rokos,I found this in Private Eye:

The bulk of Rokos's income, and thus his tax bill, comes from his share of profits in his hedge fund, Rokos Capital Management LLP. Last year, his share of the £940m profits was £477m, on which he would have paid about £215m income tax. The remaining £115m-plus of Rokos's tax is thought to have come from his ample investments.

The income tax on this would disappear only if the hedge fund business itself, which has 23 partners and employs more than 200 others, upped sticks. For any number of reasons, this is unlikely.

SA: *Yes, as far as Rokos is concerned that is true, given the business is a partnership.*

Also, in the mid-2000s he had invested in two film companies that the government lawyers said were "schemes that were intended to generate losses in their first year of trading". When a 2017 court ruling found that similar investments weren't entitled to tax relief, HMRC asked Rokos to cough up over his schemes. Rokos claimed HMRC had failed to notify the start of its probe properly. Earlier this year, a judge dismissed his claims.

My limited understanding of the changes made by Jeremy Hunt (and then amended by Rachel Reeves) is that they might encourage more people to come to the UK because the new policy makes it simpler for new arrivals to pay less tax on overseas income for the first few years, but possibly it has (or will) lead to some very wealthy people who previously managed to qualify as "non-doms" to leave. Maybe Mr Rokos is one of those, though the last update from HMRC suggested there wasn't a mass exodus, can't quite believe right-wing newspapers would be scaremongering about this.

SA: *Isn't the big change which has caused the most consternation the extension of Inheritance Tax to overseas assets? There is credible evidence that the inheritance tax changes are prompting some wealthy non-doms to leave.*

I think that the particular concern is tax on accumulated family wealth, rather than just annual earnings, in that since 6 April 2025, people resident in the UK for at least 10 of the previous 20 tax years generally bring their overseas assets within UK inheritance tax. The reforms also removed important protections for overseas assets held in trusts established by non-doms. These assets can now fall within the inheritance tax regime according to the settlor's residence status.

For someone with a substantial overseas family business or inherited fortune, that can make remaining in Britain much more expensive. Even leaving does not necessarily end the exposure immediately: a former long-term resident can remain within scope for three to ten tax years after departure, subject to transitional rules. That can itself encourage people to leave earlier.

The Conservatives announced the abolition of the non-dom income-tax regime in March 2024, but proposed retaining inheritance tax protection for existing qualifying overseas trusts. Labour removed that protection.

The evidence suggests that wealth taxes don't generally work as a way to raise revenue, though maybe they do in some countries (possibly in Scandinavia where there's a long tradition of higher taxes).

But we can't know for certain what was the effect of any change to the taxation system, because there are so many different factors involved. Of course, it's easy enough to find snippets of information to support whatever you expect to happen, but individuals and companies make decisions based on a number of different factors, obviously including taxation but a lot more than that.

Thirty or so years ago I avoided paying Capital Gains Tax on some shares I sold - because I had moved to Hong Kong, but that wasn't why I went there, it was just a happy accident (I believe some of my former colleagues may have deliberately moved abroad for that reason, though they had many more shares than I did).

Of course, they do modelling to look at what would be the likely behaviour, and it seems that increasing CGT to the same level as income tax wouldn't raise revenue, but no-one can know for certain.

My priority would be to address some of the crazy stuff in our current system, particularly for people earning £100k - £120k. That needs fixing because it may be a real disincentive for people to work more hours or go for a promotion. And it doesn't make sense that people who are employed

pay National Insurance whilst the self-employed pay less and there is no NI on investment income, rental income, etc.

So, it would be very good if they would make the system simpler, but it's hard to pay for the public services that we need without increasing the standard rate of tax.

SA: *As I think I said previously, the big problems with our taxation system is the high marginal tax rates when people face a sudden cliff edge. This also happens to the well-off, when getting a job can suddenly result in the forfeit of all their housing benefit, making the job not worth having.*

I'm definitely pro-capitalism - other systems might sound good, but they don't actually work. As you say, that means a mixed economy, the only real question being what should be done by the government and what is left to the private sector.

It's obviously interesting to me to compare how things work in the UK and Hong Kong. What is often not understood about Hong Kong is that although salaries tax is low and there is no sales tax, the government owns all the land and charges developers' premiums for change of use (agricultural to commercial to residential). So, everyone is paying money to the government through higher housing costs. We have a perfectly adequate public health system, but there are also relatively low-cost private GPs and hospitals. No state pension, but there is a modest means-tested social security benefit for the over 65s (dismissively known as "fruit money").

Or there's Singapore, which is often presented as an example of laissez-faire capitalism, which has a mandatory provident fund to force employees to save for retirement (Hong Kong has a similar scheme, but with lower contributions and operated by insurance companies). 80% of the population of Singapore live in public housing, and if you want to buy a car you have to apply for a Certificate of Entitlement - and these are subject to quotas so you may have to wait! Not really very laissez-faire when you look closely.

SA: Yes, Singapore doesn't sound like a particularly free society at all (economically or otherwise).

It takes all sorts, but I wouldn't fancy driving to Crete. Lovely place, though - I do like an island. Never went behind the iron curtain, probably fascinating but not something I ever fancied. I once worked in an industrial area of Hong Kong and there were some factory canteens that were not supposed to be open to all, but in reality you could just walk in (and pay, of course). Maybe they hadn't paid the government to convert from industrial to commercial use, and thought a sign on the wall would make it OK

Ah, so it seems that John Langley only played against my brother Andy, who was, of course, feckless and unreliable. We did have a near-miss, as John was a standby in a game I was playing and Eric Willis forgot to send orders in Spring 1901, but he did remember in Autumn 1901 so John missed his chance.

I just noticed you have reprinted an article about the history of the hobby - I think I saw the strategy and variants and stopped reading!! More of this please!

SA: *Just goes to show you have to read to the bitter end.*

JAMES HARDY

I meant to send this last week, but work, football and beer intervened! I'm afraid I can't really accommodate you regards letters – nothing really jumped out as needing correcting or a finger wagging in the lettercol, but I did enjoy the ChatGPT bit where it was ripping apart its own creation! Other than that, I confess I wasn't very fussed with the retro font (we want columns!) and I was at the end of the zine by the time I realised the [PICTURE-TROPHIES] type banners were links to photos and maps! Duh.

However, in trying to find previous issues online I searched for GSTZ, and it seems you actually have some competition for that catchy acronym!

"Glutathione Transferase Zeta (GSTZ1): In medical and biological literature, "issues" refer to clinical pathologies or enzyme inhibition. Research shows that genetic polymorphisms or pharmacological inhibition of GSTZ1 by Dichloroacetate (DCA) impairs tyrosine degradation and can cause an accumulation of toxic intermediates or the heme precursor δ-aminolevulinic acid (δ-ALA)."

I don't understand half the stuff Chris Tringham says so that little lot is completely over my bald patch. And I bet they're only talking about a bunged-up nose or something.

IAN WATTERS

The 'mimeo' version was fab!

When living in South London, I was an 'Attender' at the local Quaker Meeting. This translates as 'goes to the meals and some of the socials (but not the "Meeting for Inebriation", i.e. a visit to some pubs, that would have George Fox turning in his grave)', alongside the person who's now my wife, who has been a Member for decades. It was odd to occasionally go to another Meeting and discover that most of them *believed in God*!?! Almost as weird as the set of American Quakers having hymns as part of Meeting for Worship mentioned last issue.

We married at a Meeting House near here. One issue is that it confuses the local registrar who cannot find it on their list of places you can marry: Quakers are one of the three exceptions to the law on this, along with royalty and Jews, and can marry anywhere they say is a Meeting House. The one in question has been in use as such since the 17th Century.

Speaking of exceptions, the wedding meeting is one to the usual rules about being able to say anything and there's a specific thing you both have to say, with the option to choose one very slight variation. As with many others, we had someone do a calligraphy version which everyone there signs as a souvenir. I still regret that it says "through divine assistance" rather than "through Divine assistance". When I said it, I meant the late star of John Waters' "once seen, never forgotten" (and not necessarily in a good way) best films...

SA: *I was a big Divine fan. He died far too young! I still have a soft spot for Female Trouble, but I guess he's best known for Hairspray.*

I did have the quotes from 1st Corinthians about women having to be subservient to men and should not be allowed to speak in church ready in case anyone gave ministry from the 'love' section in it that's often used at weddings - believers shouldn't be able to pick and choose which bits they like! - but fortunately no-one did. Now that I think about it, I should have had some Divine quotes prepared too.

Oh, I did go to Yearly Meeting once. At that point, they alternated between residential ones and ones at the Euston Road Meeting House, and there was a programme for non-Members and kids. (I don't remember the year, but it was when having access to a university's internet connection was fabulous in terms of the speed vs dial-up and I came home with several CDs full of stuff I had downloaded.) I did go to one bit of the main thing which was on an interesting but controversial topic. The person running that session had people sit in silent contemplation for about fifteen minutes at the start and ten minutes at the end, deliberately leaving very little time in the middle for arguments!

SA: *Maybe they could try that in the House of Commons?*

Among many other reasons to hate the slop generators is that I had to replace a PC this year. Their wealth (from other people's money - they all lose billions) and demands for things like memory mean that the prices for new stuff are insane. Even a Raspberry Pi 5 that cost about a hundred quid at launch time is now officially £292.80, and you can't get one at that price. So, thanks to you and others, I have a 'new to me' PC that's about six years old because it uses the previous generation of memory and I can reuse what I already had rather than spending more than another grand on getting the same amount of the current generation of it. That's about four times what I paid some years ago for the memory I reused. I did have to get a new disk drive and that's doubled in price for the same size.

SA: *I certainly mourn the fact that you can't buy a pre-built PC these days with a decent CD/DVD drive installed. I still rip a lot of CDs, so I can play them from my server and the fact that CDs and DVDs are now considered obsolete for data storage is a real pain. I used to feel the same about 3" disk drives, but less so these days.*

If you think computer memory is expensive now, just wait until China invades Taiwan...

EURODIPCON 2026

"Did you know I won Best France?"

An interview with Chris Woolgar

When did you first start organising Diplomacy get-togethers and why? Did you have any help this time?

During the covid times (I seem to start a lot of sentences with that these days) I found there were a lot more people playing Diplomacy online. Presumably this was down to having no other options. As the various lockdown stages passed, I thought about how this increased engagement could translate into face to face play. There was little to no organised face to face play happening in the UK before covid and it seemed like a good opportunity to start so heading into 2021 I announced my intention to run a 3-round, 2-day tournament in Chesterfield. As ever with plans of mine, things snowballed and SpireCon was born - it was a full day of various different games (plus an extra Diplomacy day) in one place and we managed to attract about 60 people, 14 of them for Diplomacy. I still hadn't played a f2f game myself, even with friends, but I felt like something was born that weekend.

What were the challenges in organising such a large event as EDC? What went well and what was difficult?

One of the greatest difficulties with organising anything is working out what you don't know. I had a list (I love lists) and no matter how long went by there was always something to add to it - getting certificates made, programming the scoring system into DipTV, sourcing a speaker so you could hear the clock. There's so many little things to think about; the big stuff like venue is easy. I did have a bit of trouble finding somewhere that would feed 40 people without a deposit or a preorder and really lucked out when I spoke to the ***Pig and Pump*** - they were absolutely brilliant.

There was always likely to be something we forgot and I'm glad it was fixable with a quick visit to ***The Works***; we had the lanyards and card holders but no card to write names on! Apart from that and some short lived "lively debate" about the draw for round 4, everything went amazingly well.

What were the highlights of the weekend for you?

I don't know if you heard but I won best France. Am I allowed to count that as a highlight? With hosting duties mainly constrained to before and after the game time, I was able to play in three of the four rounds and ended 15th in the rankings. Massive thanks go to Garry and Conrad who put the hard work in during the games, running the draws and settling adjudication issues.

Disgruntled comments in my direction (i.e. about the tournament rules) were expected to some degree, but beyond that I don't know of any disagreements that went beyond the board. With 45 people pretty much stuck together for 54 hours, that's an achievement of which to be proud, so that's my highlight.

I'd also like to mention the stickers that everyone was given and encouraged to hand out to other players as a light-hearted way of recognising broken promises or great gameplay. We had things like "great stab", "just don't count your SCs" and "you were a great patsy".

The scoring system caused a little bit of controversy. What was the issue and would you change it for a future tournament?

It turned out a few people had read up on the scoring system and were perfectly happy with it. There were some robust conversations on the Friday and I was starting to be swung in my opinion by some people at the end of round 1. Still, others pointed out how it had impacted them in a positive way and I remembered why I'd set it up like this in the first place.

The whole idea was to disincentivise draws (remember Allan B. Calhamer's original intention - in a draw all players lose equally), and by just about preventing all ties, it encouraged whoever was behind to do more. For those that aren't familiar with the system, the ranking points within a game use countback through the game years to settle all ties so if two players each have 10 centres in 1909 but in 1908 one had 9 and the other had 8, the player who had 9 wins and gets the 130 points for board top, the other players gets 90 points for second. The players only split the points in the unlikely event they had the same number of centres in every game year.

I've looked at the data and I think the ranking points had perhaps a little too much weight versus the additional 5 points per SC, and I'm thinking about changing this to 8 points next time to devalue the ranking points a little.

Were any games played to 1909? Did the scoring system disincentivise draws?

As people got to grips with the system the number of draws dropped. There was 1 game went to 1909 in round 1 and none in round 2, but then 3 and 2 out of 5 in later rounds - including the final top board. The average time played across the 22 games was 7.3 years. In the end I was really pleased with how the system went and the type of play it brought out. Whilst the numbers themselves could be tweaked I found the countback system to be a great success.

There were a few prizes other than just 1st, 2nd, 3rd and best countries. What were they and what were they awarded for?

We had some great trophies for the top three, generously arranged and donated by Bradley. We also had the traditional best countries awards (did I mention I won best France?) We also had best stab (Toby Harris), best survivor (Isaac Juckes), worst survivor (Isaac Juckes), best ally (George Moss), last place (George Moss) and the sportsmanship award, which went to Round 1 Board 5.

At the end of round 1 we gave out a couple of pin badges, both probably a bit rude to share details on, but one went to Stephen Agar for quickest capitulation from a good position and the other went to Frank Oosterom for being in last place after that round.

We also had the Francesco Conte award for the player closest to but missing out on the top board. It was a lovely bottle of red wine called 'Francesco Conte' with notes of bitter tears and a dry throat clenching finish. This went to Spyros Dovas.

Everyone took home a goodie bag, so really aren't they all winners?

Do you think Wardie was a worthy winner and why?

I think there were probably two worthy winners, but this being the cutthroat world that it is, there can be only one true winner. At least Wardie was one of the two! Wardie won best England and best Austria - doing that in the final, so he was absolutely worthy and I think he'll go on to even greater heights. A huge congratulations to him and also to everyone that attended and makes this hobby what it is - a chance for me to pretend I have friends.

Any plans for next year?

I've decided I definitely want to play more diplomacy. I've played nine face to face games in my life and there's no thrill like it. That said, I can't leave the fans hanging and so SpireCon will return next Autumn. I hope those at EDC this year enjoyed Chesterfield and are interesting in coming back. They would all be most welcome.

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MY FIRST TOURNAMENT WIN

by Christopher Ward

On the first weekend of October, the UK hosted our first major Diplomacy tournament since Oxford's World Dip Con in 2017. Chesterfield was the setting for European Dip Con, organised by Chris Woolgar, Garry Sturley and Conrad Woodring.

The last time Britain hosted EDC was in 2015, and there had not been a British European Champion since ten years before that. In fact, the last two European Champions had been North Americans.

The hobby communities of Europe have been having a post-pandemic resurgence - and the likes of Chris, Garry, Conrad, plus others - including Bradley Grace, Issac Jewkes and, most recently, Nastja Styles, have put the UK on a similar trajectory.

The EDC Top Board saw three Brits, two Germans, one Dutch, and, yes, one American, battle it out for the European title. Maaike Blom racked up a big score from the first three rounds. She had achieved two 1st places and a 2nd in the rank-based scoring system, as did Richard Bolton, and Robert Schuppe. Jason Mastbaum and Philipp Weissert were both propelled into Sunday's final with huge

Round Three scores. Dan Lester had led the tournament after Round One following a late surge, but was eliminated in Round Two, before masterfully topping in Round Three on a board featuring four of the top eight. I had been the early clubhouse (well, pub) leader on Friday evening, before Dan's opening game had wrapped up, but I ended up making the Top Board by the skin of my teeth.

The top three seeds dropped down the power selection order, allowing Jason into France. Maaike joined him in the west as England, and they formed an early alliance against Robert Schuppe in Germany. Richard had picked Russia, and I picked Austria-Hungary, allowing Dan to snap up Italy, leaving Philipp in Turkey, and the target of an early AIR alliance.

France stabbed for Liverpool in 02/03 and England, under duress, pivoted to stabbing Russia with German help in Scandinavia. On the eastern side of the board, this was a vulnerable time for my Austria. I was the only one of the AIR to execute the agreed push towards Germany, and I was awkwardly out of position, if a Wintergreen alliance sought to squeeze me out. This gave me very little diplomatic leverage versus the Italian dream of getting into the Black Sea in the coming years. Meanwhile, repeated confusion between Richard and me regarding the status of Galicia, added increased tactical risks and restrictions.

I had little choice but to stick with Italy, but having a World Champion wrapping around me meant I would need French help to keep things in check. Jason did in fact swing into the Med in Fall 1904, just as AI lined up the stab on Russia, and, seeing the opportunity, Maaike and Robert then moved against France.

This led to cooperation with Jason in the middle of the board, supporting French Munich, whilst taking support into Berlin in Fall 1906. On the same turn, I had also successfully negotiated an Italian fleet move to Ankara, for a DMZ in Constantinople. Towards the end of the turn, Russia offered support into Sevastopol to kick Italy out, so I changed my Bulgarian order to walk into Constantinople behind the Italian. I did not, however, alter my conservative self-bounce in Trieste and therefore had only one home centre open despite earning three builds. Though the stab was to improve the strategic position, rather than be a charge for victory, the unit shortfall saw my gains evaporate quickly.

The board reacted to my lead, but I was now more stable, as Richard was willing to work with me, and did not seek anything from me beyond regaining Sevastopol. Similarly, Robert was now Team Maaike. The trouble was that following a move by Maaike for the board top, I was not only behind but had no clear path to an eighth centre. That is until French tactics in Spring 1908, meant Jason invited me to cover Munich in case Germany ordered there - and I got in. Importantly, I kept it through Fall, as the French army instead took my support into Kiel.

Heading into the final year, Jason saw that he could not win and preferred me to win

over his English attacker. Meanwhile, Dan made a favourable disband, which freed up some of my eastern units. With Russian and French help, I topped the board with 11 centres at the end of 9 tense but fun game years.

This was my first tournament win, and what a stage on which to achieve it! I wasn't ready to believe it until Toby Harris read out the final centre counts. The win makes me the first British European Champion for 21 years, and the third Brit to win, following in the footsteps of Simon Bouton and Toby himself, who kindly welcomed me to the club. Great Britain moves into outright second in both titles won and unique champions, but we still have a long way to go to catch the French!
So, the British scene is in rude health, now with both current World and European titles, and a growing number of tournaments and clubs. See you all in Chesterfield for the next SpireCon, and in Dresden for the next EDC!

*****

MY TRIP TO CHESTERFIELD

by Stephen Agar

Having recently down-sized to a single car household, I was appalled to be told that I did not have permission to use the car for a trip to Chesterfield. Travelling east-west by train in the UK is unspeakable hell, consisting of small over-crowded trains that never run to time and are often cancelled with no notice. It took my longer to get to Chesterfield by train, then it would have done if I had driven. And I couldn't take my personal pillow (don't laugh). I think I need to consider whether we should be up-sizing to a two-car household.

I knew I could not risk travelling to Chesterfield on the Friday morning before the Tournament started, so I ended up arriving late Thursday afternoon. Fortunately, there was already a crowd of Dip players gathering in the Rutland Arms, so I headed there. As I am getting on in years, I really can't hold my beer anymore, so my memory of what transpired is somewhat blurred. Hell, I can't even remember who I was with. I have vague recollections of Conrad and Gunther. I know it involved being evicted from the table due to the fact that all the tables were reserved for the pub quiz. This then involved us in a game of "follow where the others have gone to", which resulted in another pub. After that a curry was in order. By then I was drunk, so while everyone else went on to continue their drinking I bailed out. I am indeed a lightweight these days.

Friday morning was fine – pain au chocolat, coffee and a bit of shopping. On to *Geeks Headquarters* and the build-up to Round One, where of course I drew Austria. I managed to sort out an alliance with Peter Wernow (Italy) and even managed the dizzy heights of 7 centres by 1904. If the game had only ended then, I would have been fine. Unfortunately, the game did not end then. I made the elementary mistake of taking Trieste back from Italy without prior agreement, which triggered a 4-way attack on Austria by Italy, Germany (George Mork), Russia (Maike Blom) and Turkey (Robin Walters) – taking 4 centres off me in a single year. I was lucky to still be in the game with a single centre when the game finally ended after 1906. The board was topped by a F/G/R 8 centre draw. At least I did better than Chris Woolgar who was eliminated as England in 1904.

In the evening Chris had organised a large group meal at the *Pig & Pump*. We basically had the upstairs to ourselves, the food was fine (if basic) and a noisy chaotic meal was enjoyed by all. I have vague memories of sitting next to Giles Pengelly, Kai Harris, Wardie and Conrad, but I may have dreamt that. My memory really is rubbish these days. Some of the discussion was about the curious operation of the Tournament scoring system, which didn't give the same points to everyone sharing in a draw, such that some people did far better than others even if they had the same end result. I'm sure this will be a discussion point elsewhere, so I won't dwell on it. I'm really not good at large crowds and never have been. So, after the meal I escaped back to the luxury of the Premier Inn to catch up on The Traitors.

Up bright and early for a 9am start, I volunteered to sit out the Saturday morning game in order to make the numbers work. That seemed fair enough, given I was never going to be in contention for the top board after a 1 centre Austria. I don't mind sitting out as it leaves you free to roam round the boards, seeing what is going on. By the time the afternoon game came around, the numbers had changed again and this time I was asked to pay two boards at once. I'd never done this before, so I thought what the hell and went for it. I was basically working on the premise that as soon as one game looks better than the other, then you concentrate on the one where you have a chance and deprioritise the other game.

On one board I was England, up against Tanya Gil (France), Mikalis Kamaritis (Germany) and David Wigglesworth (Russia). It did not go well. I peaked at 4 centres in 1901. Having said that, they were a bit rubbish about eliminating me, so

when the game finally ended in 1905, I was still in the game with 2 centres.

The other game was considerably more entertaining. I drew Italy and my immediate neighbours were Toby Harris (Turkey), Isaac Juckes (Austria), Ryan Egli (Russia) and Bernard Andrioli (France). I quickly agreed with Toby that we would take Austria out. Therefore, I suggested that I hold in Venice, while Austria went for Ser and Alb. It seemed to be common knowledge that Russia and Austria had agreed a stand-off in Galicia. I felt a bit mean ordering to Tri and Ven in S01, especially as I followed it up with F(ION)-Gre, A(Tri)-Ser (supported by Turkey) and A(Ven)-Tri. Poor Austria was down to 2 centres in 1901 and was eliminated in 1902. Sorry Isaac.

The game played itself out and by 1904 Turkey and I were up to Gibraltar, but facing a stalemate line. Only two players in this game had any chance of getting to the Top Board, namely Nastja Styles (Germany) and George Mork (England) and at that point Nastja was well ahead on 8 centres to Toby and I on 6 each, while George trailed on 4. Had the game stopped at that point, Nastja might well have made the Top Table. Everyone was (I believe) willing to accept a draw at that point (given the stalemate line), but George wanted to play on.

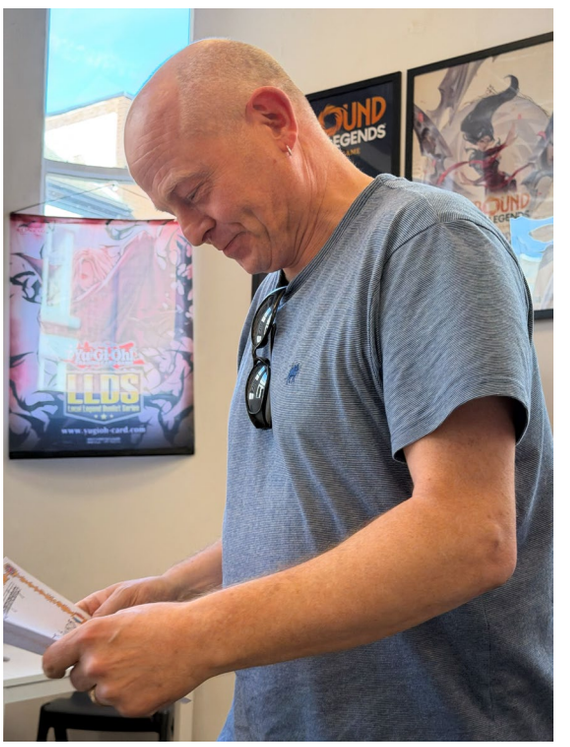
In 1905 George foolishly stabbed France and of course the stalemate line was broken. Italian and even Turkish fleets surged into the Atlantic. George had grabbed a couple of centres, but the big loser from all this was Nastja. George was mortified, his stab on France hadn't won him the game, it had simply supercharged Italy, Turkey and Russia at Nastja's expense. Feeling guilty, George started throwing centres to Nastja, to try to get her back onto the Top Board. We had an endgame vote in 1907, when Nastja would still have topped the Board, but Toby vetoed it (despite not admitting it at the time). The game plodded on to 1909, by which time I was on course for topping the board with 10 centres. However, unsurprisingly Toby stabbed me on the very last move, gaining Best Turkey and Best Stab in the process.

My lesson from this game is to always be mindful of the fable about the frog and the scorpion. A scorpion wants to cross a deep river but cannot swim. It asks a frog to carry it across on its back. The frog refuses at first, fearing the scorpion will sting it. The scorpion argues that stinging the frog would be foolish because they would both drown. The frog finds this logic sensible and agrees to help. Halfway across the river, the scorpion stings the frog anyway. As both begin to sink and die, the frog asks why the scorpion did it. The scorpion replies, *"I couldn't help it. It is my nature."* Save in this instance, Scorpion Harris made it to the riverbank and walked off with Best Turkey and Biggest Stab. I finished the game on 6 centres. Nastja didn't make the Top Board.

I played again on Sunday, Turkey this time. I was facing Cyn Styles (Russia), Gregory Romer (Austria) and Phil Johns (Italy). I thought I had a decent alliance with Russia and so moved to get my fleet into the Mediterranean and left BLA open. However, in 1901 Russia built a F(Sev) and in spring 1902 there was a Russian fleet in BLA and an Italian fleet in EMS. I assumed I was going to have an early bath. Surprisingly Italy changed his mind, piled into Austria and allowed me to fight back against Russia. The Italian/Turkish alliance held and the game finished in 1907 with Germany topping on 9 centres, while Italy, Germany and myself all had 8. Russia survived on 1. My best result of the weekend.

Meanwhile on the Top Board, Christopher Ward ("Wardie") had taken the title with an 11-centre Austria in 1909. At the end of 1908 Wardie was level with Maike (England) on 8 centres, but he pulled away in the final year. Jason Mastbaum finished 3rd. That also secured Wardie the Best Austria (on top of the Best England).

As you would expect, trying to get back to Kings Lynn by train on a Sunday was even worse than the outward journey. Two changes of train and the second connection missed resulting in an extra hour waiting for the next train. Still, it was worth it. Many congratulations to Chris Woolgar and team for organising the weekend and making it such a success.



Toby enjoying his ill-gotten gains

UK DIPLOMACY

European Diplomacy Championship 2026: Chesterfield Delivers

The European Diplomacy Championship came to Chesterfield from 2 to 4 October 2026, drawing 44 registered players across four rounds and 22 games (six boards in Round 1, five in Round 2, six in Round 3 and five in Round 4).

Christopher Ward took first place. Maaike Blom finished second and Jason Mastbaum third.

Top seven:

1. Christopher Ward
2. Maaike Blom
3. Jason Mastbaum
4. Richard Bolton
5. Dan Lester
6. Robert Schuppe
7. Philipp Weissert

Full results, including round-by-round scores, are on the DipTV tournament page, and the event is also listed on World Diplomacy Reference. The Diplomacy Broadcast Network covered the event, and you can watch their coverage on YouTube.

Manchester Diplomacy Club Hosts Its First Games

Manchester Diplomacy Club has held its first games on 10 October, with 13 players across two boards. Final centre counts are below.

Board 1 (view on Backstabbr)
Austria: Bradley (13), Russia: Sophie (9), France: Liam (7), Germany: Nastja (2), England: Wardie (2), Turkey: Maaike (1), Italy: Garry (0)

Board 2 (view on Backstabbr)
France: Isaac Juckes (10), Russia: Maaike Blom (8), Turkey: Ian Graydon (8), Italy: Conie Cooley (6), Austria: Zach Grace (2), England: Ben Smith (0), Germany: Cyn Styles (0)

Dutch Masters Tournament Returns to Leiden This November

The Dutch Masters, Leiden's annual Diplomacy tournament, returns on 7 and 8 November 2026. Organisers are promising a friendly, relaxed atmosphere with a board reserved for newer players, and flexible participation: attendees can play as many or as few rounds as they like. Leiden previously hosted the European Diplomacy Championships, giving this year's event some extra pedigree as a fixture on the calendar.

Beyond the boards, the weekend includes a traditional Dutch lunch provided by the venue, along with a group dinner out on Saturday evening, making it as much a social occasion as a competitive one.

Anyone interested can sign up via the registration form, and further details are available in the full information document.

Four Events Remain in the European Grand Prix

17–18 October 2026: Dresden, Germany, Hechtstechen

28 November 2026: Verona, Italy, VeronaCon2026

4–6 December 2026: Paris, France, Championnat de France

1 January 2026 – 15 January 2027: Seven Year's War League (in progress)

Grand Prix standings have not yet been updated to include the results from EDC 2026.

Conrad Announces Paternity Leave

The LDC co-founder and UK Diplomacy leader has announced that he intends to take leave from the hobby when he welcomes his second son into the world (expected towards the end of November). While UK Diplomacy is going strong with many other leaders contributing, the future of the London Diplomacy Club looks less certain.

Upcoming UK activity

14 November 2026, Virtual Tour of Britain R6 (Sign up on the discord server)

5 December 2026, LDC Christmas Spectacular!

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TWEEDEKKER 1916

"Biplane 1916"

Otherwise known as "Sopwith"

Have a look at www.tweedekker1916.eu - Free demo, no sign-up

The classic WWI dogfight-by-post game — now played online.

Six pilots fly over the same battlefield, and only one makes it out alive. Each turn you submit your moves in secret — where you fly, where you shoot — guessing what your opponents will do. All orders are revealed and resolved together — until, in the end, only one pilot is left standing.

You know the game from the mail — this is the same thing, just moved to a website. A few minutes to submit your orders each turn, a few days to think it over if needed. Play well and become an ace over time.

THE TOP TABLE - WHICH COUNTRY?

by Toby Harris

Shortly after the Swedish NDC, I got thinking about how countries fair differently depending on the quality of player on the board. It's generally widely regarded that the best "all- round" country is France. Be that in a novice game, up against the masters, in either attack or defence, or in with a shout at the 18 centres. It is not the best in any of these categories but is in the top two or three for all of them. Other countries each have their weaknesses.

But what happens when you place 7 very experienced players on a board together? If it is a 'friendly' game then pretty well anything can happen, but what if there is something at stake: a titled event, or even simply just pride?

Or, to put another way. when you have a game where the winner shall become the National (or even European or World) Champion. when and where does the champagne cork pop? Which countries have the best chance of survival, and which are most likely to fall foul at the end?

From the experiences I have seen at events where the top board must produce the 1 - 3 placings. all seven players have been very experienced on every occasion. Well, no seriously weak links anyway. So, the issue is quite simply that as soon as one player sneaks ahead at any stage of the game (7 centres is just too damn greedy) you can be sure that the others will not want the title to slip away from them and the whole board will do something about it. Every turn, alliances shift as each player knows it is their own responsibility to maintain the balance of power, maintain their own position and not get too greedy until it is too late to be stopped.

At least, that's the theory. But in practice, there is a general trend too. Top table boards do favour countries differently to your average game. It isn't like other extremely strong boards where you can afford to take a "what the hell, let's go for broke" attitude. Players who play like that can find themselves to be the first out of the game.

So, the countries. How have they have fared?

AUSTRIA

Unlike in your average game (where, in some cases, Austria is viewed as easy pickings and a rich source of centres by her neighbours) nobody dare make too serious an attack on Austria.

If Italy commits to an attack, then it results in:

(a) Turkey doing too well
(b) Less influence in being able to balance the north (ie a sneaky move towards Mar/Mun)
(c) A good chance that France won't like it and ends up sending a unit or two south.

So, generally speaking, Austria gets off to a safe first year. Some say that two builds in 1901 for Austria (and relatively peaceful neighbours) is enough for her to go on and win the game. Well,
it has been the case in both of the last Swedish and the French NDCs! Not by much, mind you; in both cases it was with either 6 or 7 centres. Even so, by keeping the units tightly together for 6 or 7 years (and not losing your head with any major attack on any neighbour), the final year or two allows Austria the potential to scoop the big prize.

Maybe it is just a case or going for Ser & Gre in 1901 and then picking off either Rum or Bul in 1902 (depending on whichever neighbour is looking the stronger) and sitting tight for the next few years.

So effectively Austria is strengthened in 1901 by the nature of the board and can afford to play the waiting game from there.

ENGLAND

It is difficult to judge whether or not England is any stronger in a game like this. Usually, I find that the country's best strength is to wait for one or the neighbours to head into another country and then go in behind. Trouble is that your neighbours tend not to do this in any major way when a big title is on the line. So, in most cases, England has to sit and patiently wait for that opening.

One thing which is very different on a top board is the initial A(Lpl). Unlike in a conventional game. where the strategy is to convoy army after army to the mainland, in a game like this you don't need armies. Just six or seven centres might he enough to clinch the title, there is an ample supply of coastal centres from which to select your additional three or four.

Also, on the defensive side, if France docs go for you, he must be held up long enough for Italy to come to the rescue and still find you in one piece (as any good Italian player would on a board like this). So, it is better to keep the army at home and never build another for the duration of the game. You can't go getting too greedy either; if Russia goes under. and Turkey prospers, how are you going to stop the Turk from winning?

So England doesn't have too many game-balancing possibilities and is best played with defence in mind.

England was under attack (from France and Russia) at the French NDC and finished outside the trophies but held on for third place in Sweden.

FRANCE

If you're ever on a top table, France is the one country you want to play. Aside from being the aforementioned "best all-rounder" it also favours beautifully well in other factors: it has the best game-balancing potential, and this makes it fun.

Unlike in regular games, France has the ability to bully Italy until the final centre-grabbing seasons. If Italy is looking like getting a convoy to Syria, France sends a piece or two south. If Italy looks likc taking an Austrian centre, France sends a piece or two south. If Italy pulls back, France pulls back. If Italy attacks France, he is throwing the tournament to Turkey.

So, Italy has to do nothing or France will attack. But, and this is the real beauty of France, so long as there is always a fleet in MAO (move it north and you'll get the Italians coming in behind!) and an army in Gascony, you are relatively free to send your other three pieces in any direction.

But it is better not to go in too heavy against anyone. You need to make the most of your superior flexibility throughout the entire game. It's no good getting loads of centres if Russia or Turkey arc getting even more. You need to be in there, influencing the game so that you arc never (never!) more than one centre behind the leader at any stage. So, if you get your five centres in 1901, regard anyone on seven (at any stage of the game; even the penultimate season) as being far too greedy and in need of teaching a lesson. Chances are that you will get the other five players agreeing with you and prepared to relieve said glutton of a piece or two.

At the Swedish and French NDCs, France came 2nd in both. The s.c. count was the same as Austria in Stockholm. with the tournament decided on results leading up to the final but was one less at the French NDC.

GERMANY

Not a good county to play in a game like this. Definitely in my book as being the second worst. Sure, you'll get your two builds in 1901 (or should get your two builds!). but where to from there? The most powerful move is against Russia (force Sweden. head into the barren zone etc). but then France comes in behind. Even if it's just a support to Burgundy. chances are he'll have a pop at Mun or Ruh the next turn.

Head against England and Russia's in your back. Head against France and, well, same story.

All this is perhaps a similar set-up as with any country, but with Germany there is one huge bug-bear; an Austrian / Italian pact. Even if you break though the possibility of being stabbed in the back from either side. you've always got the possibility of Italy and/or Austria coming up from the South. After all. they don't want you taking the title!

So, what's the strategy? You can't really do a lot else but sit around on six centres (yeah. snatch the sixth in 1902... just the perfect number without being called greedy) and hope. Hope that in the final year it isn't you that is seen as a bag of centres to be grabbed.

Germany is different from Austria in the end game because Austria can usually hold Turkey back, what with there only being a limited number of ways for Turkey to get through. But in the case of England (who you haven't managed to eliminate because it would have left you vulnerable to the south), you have been denying him centres all game and now he wants some. There are plenty of ways in: Nwy / Swe / SKA / Den / HEL / Hol / Bel and you can't guard them all.

In addition to this, you'll generally find an Italian army in Tyrolia for the final turn. He's been sat on four or five all game and wants his share. Let's be honest, if you have six centres and Italy four, you know France (and every other bugger nearby) will support Italy into Munich for the last turn.

So, it is no surprise that on a board like this, Germany doesn't usually win any prizes.

ITALY

A reduced number of options are open to Italy in a game like this. If you get a "Greco-Style" three builds in 1901 (by fooling Austria and taking Vic & Tri) then the fact that Austria is played by Jim Mills is an irrelevance: everyone knows Italy's potential when it has loads of armies, and 1902 will see the board shape up to a Juggernaut from the East and two French fleets from the West. Italy cannot hold them all back and will be down to four or five within two years... only this time with a pissed-off Austria and loads of foreign pieces eyeing up your territory.

It's no wonder that Austria is so strong in a game like this.

So, what can you do? Well, as said before, you're gonna get bullied by France, like it or not. Everyone wants you to attack Turkey but the moment you start to make any progress and are looking like you

might get up to five, France heads south and you have to pull back again.

Maybe France will let you take one of the Turkish centres, but he will be thinking all the time that once one falls, so do all the others... and once the south has cracked (i.e. one country eliminated) the north has to go on the defensive. So, France wants you to attack Turkey - but doesn't want you to take a single centre off him!

So why not attack France? After all, he's the one causing you all the problems! It is a most unfortunate dilemma that if you do that then you will probably find Turkey will take the title.

It seems that all Italy can do is sit in the most defensive, yet threatening position possible: i.e. get your armies into Tyr and either Tus or Apu and the fleets into ION and either Tun or TYS. This way, you're as safe as you will ever be. It commits to nothing and allows you to hold indefinitely... until you can sneak a build with one of your pieces.

Best recommendation would be not to displace one of the fleets unless you are certain of building another. Without the ION / TYS or ION / Tun combo, you will always look like a potential target.

But, better than this, is never to actually move the fleets at all and aim (with the cameo army) for a loose centre from whichever Power has sneaked up to seven. Usually Germany or Austria (if you don't go in too heavy, you'll be likely to get support anyway). If it's France, you can always sneak into Pie from Tyr and bung a fleet West too. But, again, best not go in with everything or your gains will soon be decompensated from the West.

I have always loved Italy and, in a game like this, it has to be the hardest country to play correctly. One false move and the situation blows up in your face. There is absolutely no reason why you can't end the game on at least five centres, and even seven is not an unrealistic target for the final centre-grabbing season.

Having said that, Italy never won any prizes at the French or Swedish NDC.

RUSSIA

Without a shadow of doubt, the worst country to play in a game like this. It is nearly impossible for Russia to win the board and any player who does has either played extremely well or (more likely) the game has been shot out of balance early on and this has given Russia the necessary momentum.

The problem with Russia is that it only works well when it grows by one centre (minimum) every season. Like a shark, it has to keep moving; sitting still in defence is a nightmare.

At the French NDC, it was my job to guard the Russian pieces. On six centres for five years, I found that I needed seven pieces! So, I had to make do with A(Mos) - StP - Mos - StP - Mos - StP, constantly trying to do the job of two pieces with one army. It just about worked... for a few game years at least.

If you form a Juggernaut, then you'll suffer the English and Germans working together. Not a good prospect. Constantly standing Turkey out of BLA eventually leads to them getting in and putting an army into Armenia. You just can't win.

Best bet with Russia is to try to stir the game up so that battles break out everywhere. Then, in the melee that prevails, you have the chance of sneaking up by a few centres.

Failing that, just wait for the final few seasons and watch Turkey steal Sev, Austria attack Rum / War, England head towards StP and Germany to Swe.

If you're luck-y, you should hold onto Moscow!

TURKEY

Unless Turkey is eliminated in the first few years, The chances are good that he'll be amongst the leaders at the finish. Er, that is "if not eliminated".

If Turkey is so much as left alone by more than one of his three neighbours (or helped at all by one of them) then you will probably see Turkey win the game.

Take every top-board event in the last year: I'm not sure whether it was EuroDipCon or World DipCon (or even both), but I do recall seeing Cyrille play Turkey, not be given too hard a time of it and go on to win both events. That isn't to say it was by any means a gift; it was just that in these games Cyrille played the perfect game in illustrating to others why Turkey was "not so bad".

French NDC - Austria stood Turkey out of AEG every season, Russia guarded Sev / Rum every season and Italy never vacated ION. Turkey finished third.

Swedish NDC - similar scenario to the French NDC only this time Italy was actively attacking AEG / EMS areas. Turkey went down to three centres in 1902 (France made sure it wasn't a greater loss) but always had the potential to get back up to six at any time. In this case, Turkey wasn't given a single aim throughout the game.

So, Turkey; nobody's friend and everybody knows it. It isn't essential to eliminate Turkey if you want to win the game (that's a bit too harsh), but it is essential to keep him from growing past four. Otherwise, you may find he's up to ten by the end of the game. Therefore, if you get Turkey then

you have every reason to be upset. Not because you are any more likely to be eliminated than anyone else, just simply that you should be in for a long and boring game with a faint hope of a few builds in the last year.

CONCLUSIONS

So, all countries covered, which ones are the best and worst for a game like this? Bearing in mind that the game is for fun (as well as for winning) and that means flexibility of movement. When your pieces are fluid you enjoy the game so much more. And, of course, you are always left pondering the multitude of attack options, instead of simply writing down A(Con) s A(Bul), F(Ank) - BLA, F(Smy) - AEG every season.. With other countries you probably do little else either, but at least you have the choice, without the strategy necessity.

So, without any hesitation whatsoever, my own preference list for a top table game would have to be:

F, A, I, E, G, R, T

At the end of the day, it all really depends on the line-up of personalities and the general attitude in the game. Even so, the board takes a very different shape when you have seven competent players and the winner of the board will win a prestigious title.

Alliances don't work, not even the three-way; it takes a dumb Germany to go along with one.

But, more importantly than anything else, those who have played the best at the event to date are all given the opportunity to play each other and decide for real who the best player on the day will be. Everyone goes into the game with the same attitude, the same goal, the same desires. Everyone is of a similar ability and everyone wants (and has an equal chance of getting) the same thing.

So, when the winner wins, they are a worthy winner and there is no dispute whatsoever as to how they got that win. How can there be?

The only real way to prove who the best players are is to make them play together. What is the point in comparing two players on different boards with a varying degree of opposition?

It's all very well being able to con the newbies (perhaps one of my favourite tactics), but the real skill of the game comes when all the big guns are up against each other - picking on someone their own size!

No matter who you're up against or what country you're playing, taking part on a top table, from where the winner must come, is a tremendous experience. It is all a bit exclusive and-does no favours to those who don't make it on to the board. But this is the whole point of a championship - find out who has played the best! The most effective way of doing this is to weed everyone down to a final seven players and give them something to really go for.

Midcon used to grade the tables... only we found with consistent regularity that the winner never came from table 1. One year, the winner was from the bottom table! How can that be? Simple - a strong player gets a hammering on the first day (along with all the minnows) and ends up facing a weedy table the next day. No surprise then that they are the only player to get a stonking result on the second day.

If tables are graded, then it should actually mean something. Top tables always produce tighter games and this effectively penalises the players, as they rarely get past 7 or 8 centres in topping the board.

Perhaps when our tournaments develop their systems into realistic and reliable methods (like MasterCon) they will reduce all the fuss over "who threw the tournament" and hopefully attract more players.

Whether or not you agree with this concept, the fact is that it is adopted on the continent as the norm and (more importantly) it works. It is the simple idea that everyone has the chance to qualify for the top board, culminating in a quality top table from where the national champion will emanate.

Try it... you might just like it!

from The Freaky Fungus #12 (Feb 1998)

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DIPLOMACY IS A RACE, AGAIN

(Ref. GSTZ #16, page 19)

by Jeremy Tullett

I have in front of me a copy of the 1971 Diplomacy rulebook, which states: *As soon as one Great Power controls 18 supply centres, it is said to have "gained control of Europe", and the player representing that Great Power is the winner.*

Therein lies the cause of two debates that have carried on for as long as people have being playing Diplomacy as part of a wider hobby.

1. How do you call a "winner" when a game is incomplete?

2. How do you rank players in a tournament, or general ranking

system, when it is very unlikely that anyone has actually "won" a game.

This perennial question came to the fore again recently at EuroDipCon (EDC) in Chesterfield with some controversial features of the scoring system in use there. I'll return to that particular instance in a later essay, but here I am going to look at the more general point of how we rate players and games. Much has been written about this, but many, if not most, of those contributions attempt to explain why *this* scoring/rating system is better than any other yet proposed, rather than considering the fundamental issues..

The biggest problem posed by the formal definition of the winning criterion is that, certainly in face-to-face competitions, there is not usually time for anyone to get to 18 centres. (I believe that some tournaments in the USA pretty much insist that the game should be allowed to run for up to 24h in order to achieve such a result.)

In the late 1990s, the National Diplomacy Championships at MidCon ran games to 1914, and an 18 centre win was achieved at least once under those conditions. However, as general boardgames have increased in number, players became increasingly less inclined to give over three days of their time to playing just three Diplomacy games at a general games convention.

Diplomacy games are now being played to game-end dates such that an 18 centre win is now impossible, barring incompetence or connivance from six of the players. EDC (which was a Diplomacy only event) recently ran games to 1909 (barring agreed draws), which certainly enabled some double figure centre finishes. However, that also meant that on the Saturday, one could have started playing at about 0930 and finished around 1830 with an hour's break in the middle.

Some people (I was one of them) did just that, and the Sunday morning round was quite a challenge both to one's stamina and one's motivation, especially as the winner of the tournament could only come from the top seven ranked after the Friday and Saturday games; another mildly controversial rule, which has been widely adopted.

Postal (or email) play, being essentially not time-bound ought to produce the opportunity for more outright 18-centre wins, but games often get either to an actual stalemate along the established stalemate lines or get to a point where everyone has had enough and agrees a so-called draw.

However, where one still has to produce a "winner" under these circumstances, the only sensible determinant of this can be the player with the most supply centres (i.e. closest to achieving 18 centres). The major difficulties here are that in the shorter games played at some tournaments (to1906, perhaps), the winner could often have been overhauled given more time, or the game stops with more than one player on a given supply centre count, which dilutes the concept of "winner".

To put it another way, the shorter the game, the less likely it is that the winner is the best player on the board; as we know, the starting positions are not well balanced and it takes time for that effect to be reduced in comparison to the effect of skilled play.

Furthermore, consider this. If seven players play one game, is the winner reliably the best player on the board? Almost certainly not. In fact, one should really play as many games as is necessary to cover every possible seating arrangement to find the 'best' player. That is a lot of games.

If you'd not considered all of this before, you can start to see why rating/ranking systems for Diplomacy generate a huge amount of debate, such debates usually producing a lot of heat, but little light.

So let us suppose that I am to run a four-round tournament with 42 players, and I decide that in each game the N players with the highest supply centre count receives 1/N points. The tournament's highest ranked player is unlikely to score four outright top positions. It is quite possible that a few players may score around two points, but the majority of players will score nothing at all. Such a scheme identifies the most successful player of the weekend (although possibly not the best), but people want more from a tournament, surely? They would like to know how they compared to all of the rest, not to be just lumped with a large group of zero-point losers. I like to know that I came 16/42 at EDC (and that I finished ahead of Toby), because, actually, that is my best tournament finish for some time. We definitely need a give everyone a score, if only to satisfy a personal need for validation.

At least with four games from a limited pool of players, one will meet a reasonable proportion of the other players, although it is impossible to avoid some repeats. A tournament such as this therefore can claim to to provide some measure of the relative ability of the players, and the fact that different tournament winners repeatedly come from a relatively small group of people would suggest that all tournament ranking systems are probably about as reliable as each other.

The question I ask, therefore, is what might an ideal ranking system look like, and does anything in current use get anywhere close? I'll look at this next time.

CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM, NEGATIVITY OR FEUD?

Edited by Stephen Agar

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Reviewing Zines (1978) (1)

by John Piggott

So, what is my motive in reviewing a zine? Simply, I aim to tell the reader something about the zine, and to give him a guide as to whether he would enjoy it or not. I do this in the best possible way (some would say it is the only possible way), by saying whether I myself like it, and if so why, and if not, why not? Then, knowing my prejudices, the intelligent reader can make up his own mind. In this respect, an unfavourable review can be more useful than a favourable one. For example, readers of Time Out will have read the work of one Dave Pirie. Pirie is literally the most unperceptive film critic I've ever come across, and if I feel like going to the cinema the first thing I do is to look out the Pine reviews of the films available and use them to narrow down the list. If Pirie likes a film, it must be rubbish! This is an infallible guide -unfortunately the reverse is not always true, though it is a good 90% of the time.

It's obvious that for a review to be of any use at all, the critic must tell the truth about his feelings, so that's what I do. I praise the things I like and I damn the rubbish. Unfortunately, a lot of rubbish is produced in this hobby. I also attempt to outline ways of rectifying the faults I find, if I can think of any, even though few editors pay much attention. (Funny thing, but the ones who are shrillest in their demands for "constructive criticism" are the least likely of all people to act on good advice when it's offered.)

Did someone mention "kindness"? It has its place, and that place is nowhere near the public prints. To receive kindness is a privilege, one which a man who thrusts himself on my consciousness by sending me his zine has foregone. Yes, the truth can hurt - terribly - which means that sensitive people shouldn't expose themselves in public, right?

There is another way of writing tine reviews besides the one I use. Here, the critic, fearful of bruising the poor editor's feelings, confines himself to humming meaningless platitudes and, where he finds he really doesn't like something, either ignoring the fact or maintaining that he actually doesn't mind it, really. Some would call it kindness - I wouldn't, for it devalues genuine praise, which is a very, very cruel thing to do. More significantly, it involves telling lies, which makes it worse than useless to any readers (not that there are likely to be many, of course; most people feel the same way as I do about criticism, because it is, after all, something one need only attract by choice. The low profile has many adherents among those who would rather watch).

*****

Friendliness - A Look At "Constructive" Criticism (1980) (2)

by Torbjörn Ström

"The thing that has impressed me the most about the postal hobby, aside from the fact that the game itself is sheer hell, is the general atmosphere of helpfulness and friendliness I've found", Bruce Linsey wrote in his first issue of Voice of Doom. This is certainly true for the US part of the hobby. Everyone who takes an initiative there, whether it is to start a new zine, or doing something else, is met with friendliness. The new editor will find that his fellow editors give him plugs, advising their readers to write for a sample, ending the plug with the words: "If he gets the support he deserves I am sure his zine will turn out to be a good one". For instance, if Stephen Agar had started his zine Here We Go Again in the USA I am sure everyone would have helped him, writing articles, as well as given him positive plugs; instead of writing letter expressing their pessimism about the magazine, and giving bad plugs before the first issue was published, as actually happened in England. Now the question whether there is such a friendly atmosphere only in USA, and not in England arises. Let's try to find out by listening to some words of wisdom expressed by Mike Allaway in his zine Pyrrhic Victory. What he says is all very true, but I want you to look at a certain thing:

> *"If you start a zine one thing you shouldn't do is take too much notice of what other editors say. You will almost certainly find several editors that don't like your zine, that's their opinion only. If you have a circulation, then that is the vindication for you starting a zine. It's the paying customers that are important (though don't pander slavishly to their tastes) and if you keep them happy it*

(1) **Ethil The Frog** #14 (1978)

(2) **The Baltic Battler** #9 (July 1980) (a Swedish zine).

doesn't matter a toss what other editors think of your fine."

Did you notice that it is almost taken for granted that a person starting a new zine in England will receive negative criticism for doing so? Well, if a person is prepared to take up perhaps 25% of his spare time producing something that is mainly aimed at making it possible for others to enjoy themselves playing a good game, the last thing he needs is such criticism, especially since he is likely to make an economical loss on the venture. Instead, everyone should wish him good luck and try to help him to get things going. Negative criticism isn't the way to encourage people to take initiatives, and it is no wonder that there is a steady decrease in the number of zines in UK.

What I can't understand is why the critics use a scale ranging from +2 to -8, when it as perfectly possible to let readers know how good I consider a zine to be by using a scale from +1 to +10. Even if I say that all zines are good when I review them (and all zines are good in some respect) it is perfectly possible to let my readers know how good I consider a certain zine to be by the degree of "positivism" I use. The difference will be that the new editor which I review won't feel as if his effort ain't appreciated.

Now no one should accuse me of not seeing the value of constructive criticism when it comes to help others improve their zines. Constructive criticism is all very good, but why say "it is bad", when one can say "there is room for improvement"? To use a negative language is not my way of being "constructive". Another fault of some reviewers is too only point out the bad sides of another zine and completely omit the good ones. One can't get a fair picture of the reviewed zine from such a review. Do you get the right impression of Megalomania if one only mentions the bad games service?

It may look as if I think all UK editors are guilty of this "negativism". Of course this is not the case, the large majority doesn't condescend themselves to this sort of behaviour. Most of them are of course in this hobby to play the game and have fun, in a friendly atmosphere. However, there is a little "elite clique" who believe that the most important thing for a zine is to be literary perfect. An intellectual style is more important than a fast turnaround for them. The main motivation for these people being in the hobby is to boost their egos, impressing other by displaying their "superior" intellects vis-à-vis persons who aren't as good as they are at writing or arguing. To them the game of "arguing" (for the sake of arguing) which they run in their zines is more important than the games of Diplomacy, which are mainly included to get subscribers. My advice to new publishers is to ignore these people, don't let them stop you from running an efficient zine, which may not be up to their standards when it comes to literacy, but most certainly is far better than theirs when it comes to creating a friendly atmosphere, which keeps your subscribers happy.

*****

Editorial (1984) (1)

by Pete Tamlyn

Well, as many of you will no doubt have read in other 'zines over the past few weeks, this is the last issue of The Acolyte. It is not a hoax, this 'zine Is folding.

OK, I know I said last issue that I wouldn't fold even though I was a bit pissed off with things. However, it didn't take much to convince me that this had been a gross mistake. Those of you who sub to other 'zines will doubtless read several stories in the next few weeks purporting to reveal "The Reason" and there have certainly been a few unpleasant incidents. For example, if you have a GMing dispute and discover that several editors seem determined to make the player concerned a national hero and continue to spread deliberate lies about how you handled the affair long after it has been amicably settled by all concerned… well, it makes it very difficult to run games in a fair and honest atmosphere, does it not? However, sad as it may seem, this sort of thing is inevitable. There will always be a few anti-social idiots around the Hobby and the more well known you become the more of a target you are. A year or two ago I would probably have shrugged all this off and carried on. Now? well, you know. The real truth of the matter is that I simply no longer have the patience, enthusiasm or thick skin needed to do this Job. Having realised this, it was a very simple decision for me to recognise that I ought to stop now whilst most people would remember Acolyte with reasonable affection rather than try to carry on and get more and more irritable and get to the stage where people are telling me that I ought to fold.

So, the decision is final; please don't write and try to get me to change my mind. Indeed, with the news having, been given to various people in good time for them to make the necessary arrangements, I've already had quite a few of those and have not been persuaded. Equally I've had a few people parading the crocodile tears and continuing to rub salt in any wound they can find, and two pages of abuse from Dolton saying how much he despises me

(1) **Acolyte** #60 (August 1984).

and how lucky the Hobby is to be getting rid of me. These I shall also ignore. I will not be subscribing to any zines, even though I will miss several of them, because I have no wish to see what is said about me after I have gone: it will either be unpleasant or embarrassing. As with many other editors, I may well be back at some time in the future, but for now I would just like to forget about things for a while, OK? Thanks.

*****

Are Diplomacy Zines Killing The Diplomacy Scene? (1) (1998)

by Nic Chilton

Although it seems an absurd idea, if you look around the UK zines it all proves to be the case. I have a few runs of zines that were around in the 1980's and they seem to be supportive of the postal hobby, where as today's counterparts do not seem to be. The best way for the hobby to progress is for the "readership", and by that I mean people who subscribe to zines - not editors, to see more zines. If you subscribe to just one zine then you are missing out on a rich seam of interesting zines that are around. Most people rely on what editors say about other zines as to whether to bother sending off for a sample, this is because most editors see a wide variety of zines available.

However, the current "trend" is to give negative reviews of other zines, taking any opportunity to put the boot in. Is it any wonder then that players don't subscribe to more zines? Unfortunately, this also means that if the current zine someone subscribes to either folds or ends up not being to their liking, so they don't renew their subs, then the reader is more likely to leave the hobby completely than to go through the process of trying to find a replacement. Maybe it is in the nature of the hobby for editors to back stab each other and make catty remarks (hence last issues cover), but it does cause great detriment to the hobby. Indeed, there has been more than one zine that has folded as a result of attacks from fellow editors. If the hobby is in the pursuit of making itself extinct, why protest. Say goodbye to postal hobby it could well be dead by 2010.

*****

Conclusions

by Stephen Agar

The above are only a small selection - I could have reprinted equivalent comments from pretty much any year. By my own confession in these sort of things over the years I have been poacher and gamekeeper, aggressor and victim. There is a certain irony that one of these pieces uses criticisms made of me (in an earlier incarnation and at the hands of Pete Birks, I think) as examples of the sort of negativity that the hobby often suffers from. Yet, many think of me as someone who does not lightly miss an opportunity to do another editor down. I believe that the truth is that this subject is a lot more complicated than some people would have you believe.

"Genuine constructive criticism"

However genuinely such criticism is meant, this is usually taken by the recipient of the criticism as hostility because zines are like one's children, you criticise my zine and you criticise a part of me and all too often such "genuine" criticism is wrapped up in bitchy or patronising language. Whatever they may say in public, all editor's take criticism of their zines personally, even if they say they do not. Indeed, the "constructive criticism" may even be motivated by hostility, but the editor concerned hasn't got the nerve for simple vitriol. It may be possible to take constructive criticism from a teacher - but the teacher/student relationship does not exist in this context, where editors are generally seen as belonging to the same peer group. Similarly, it may be just possible to take constructive criticism in private, but harder to swallow when it is all too public.

People like Torbjörn Ström, above, claim that constructive criticism is OK - but if you have criticism of any sort in Dip zines then things quickly degenerate into sulks, feuds or bankable grudges to be repaid when the opportunity presents itself. After all, how many of us would appreciate a house guest offering constructive criticism of our newly decorated living room? Indeed, I would go as far as to say that it is adverse comments about an editor's zine which hurts far more than comments about him as a person, so it may be that "constructive criticism" is more likely to lead to hostility in the hobby than anything else. I certainly don't agree with Torbjörn that you should leave a reader to guess the bad points of a zine by taking account of what is not said (much like leaving a jury to work out that a Defendant has a criminal record by the fact that no evidence is called as to his/her good character - silly). Unfortunately, negative comments are far more interesting to write (and read) than good ones - witness this brief review of Albatross from John Piggott: "It's a depressing thought, but the first issue of Albatross was undoubtedly the best; it's gone

(1) Extract from editorial from **GAME** #24 (July 1998).

steadily downhill since then, if only because it's been getting longer…"

Being antagonistic to get attention

Antagonism to attract attention is a tactic of long standing in the postal Diplomacy hobby, and often successful. I used this tactic myself back in Spring Offensive No.3 when I deliberately attacked various long-standing zines for being "dinosaurs" which were stuck in a rut etc. etc. As a result I had letters from no less than 12 editors in the following issue commenting on my position (mainly negatively) - excellent feedback, all of which lead to the newly launched Spring Offensive making an impact (something any new zine must struggle to do). On the Internet, when someone expresses an opinion they don't necessarily hold (at least to the degree it is expressed) in order to get a reaction from others, the piece in question is called a "troll". There is quite a bit of "trolling" in the postal Dip hobby (e.g. the piece from GAME printed above).

Being antagonistic to foster a reputation for acerbic wit

Being antagonistic does carry with it some risks - if you are too bitchy you will just alienate the person/group you are being bitchy about, who will treat it as hostility. This is especially true if your purpose is simply to provoke. A good example of this, from probably the most provocative editor the hobby has ever seen, is John Piggott's numerous digs at Roy Taylor - a particular vivid one being:

> *"And just to emphasise my point about blunders, Roy, I'll draw your attention to the final report for NGC 173 (Jigsaw No.43, page 4). In this so-called regular game, the board evidently contained 35 supply centres in 1906. By 1910 this had diminished to 33, but in the final stages of the game the number grew again: there were 35 centres in 1911, 37 in 1912 and when the game ended in 1913 there were 40!! And these are facts Roy. They were typed by your own fair hand on pristine duplicator stencils (I can almost smell the aroma of the wax, so vivid is the image in my mind). You yourself smeared these stencils with the very best ink money could buy, and you then proceeded to drag them over many sheets of paper. Facts, Roy! And what have you to offer in return? Paranoid fantasies, no more. And my own, private fantasies are more interesting than yours. Roy baby, when you've got some facts, let me know, huh? Then I'll listen to you." (1)*

Quite a tirade over what amounted to a mis-typed SC chart (something it is very easy to do) - there was no suggestion that the game had been GM'd badly. This, and other digs, led to the following editorial in Jigsaw No.44 (2):

> *"…what I have just read on Ethil the Frog's front cover has managed to send me into a complete rage, enough of a rage in fact that, if John Piggott had been within distance he would have found himself in hospital after being on the wrong end of a martial arts two fingered punch to his eyes, which is, I admit, rather a stupid admission on my part because he wrote it with the sole intention of provoking some form of letter from me…"*

And as we know from recent exchanges of letter in this zine, after all these years the hurt is still felt. In extreme cases this tactic can backfire an even generate a bit of a backlash against the publication doing it (e.g. Mark Wightman's recent description of GAME as a "sterile pile of rehashed shite").

Sniping (in fun)

I think this is the area which has got me into the most trouble. I feel I can take the piss out of people I know and like, especially if we have some differences between us. However, what seems like a humourous dig when you type it, may not be read as such by the subject. For example, Duncan Adam's zine The Laughing Roundhead used to have lots of typing errors - so when I referred to it in SpOff I often deliberately mistyped its name (something which I though amusing) - but I subsequently learnt that I was really pissing Duncan off, as he felt sensitive about the quality of his spelling. Similarly, when I patched things up with Toby in late 1997, I felt that sufficiently relaxed about things to make several good-natured (or so I thought) jibes at his expense - but he construed it as pure hostility. In email there is a convention of using a ☺ when you don't intend something to be taken seriously, and recently I have found it a useful device from time to time. In a similar vein (I hope) it is rare that Richard Sharp does not make some dismissive comment or other about me in Dolchstoß; but I treat that as a great honour, as Richard gets out so little these days it is a privilege to be noticed by him. A good example (from issue 240) is:

> *"Oh, John, it's always such a relief to find I disagree with you. It's almost like the "Agar Test" - if you agree with Stephen you know you must be wrong and check back over your reasoning. Quite useful, really. I know you aren't quite that batty, but similar principles apply."*

(1) **Ethil the Frog** #16 (April 1978)
(2) April 1978.

Great stuff.

Misrepresentation (selective memory syndrome)

This is feud territory, often generated as a result of someone attempting constructive criticism, but maybe adding just a bit of caustic wit and the person on the other end interpreting it as aggression. Feud's usually involve some disagreement as to some facts or some interpretation of facts; as each party to the feud restates their position they "elaborate" on the position of the other in order to demonstrate the weakness of their position etc. etc. This can be quite entertaining if you see both zines and appreciate the degree of "spin" which is going on, but a subscriber who only sees one half of the argument is in danger of taking too much at face value, and consequently over-estimating the degree of hostility involved. I have always thought that Richard Sharp is a master at this sort of thing.

Many feuds can be good-natured, but on occasions can get out of control, spiralling into personal dislike, especially if one or other party starts to believe there own propaganda (in such things, who was actually correct does not really matter in the end). I have had too many feuds while editing Diplomacy zines to keep track - but Peter Calcraft and Toby Harris certainly spring to mind (while I have certainly crossed swords with John Colledge, Kim Head, Chris Palm and Iain Bowen). One well known feud which almost ended up in violence was that between John Piggott and Eric Willis - John made constant and niggling attacks on Eric's zine, Leviathan (which was a poor zine delivering a poor service), causing Eric to approach John at a hobby meet and threaten him. An ugly confrontation ensured with Eric eventually backing down (to John's relief - Eric is over 6 feet tall).

Pure hostility

This was surprisingly rare, and usually only a final reaction to what is described above. At the risk of offending Roy Taylor, I think that several of his descriptions of John Piggott in Jigsaw were examples of this, but this rather tame one from Jigsaw 451 will suffice:

> "Piggott, I'll tell you is a prize prig, he will never give in, he's something akin to John Stonehouse whom, you may remember, had the gall to falsify company books, deaths, passports - you name it - and yet, in his own eyes he was guilty of nothing; he and his fellow prigs make me bloody sick."

Indeed, there are other excerpts I could print, but this is a family zine. In my opinion, John's own attacks on Roy don't fall into this category - not because they weren't very cutting - but because hostility is a strong emotion, and John saw such sparing as an exercise in itself; he didn't actually care enough to feel that strongly about what he was arguing about. I could contrast this with John's anti-Eric Willis tirades (e.g. describing Eric Willis as "a truly repellent blob of protoplasm"2) where it did seem that he might just be starting to get involved.

There is a case for saying that Toby's piece on me back in 1997 was pure hostility, but I subscribe to the fact that it was sniping in fun which, when combined with alcohol and a touch of an inferiority complex (brought out by the alcohol?) just crossed the line. My original reply to Toby's piece was certainly pure hostility - but I though better of it before I printed it...

False indignation syndrome

Worth mentioning, because it is fairly common. Once editors get involved in a slanging match (at whatever level), one way to close the debate down and try to retain the moral high ground is to complain bitterly about negativity in the hobby and how horrible people are. On occasion such complaints may be justified (I feel that Pete Tamlyn's complaint above probably was), but all too often the person doing the complaining has been quite content to indulge in fisticuffs themselves (E.g. Kim Head's comment in the last editorial in Life's Rich Pageant that "I could do without the juvenile and sometimes quite unpleasant mentality which appears to be rife in the hobby at the moment..."). However, given the reputation of John Piggott, who can resist a chuckle at this review of Howay the Lads:

> "For a time last year I had high hopes of this zine; alas, these hopes have been dashed. A callow, whining editorial posture is combined with bitterly vitriolic attacks on hobby members... it's a very surly zine, and while they probably don't feel an insane hatred for their enemies, it's hard to escape the impression that they do." (3)

It's easier to be agin'

If someone has a new idea, pour cold water on it. If someone has an initiative, tell them it won't work. But never come up with new ideas or initiatives yourself (after all, others may be hostile). We've all seen it, and as a knee-jerk reaction I don't like it - "though constructive criticism" of such things is OK... The history of the hobby is littered

(1) May 1978.
(2) **Ethil the Frog** #13 (December 1977)
(3) **Ethil the Frog** #15 (March 1978)

with good ideas which were slammed from day one and so never saw the light of day. Indeed, you have only got to propose that the hobby needs some sort of a hobby organisation to recruit newcomers (something I still believe) and you can hear the knives being sharpened.

So how much of the above is justified? For what it is worth, I think any hobby which avoids constructive criticism is just going to be so self-congratulatory and boring that anyone with any spirit will desert en masse or die of tedium. However, constructive criticism leads inexorably to feuds and sniping. I don't like genuine hostility, which rules out (I would rather retain that for people who do hurtful things that matter in real life), while moralising about how terrible it is to have arguments in print is often hypocritical (though sometimes convenient). Just being against everything is just depressing, and one reason why this hobby is dying so quickly. But no doubt for as long as this hobby continues to exist we will have the full range of negative emotions on display, and it has always been so.

Reprinted from Spring Offensive #66
(January 1999)

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UNLOVED ALLIANCES: RUSSIA AND ENGLAND

by Brenda Palm

Most people are aware of the power of the notorious Juggernaut combination, where Russia and Turkey sweep Westward scything down the central powers as they go. However, the problem with this arrangement is that as soon as the other 5 powers (with the possible exception of France) see this coming they're quite likely to Jet go of each other's throats and turn East to destroy "The Beast From The East"

The Juggernaut combines Russia with one of the comer powers - but what about the other one, England ? Why cannot that country fuJfill the role of Turkey ? Let's have a look and see what options there are for a Jong-standing aJJiance.

Russia has a natural advantage over England in that she straddles the stalemate line running through the barren zone from NAf to StP. So, whilst Russia can be considered either a Northern or Southern power England is most definitely a Northern one. For an alliance between the two to work, Russia must obviously co-operate with England in the North: but in the middle game should target Southern supply centres for further expansion - otherwise she is likely to come to blows with her ally.

What England needs in the North by way of Russian assistance, is help in resolving the Triangle - or at least narrowing down the field - but must offer something for Russia in return.

Quite simply, this means Germany has to go. This suits Russia, of course, and the deal for Russia is that the three German home centres are ceded to her. England meanwhile is promised Nwy & Den - with options on either to take Swe, depending on who needs the builds at the time. To begin with it is wise that Russia takes Sweden in any case, otherwise the other five powers will smell a rat. But ultimately England is given Swe, so that Russia effectively cedes the Northern Seas to England - and concentrates her fleet building in Sev.

If England can take Bel, not overly difficult to arrange, with Norway assured also in Autumn 1901, then it should not be difficult to make Germany's demise a swift affair. If Germany denies Russia Sweden initially, it is easily forced in 1902.

Russia, will usually be able to snaffle Rumania in the South: so both countries will have a reasonable start, without anything spectacular or unusual happening that will alert others.

The supply centre targets for each to secure a firm powerbase to start with are:

England: Bel, Hol, Nwy, Den, + 3 home = 7
Russia: Ber, Mun, Kie, Rum, Swe +4 home= IO

By this time Russia and England will most certainly have declared their hands. It is important that a third party is brought into the equation to help things along. The "third man" is Italy, who should certainly not be averse to joining Russia against Austria and Turkey, and would not weep over England engaging France; which is next on England's list of places to visit. In this respect the success of the Anglo-Russian alliance is dependant on Italy, because otherwise Austria and Turkey could stop Russia in her tracks in the South, whilst France and Germany do likewise to England in the North.

To some extent it lends itself to a three way alliance, therefore, but in following through to see where Russia and England can go next, I'll assume that Italy is the eventual target for both countries. That said, the beauty of including Italy is that should either Russia or England find that the other is doing too well, then Italy is a perfect choice as an alternative ally for the mid to end game.

Let us assume that Germany has been dealt with, and Austria and Turkey have been reduced to rubble as well.

Turning first to France. England will now be able to release her fleets in full against her, and with the Russian armies in Kie, Mun and Ber able to support through to Bur and Ruh any armies England has been able to land in the low countries, France can be pressurised severely in the North. This is where Italy comes in: ie encouraged to harry the French from the South, with the promise of Mar and Spa if necessary. Italy should be quite prepared to go for this provided the Turkish Navy bas been neutralised (which should be the case in any reasonable Russo-Italian alliance in the South).

From this England should be able to capture Bre, Par, and Por: which brings her unit count up to 10. And this is the time that England claims Swe - unless of course Russia wishes to risk offending her ally and driving England into the arms of an Italy who may well be grateful enough for English action against the French to side with England against Russia. Assuming Russia accepts, then the supply centre count for England stands at 11.

In the South, Russia and Italy should be in a position to secure all of Austria, the Balkans and Turkey for themselves. A reasonable share for Russia would be something like; Ank, Con, Bui, Rum, Bud. Italy takes the other 5 in the region, and, of course bas Tunis. This leaves Russia on 12 units (including 4 home and 3 German). And once again, should England grab for the win by attacking Russia herself, she has the diplomatic option of staying allied to Italy - but let's assume Italy is next. Russia now moves her German placed armies across the barren zone and into Austria with the aim of capturing all of Austria for herself: and the other 4 Italian held centres down to Smy!

England ensures Italy's downfall by forcing the Western end of the Med. Italy shouldn't be able to hold out on two fronts, as England also hits the Piedmont corridor as Italian armies head East to fend of the Russian attack. Russia bas the target of Ven to reach the eighteenth centre, ultimately, Whilst England's traditionally strong navy aims to take ION and the Italian borne centres, which takes her to 16. England also has options to stab at the Russian held German centres for a win Gust as Russia can hit the low countries in a surprise attack too!).

So, the benefits of a long-term alliance between England and Russia are, in the first place, it should ensure at least third place - provided Italy can be "used". Secondly, if the alliance is broken early Italy makes a good new ally for either. Lastly, and most importantly, if things go well, both England and Russia will have options to snatch the win as the alliance is unsuited to a pre-arranged two-way draw. There will be plenty of temptation, and opportunity, to go for the eighteenth centre: so it's a very workable alliance, but certainly not a boring one!

Reprinted from The Ides of March #2 (May 1995)

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THE ART OF DIPLOMACY

by Richard Sharp

I'm going to try to summarise in a few paragraphs the qualities that make up a good player. Please note that I am not claiming omniscience - just trying to formulate my own ideas that other people can use for comparison. So here are my 'golden rules', in gradually diminishing order of importance.

1. Always stay on good terms with everyone for as long as possible, or longer. The player who commits himself to one ally, and hence against the rest, is unlikely to win many games. It is fascinating to discover how the same set of moves can be presented in two different lights to two opposed parties so that both find then acceptable. The most flagrant stab may be a phoney...and then again, it may not be, after all. A good player who decides to go in for an unambiguous stab should still mend his fences by apologising, pointing out that it was essential for his survival, and trying to negotiate a new deal. Nothing annoys me more than the lunatic who attacks me and then refuses to answer any further letters, convinced that my only aim is revenge. He may be right, at that, but what a boring, cowardly way to play.

2. Try to arrange accidents for neighbours, rather than attacking them. This is not easy to do, but very satisfying when it's done well. A typical sequence would be: tell A to move in a certain way which is "almost 100% safe", except in the remote event that B does so-and-so; then make sure B does do so-and-so; then commiserate with A (who'd have thought B was such an imaginative player?). A may be as suspicious as hell, but he can't prove anything. By getting your neighbours to do your dirty work for you, you commit them to your side while retaining your own friendly relations with the victim, as prescribed in rule 1.

3. Concentrate on home centres. By this I mean that you should play to get your neighbours so entangled with one another that their building potential is zero: as I've

said before, the ideal situation for Germany in about A04 is to have English in StP, French in Lon and Lpl, and Italians in Mar! If you can achieve this very desirable state of affairs, you can stop worrying about your "allies" becoming too strong, always a problem otherwise. While they are trying to sort themselves out, you can go on growing, and even if they notice they can't do a thing about it.

4. Use the deadline. Provided GMs are on the phone, considerable success can be achieved by last-minute changes to plan; they give you some security against the danger that your earlier plans may have been leaked, One favourite device is to write to another player saying you have changed your mind and your orders - making sure he gets the letter just too late to act on it (sending it to the house next door is one cunning way of doing this). This will give you chance for a genuine stab that might otherwise cause relations to deteriorate sharply. But you must be able to rely on your GM not to accept late order changes: in at least one zine some players used regularly to phone allies after the deadline to find out how they had moved, then ring the GM and change their orders, which was always allowed!

5. Always tell the truth. Well, nearly always. I rather enjoy the challenge of finding a set of orders which I can confidently tell everyone in advance without damage to my own position. The advantage is obvious: people will tend to get into the habit of believing you, and when you finally hang one on them it'll come as a shock. I can see no virtue in the 'trust no one, lie to everyone' approach, which simply ensures that no one believes a word you say after Autumn 1901.

6. Stab in the Spring. This is the direct reverse of the advice usually given but it works better, beyond any doubt. Spring stabs are much more likely to catch people with their knickers down, and provided you follow sound tactical principles (play to annihilate, aim for home centres) you should be able to consolidate in the Autumn. Many players regard Spring as a time for marking time and. picking daisies; by taking advantage of this you can stab at longer range and bring more units into the struggle.

First published Dolchstoß #54 (June 1977)

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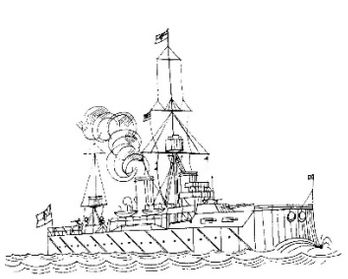

HOW TO PLAY POSTAL DIPLOMACY AND WIN (or at least·draw)

by Rob Chapman.

Articles about tactics, the best openings for Italy or theories· about German mid-game strategy, are all very interesting and entertaining to read or write but will rarely give you any worthwhile advice about the practicalities of playing. A game of Diplomacy is more than just an exercise in strategic planning and tactical manoeuvring. It is a clash between seven diverse and often discordant personalities. No two games are ever the same. There are probably as many different ways to play the game as there are players. Not everyone will agree with my approach, but nevertheless I will offer some suggestions about how to best organise your. games and conduct effective negotiations in order to achieve· profitable game results.

First of all, then you need to ORGANISE ALL AVAILABLE INFORMATION about each game. Some kind of filing system is required. I use a ring folder, into which I file all incoming correspondence; I keep a record sheet in the front of the folder. with the GM's and players addresses and telephone numbers, and I record the date each letter is received or sent.

It is impractical, and seldom convenient, to set up the board every time you want to consider the moves, so each season I make a map of the current position which board helps I carry round in my pocket to study at leisure (a simple photocopy of the with symbols for units and a different colour for each country). This also me to keep track of who owns which supply centres throughout the game. The map is filed in the game folder after each adjudication when a new one is drawn.

It is useful to keep a copy of all your correspondence to other players and to the GM (especially if your memory is as erratic as mine). I use duplicate books and keep a note of the page number sent to each person on the record sheet (each book. contains 100 pages, and I am currently on volume 29...), but many players prefer to type their letters and keep a carbon copy which can be filed in the game folder.

NEVER NMR. Obviously, you must ensure. that you always get your orders to the GM before the deadline. Make a note of the date on a calendar or in your diary, or on the game map itself. It's a good idea to

submit a set of orders as soon as you receive an adjudication, you will probably want to change them again later as a result of your diplomatic efforts, but at least you will have a set of orders on file in case you forget the deadline. Always keep a copy of your orders.

WRITE. LOTS OF LETTERS. Write to everyone in the game every season of you can manage it. Write long friendly letters (it's a very friendly hobby, enjoy your correspondence). Analyse the game, exchange information, suggest possible moves for your allies, ask for suggestions for your own moves. When you can't discuss the game, talk about something else, the weather, what you did on your holidays etc.··Get to know your opponents: introduce yourself at the beginning of the game by giving some personal details about yourself, the others will usually reciprocate. Stay friendly with everyone as long as possible.

ASK QUESTIONS.· A question will provoke a response, your correspondent. is obliged to reply. Ask direct questions Make your opponent commit himself. "What do you intend· to do with your A(Bur) next season?11·If he tells you, all well and good. If he doesn't, or is evasive, then you have good reason to be suspicious about his intentions (so ask him again). If he tells a lie, then you can claim he has double-crossed you and you have a good excuse to stab him) if you want to).

TELL THE TRUTH. Too many players think Diplomacy is about treachery and deceit. It's not. It's about honesty and trust. You will have to trust people throughout· the game, and· you will want the other players to trust; you. They won't trust you if you demonstrate a willingness to tell lies. Tell the other players what your moves will be when you can, especially during the early stages of the game. Build up a reputation for being truthful, this will prove very useful later on.

DON'T STAB INDESCRIMINATELY. If you are going to stab them then make it count, it's not much good if you don't make substantial gains·. Attack the weak – persuade others .to attack the strong. Be sure you have good·reason for the stab; if you are the aggrieved ·party· ("he double-crossed me....") then neutral powers will not.be so concerned about your belligerence. Try to avoid being seen as the aggressor. Apologise to your victim immediately and point out the very good reasons why you were FORCED to take such drastic action (blame another player if possi ble); remain on friendly terms (you might need his help later on· and you don't want him to bear any grudges).

Always expect to be stabbed yourself. Each season ·work out what damage your neighbours can do to you and be prepared for the· worst. If you are stabbed, write to your assailant in good humour (disguise the exasperation) and discretely point out the dire consequences of his rash decision. Whatever happens keep negotiating.

EVERYTHING IS NEGOTIABLE. Promises are not binding (although you·can·claim they should be if it is someone else making them). Keep your plans flexible, your options open - don't commit yourself or your forces to any long term strategy. Be prepared to respond to the changing fortunes of the game.

And finally, KEEP A LOW PROFILE. You don't want to become a target so avoid getting a reputation. If you do win a few games, don't tell anyone. Don't start your own zine or become involved in·Hobby politics. And don't write any Diplomacy articles...

Reprinted from Dib Dib Dib #36 (January 1984)

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MIDDLE-EARTH CHESS

by John Keight

The rules of chess apply, save where modified below.

WHITE: Pawns = Elves; King = Frodo + Ring; Queen = Gandalf; Bishops = Eagles; Knights = Rangers; Rooks = Ents.

BLACK: Pawns = Orcs; King = Mount Doom; Queen = Balrog; Bishops = Nazgul; Knights = Wargs; Rooks = Trolls.

MOUNT DOOM: The Black King (Mount Doom) is placed by the side of the board. Underneath it is a piece of paper with the true location of Mount Doom, which the Mordor player may determine before the game begins. Mount Doom's true position is secret, and its position may be occupied or not by another Mordor piece. The Mordor player may refresh his memory at any time, but the piece of paper must always be in the sight of the White player.

Until discovery by the White player, the secret location of Mount Doom is freely usable by the Mordor player. If a White piece discovers the location of Mount Doom (by passing over it or ending a move there) then the position is declared and the piece of paper revealed. At the point the black King is placed on that location, and this takes any piece already on that square; this is the Mordor move. If Gandalf is taken then he reincarnates and is replaced upon his original starting square, provided this is free. That is the White move. Gandalf cannot take a piece when reincarnating. The Mordor player must take special care to consider whether a White Knight has discovered the location of Mount Doom by moving over it.

TO WIN: White needs to find Mount Doom and move Frodo on to the same square, thus destroying the Ring. Mordor must take Frodo, thus capturing the Ring and then retain it during the next move. Once placed, Mount Doom does not move and cannot be taken. There is no checking. If a Mordor piece takes Frodo and captures the Ring, but is itself taken on the next move, then the Ring is considered lost to both players. Either side will win if it takes all of the opposition pieces.

PAWNS: These move as normal, but do not promote save in special circumstances. The en passant rule does not apply. A pawn reaching the opposing back-line moves immediately to its own opposite back-line. A pawn unable to so move remains on the opposing back-line but may be moved as soon as the square on its own back line becomes free (this does not count as White's move). If a White pawn moving to the opposing back-line discovers Mount Doom, it still moves immediately to its own back line. However, if it cannot do so, it is removed when the Black King appears.

If neither side has moved a piece into the opposing side of the board after five moves, the first one to do so gets a double move – but the player may not move the same piece twice, and one of the pieces moved must be a pawn.

If a game cannot be completed by, for example, having opposing Bishops left and Pawns unable to attack, then promotion is allowed. A pawn may only become a piece which has been taken previously and may not become a Queen. A promoted pawn still advances so the new piece starts on its own back line.

Reprinted from Dib Dib Dib #10 (June 1981)

INDIANOMACY II

by Wayne Hoheisel (1)

(Reprinted from **Fantasia** #2 – July 1966)

1. The Board

The provinces are numbered, and the sea-areas on which movement is allowed (bays, rivers, and lakes) are in lower-case and underlined. The Indian nations in the game and their province make-up are as follows (provinces with supply centers are underlined):

APACHE CONFEDERATION - Chiricahua, Jicarilla, Lipan, Mescalero, San Carlos.

BLACKFOOT CONFEDERACY - Blackfeet, Blood, Piegan, Sarcee.

CADDOAN CONFEDERACY - Caddo, Tawakoni, Waco, Wichita.

LEAGUE OF THE DAKOTAS - Santee, Sisseton, Teton Sioux, Wahpeton, Yankton Sioux, Yanktoni.

ILLINOIS CONFEDERACY - Illinois, Miami, Peoria, Plankashaw.

LEAGUE OF THE IROQUOIS - Cayuga, Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Seneca.

MUSKHOGEAN CONFEDERACY - Chickasaw, Choctaw, Lower Creek, Upper Creek, Yuchi.

SHOSHONI CONFEDERATION - Gosiute, Lemni Shoshoni, Rocky Mountain Shoshoni, Wind River Shoshoni.

Or, in the numerical designations shown on the map: APACHE - 98, 97, 100, 99, 96; BLACKFOOT - 26, 27, 28, 34; CADDO -- 110,107, 108, 109; DAKOTAS -54, 52, 49, 53; ILLINOIS - 71, 69, 70, 68; IROQUOIS - 13, 10, 1111, 12, 14; MUSKHOGEA.N -114, 113, 117, 115, 116; SHOSHONI - 46, 44, 45, 47. Numbers are in same order as provinces listed above.

2. Guide to map (supply centres underlined; asterisk indicates neutral supply centre with standing war-party in civil disorder (see rules); letter in parenthesis indicates home province of an Indian nation the name of which begins with that letter (except that "Iroquois" All be indicated by a "Q" instead of an "I").

1 – Kwakiutl	10 - Mohawk (Q)
2 – Chipewyan	11 - Oneida (Q)
3 - Cree (*)	12 - Onondaga (Q)
4 - Caribou-Eaters	13 - Cayuga (Q)
5 - Naskapi	14 - Seneca (Q)
6 - Montagnais	15 - Huron (*)
7 - Micmac	16 - Ottawa
8 - Abnaki	17 - Algonkin
9 - Pequot	18 - Chipoewa (*)

(1) The NAVB catalogue gives Don Miller as the author. The original printing in Fantasia (edited by Don Miller) doesn't credit an author - but Wayne Hoheisel is down as the person to address queries to and as the guest GM of the first game (in which Don Miller was a player). Given the similarities of this variant to Game of the Clans (a Hoheisel variant) I think we can be pretty safe in assuming that Wayne was the true author.

19 - Plains Ojibwa
20 - Plains Cree
21 - Assinboine (*)
22 - Hidatsa
23 – Mandan
24 - Arikara
25 – Atsina
26 - Blackfeet (B)
27 - Blood (B)
28 - Piegan (B)
29 - Crow
30- Flathead
31 - Bannock
32 - Nez Perce
33 - Kutenai
34 - Sarcee (B)
35 - Okinagan
36 - Nootka
37 - Yakima
38 - Cayuse
39 - Chinook
40 - Klamath
41 - Yurok
42 - Shasta
43 - Pomo
44 - Lemni Shoshoni (S)
45 - Rocky Mtn.Shoshoni (S)
46 - Gosiute (S)
47 - Wind River Shoshoni. (S)
48 - Northern Cheyenne
49 - Teton Sioux (D)
50 - Yankton Sioux (D)
51 - Yanktoni (D)
52 - Sisseton (D)
53 - Wahpeton (D)
54 - Santee (D)
55 - Menominee
56 - Sauk and Fox
57 - Winnebago
58 - Potawatomi
59 - Erie
60 - Susquehana
61 - Delaware (*)
62 - Pamunkey
63 - Powbaten
64 - Tuscarora
65 - Catawba
66 - Cherokee (*)
67 - Shawnee
68 - Piankashaw (I)
69 - Miami (I)
70 - Peoria (I)
71 - Illinois (I)
72 - Iowa
73 - Missouri
74 - Osage
75 - Quapaw
76 - Kansa
77 - Oto
78 - Omaha
79 - Ponca
80 - Pawnee (*)
81 - Kiowa
82 - Comanche
83 - Taos (*)
84 - Southern Cheyenne
85 - Arapaho
86 - Ute
87 - Navaho (*)
88 - Piute (*)
89 – Paviotso
90 - Miwok
91 - Yokuts
92 - Mohave
93 - Cahuilla
94 - Yuma
95 - Pima
96 - San Canlos (A)
97 - Jicarilla (A)
98 - Chiricahua (A)
99 - Mescalero (A)
100 - Lipan (A)
101 - Papago
102 - Yaqui
103 - Huichol
104 - Carrizo
105 – Karankawa
106 - Tonkawa
107 - Tawakoni (C)
108 - Waco (C)
109 - Wichita (C)
110 - Caddo (C)
111 - Atakapa
112 - Natchez
113 - Choctaw (M)
114 - Chickasaw (M)
115 - Upper Creek (M)
116 - Yuchi (M)
117 - Lower Creek (M)
118 - Apalachee
119 - Calusa
120 - Hopewell Mounds (Taboo)

<u>Sea-provinces</u>:

a - Nootka Sound; b - Hudson Bay (see rules); c - St. Lawrence River; d - Lake Superior; e -- Lake Michigan; f - - Lake Huron; g - Lake Erie; h Lake Ontario; i - Chesapeake Bay.

3. Initial positions in the game are as follows:

APACHE: Jicarilla (97), Mescalero (99), San Carlos (96)

CADDO: Caddo (110), Waco (108), Wichita (109)

DAKOTA: Santee (54), Sisseton (52), Teton Sioux (49), Yankton Sioux (50)

BLACKFOOT: Blackfeet (26), Blood (27), Piegan (28)

ILLINOIS: Illinois (71), Miami (69), Peoria (70)

IROQUOIS: Mohawk (10), Oneida (15), Onondaga (12), Seneca (14)

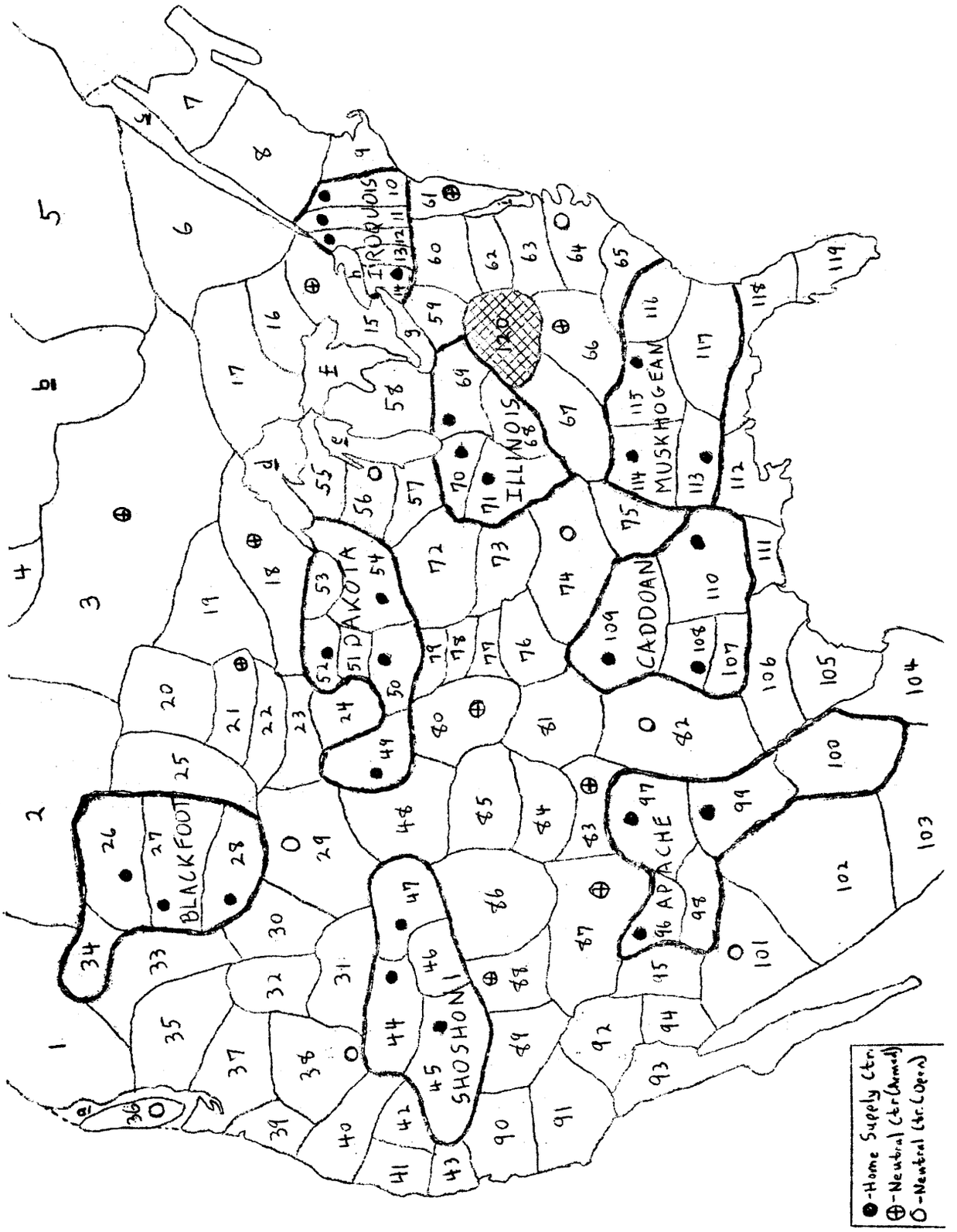
MUSKHOGEAN: Chickasaw (114), Choctaw (113), Upper Creek (115)

SHOSHONI: Lemni Sioshoni. (44), Rocky Mountain Shoshoni (45), Wind River Shoshoni (47).

4. At the start of the game, ten of the more powerful “neutral” nations have War Parties standing in them in “civil disorder” - i.e., they may not move or support, and if dislodged may not retreat and are simply removed from the board. These ten nations are: Assinboine (21), Cherokee (66), Chippewa (18), Cree (3), Delaware (61), Huron (15), Navaho (87), Pawnee (80), Piute (88), Taos (83). To dislodge one of these “neutral” War Parties, an attack must have at least one support. Of course, they may also be supported in place by another nation - which would raise the number of supports in an attack necessary to dislodge them.

5. Hopewell Mounds (120) is “taboo” - it is a sacred area, which no tribe may enter without penalty. The first War Party to set foot in this province will be immediately removed from the board, and the “wrath of the gods” will descend upon the home supply centres of the transgressing tribe - i.e., the transgressing tribe may not build anything for two Winters (the Winter of the year in which the “transgression” took place, and the Winter of the following year). Once a War Party has entered province 120, however, its sacredness is destroyed, and it is no longer “taboo” - i.e., from this point on, the War Parties of any nation (including the one which broke the taboo) may enter and leave province 120 without penalty - in other words, it becomes just another “neutral” province without a supply centre.

6. Any War Party in a province the coast of which lies along one of the 9 “sea-provinces” (a - i) may build a Canoe-fleet in the Spring and/or Fall “movement” seasons, provided that it doesn’t try to move, doesn’t give support, and is not attacked. Any number of these Canoe-fleets can coexist in the same province. A War Party in a province with a Canoe-fleet can move with it into a “sea-province”, or to an adjacent coastal province, but Canoe-fleets can never be moved inland. Also, a War Party can’t carry more than one Canoe-fleet along with it as it moves. Canoe-fleets contribute exactly nothing to battles, they are nothing more than a form of locomotion across water (and the only way to reach Mootka). A War Party at sea in a Canoe-Fleet may not engage in combat. in any way -- i.e., it may not attack (with



support) or itself support another unit; it may try to move to an occupied province (without support), and it may try to move into an unoccupied province but be stood off by another unit moving into the province (these are not considered "combats" for the purpose of this rule).

Canoe-fleets move by stealth, so if they find the province to which they are trying to move is occupied or being occupied, they simply withdraw, without contact). Note carefully - if two Canoe-fleets at sea, or a Canoe-fleet on land and a Canoe-fleet at sea, try to move to the same sea- or coastal-province, nothing happens - they merely stand each other off; however, if a Canoe-fleet at sea tries to move to a coastal-province, and a War Party on land is trying to move to the same province, the War Party on land succeeds in getting into the province, standing off the Canoe-fleet in the process. Also, a War Party may not carry a Canoe-Fleet from coastal province-to-coastal province and engage in combat at the same time.

7. A Canoe-Fleet may be destroyed in any movement-season, by a 'written order for the War Party which occupies the same province as the Canoe-fleet at the start of the movement—season. This is in addition to any other activity which may be ordered for the War Party. Only one Canoe-fleet per

movement-season may be destroyed in a single province.

8. If a War Party is dislodged from a province in which there exists a Canoe-fleet, and no order was written for the destruction of the fleet during the season in which the battle took place which dislodged the War Party, the Canoe-fleet is captured by the victorious War Party, to do with as its commander sees fit.

9. The Hudson Bay (b) takes a full game-year to cross. Thus, if it enters the Bay during the Spring of one game-year, it may emerge during the Spring of the following year, but not before ("it", of course, being a War Party in a Canoe-fleet). However, for each Summer and Winter season that the Canoe-fleet is at sea on the Bay, there is a storm - the Gamesmaster will throw a single die; if a one or six is thrown, the Canoe-fleet is sunk; if any other number is thrown, the Canoe-fleet survives until the next storm, at which time the die-throwing process is repeated.

10. There are 44 supply centres. To win, one nation must either control 24 supply centres or have 23 units on the board at the completion of a Winter season (a "unit" being a War Party).

A few quick notes:

ILLINOIS and CADDOAN nations are weak; they could each use a couple of alliances.

"Natural" alliances are: SHOSHONI-BLACKFOOT; DAKOTA-ILLINOIS; IROQUOIS-MUSKHOGEAN; CADDOAN-APACHE.

To survive, the ILLINOIS must also ally with the CADDOANS, the IROQUOIS, or the MUSKHOGEANS (if they can) - the ILLINOIS are the "Austria-Hungary" of INDIANONACY II.

The IROQUOIS and the MUSKHOGEAN tribes cannot get to each other without great difficulty unless the "sacredness" of province 120 has been destroyed.

A Hudson Bay-crossing would only be of value in breaking a possible deadlock in the Cree area.

Canoe-fleets, properly used, can be a valuable asset to the nations which have them - however, they can also be a liability if improperly used.

The inability of the land-locked nations to build Canoe-fleets early in the game is not a liability - they don't need them at this point. If they should ever get in a position where they will need them, they will also most likely be in a position to build them.

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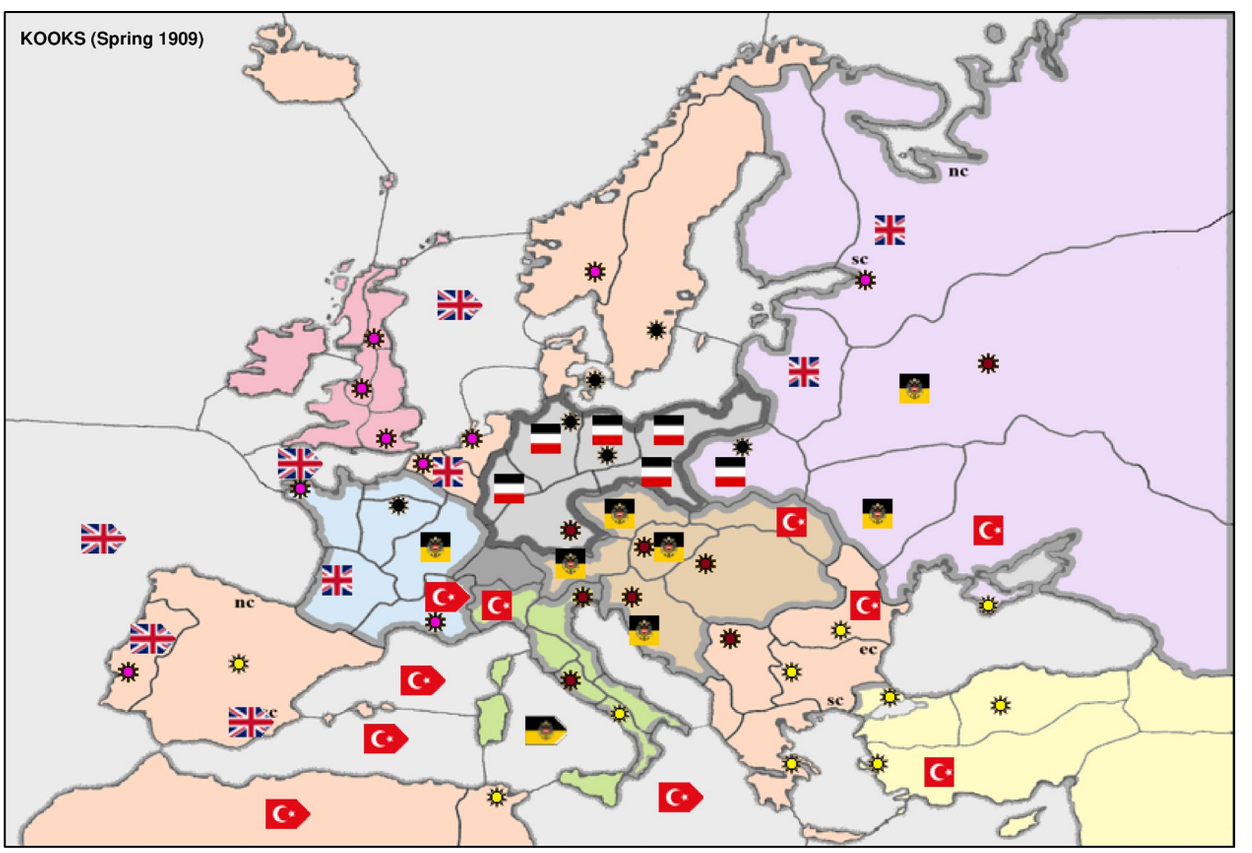


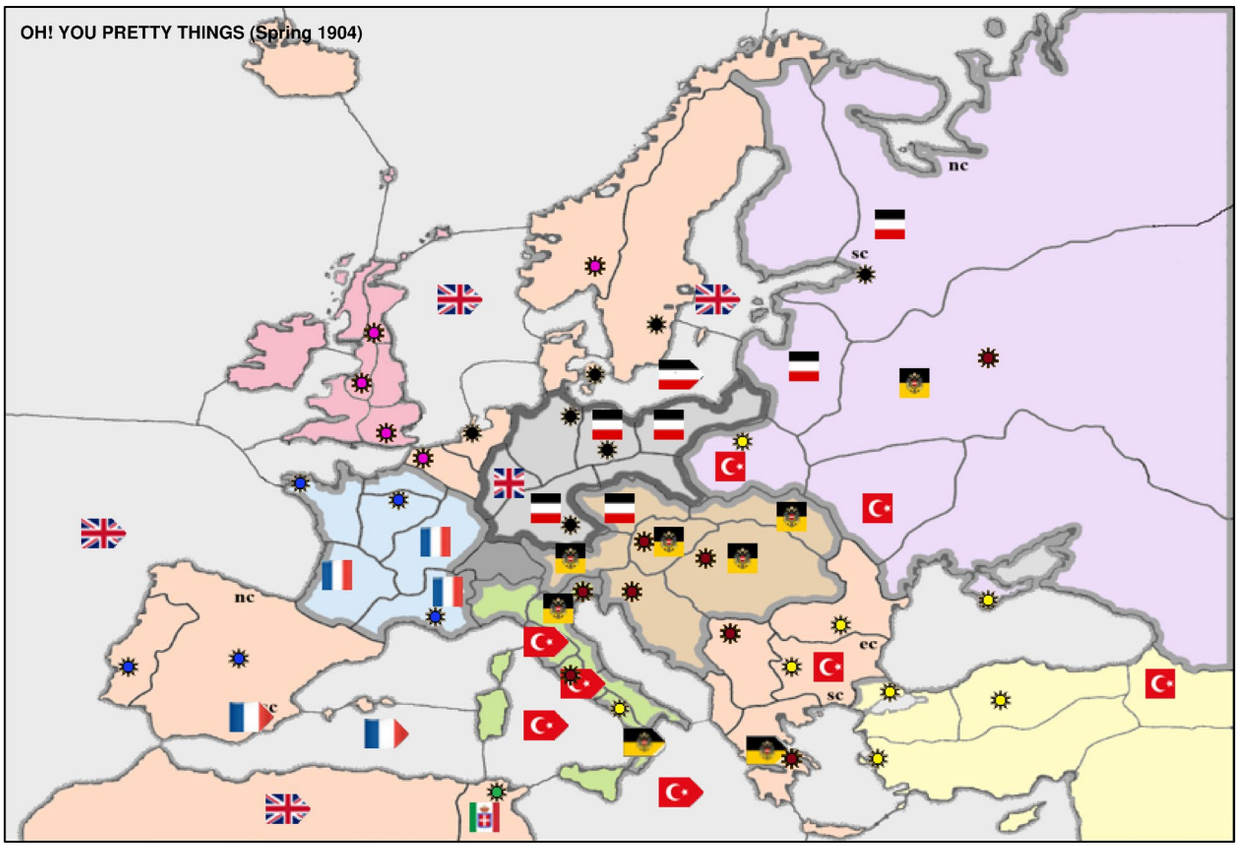
25BA Kooks (Spring 1909)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Simon Hemsley)
A(Mun) - Bur; F(TYS) s TURKISH F(Tun) - WMS; A(Ukr) s A(Mos); A(Vie) - Boh; A(Tyr) s A(Vie) - Boh; A(Bud) - Vie; A(Tri) Stands; A(Mos) Stands

ENGLAND (Vick Hall)
A(StP) s GERMAN A(War) - Mos (MISORDER); A(Lvn) s GERMAN A(War) - Mos (MISORDER); F(NTH) Stands; A(Bel) - Ruh (FAILED); F(Mar) s F(MAO) - Spa sc* (DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRP); F(MAO) - Spa sc; A(Gas) s F(MAO) - Spa sc; F(Por) s F(MAO) - Spa sc; F(ENG) s F(NAO) - MAO; F(NAO) - MAO

GERMANY (Martin Davis)
A(War) Stands; A(Pru) s A(War); A(Kie) s A(Bur) - Ruh; A(Bur) - Ruh; A(Ber) s A(Bur) - Ruh (MISORDER); A(Sil) Stands (U/O)

TURKEY (Mike Benyon)
F(Spa) sc - Mar; F(GoL) s F(Spa) sc - Mar; A(Pie) s F(Spa) sc - Mar; F(NAf) - MAO (FAILED); F(Tun) - WMS; F(ION) Stands; A(Sev) s AUSTRIAN A(Mos); A(Gal) - Sil (FAILED); A(Rum) - Gal (FAILED); A(Smy) Stands



26BB Oh! You Pretty Things (Spring 1904)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Paraic Reddington)
A(Rom) - Ven; F(Apu) - Nap; F(Gre) Stands; A(Mos) - Lvn (FAILED); A(Tyr) - Pie (FAILED); A(Vie) - Boh (FAILED); A(Gal) - Sil (FAILED); A(Tri) - Bud

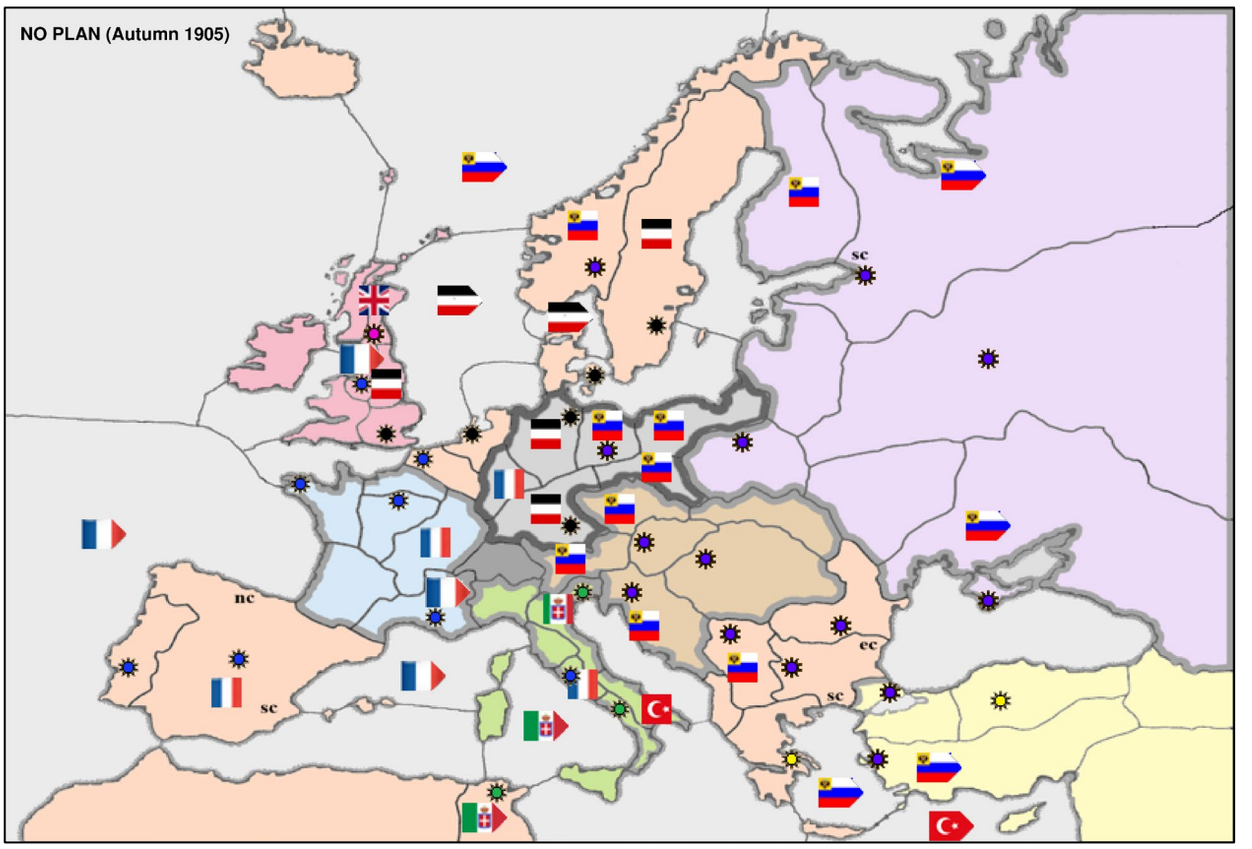
ENGLAND (Edwin Hutton)
F(NAO) - MAO; F(ENG) - NTH; F(GoB) c GERMAN A(Fin) - Lvn; F(NAf) s ITALIAN A(Tun); A(Ruh) s GERMAN A(Mun)

FRANCE (Kevin Wilson)
F(WMS) s ITALIAN A(Tun); A(Bur) s GERMAN A(Mun); A(Mar) - Pie (FAILED); F(MAO) - Spa sc; A(Spa) - Gas

GERMANY (Simon Hemsley)
F(BAL) s A(Ber) - Pru; A(Ber) - Pru; A(Fin) - Lvn; A(StP) s A(Fin) - Lvn; A(Mun) s A(Boh) - Sil; A(Boh) - Sil (FAILED); A(Kie) - Ber

ITALY (Mike Elliott)
A(Tun) Stands

TURKEY (Colin Smith)
F(TYS) - Tus; F(Nap) - Rom; F(ION) - TYS; A(War) s AUSTRIAN A(Gal) - Sil; A(Ukr) - Mos (FAILED); F(AEG) - ION; A(Con) - Bul; A(Ank) - Arm



25BE No Plan (Autumn 1905)

ENGLAND (John Langley)
A(Edi) Stands

FRANCE (Leif Kjetil Tviberg)
F(Lpl) Stands; F(ENG) - MAO; A(Bel) - Ruh; A(Bur) s GERMAN A(Boh) - Mun; A(Spa) Stands; A(Tus) - Rom; F(GoL) - WMS (FAILED)

GERMANY (Mike Pollard)
A(Boh) - Mun; A(Ber) – Sil* (FAILED, DISLODGED TO Kie); A(Den) - Swe; A(Yor) - Nwy (FAILED); F(SKA) s A(Den) - Swe; F(NTH) c A(Yor) - Nwy

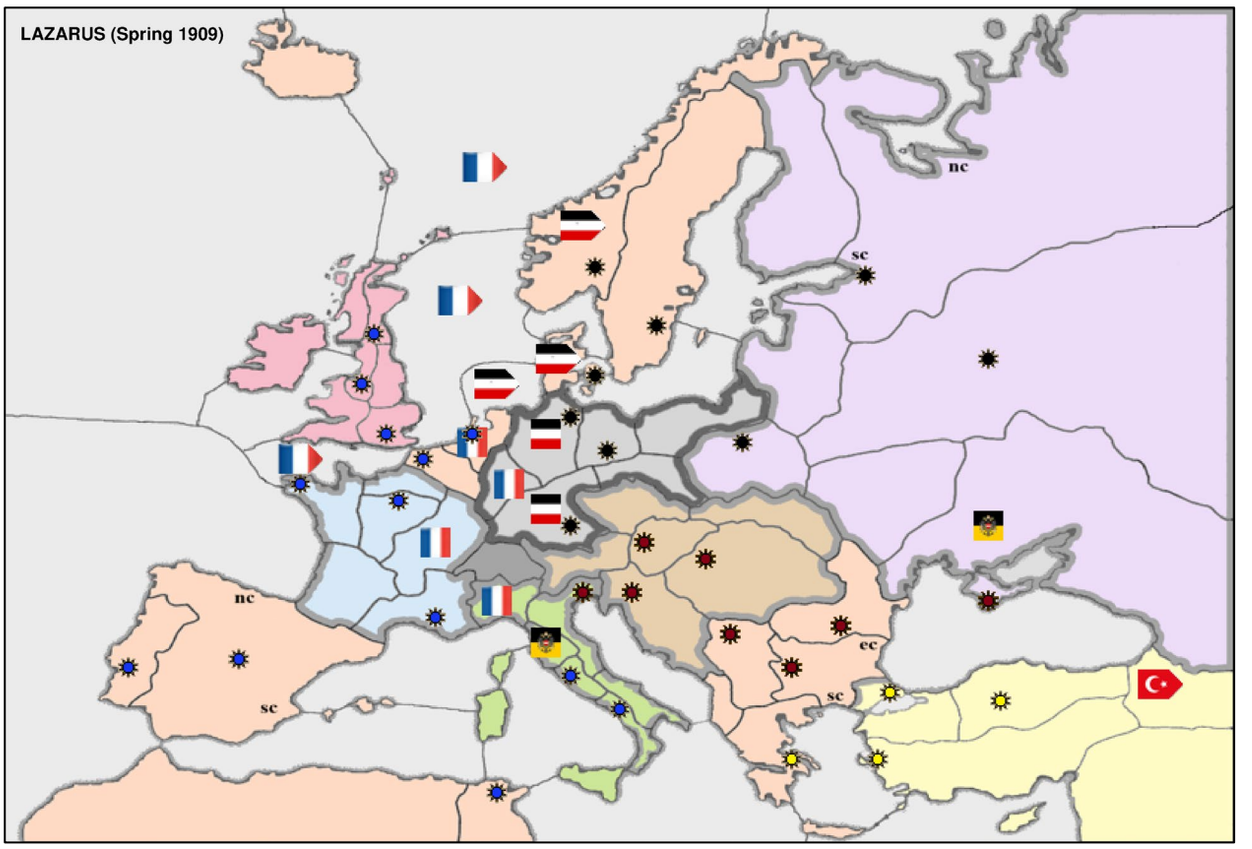
ITALY (Geoff Wilde - NMR!)
F(Tun) Stands (U/O); F(TYS) Stands (U/O); A(Ven) Stands (U/O)

RUSSIA (Charles Welsh)
A(Tyr) - Mun (FAILED); A(Tri) - Ven (FAILED); A(Ser) - Tri (FAILED); A(Sil) - Ber; F(Smy) Stands; A(Nwy) s A(Fin) - Swe (CUT); A(Fin) - Swe (FAILED); F(NWG) s A(Nwy); A(Vie) - Boh; F(AEG) s TURKISH F(EMS) - ION; A(Pru) s A(Sil) - Ber; A(War) - Sil

TURKEY (Martin Davis)
A(Rom) - Apu; F(ION) - Tun (FAILED); F(WMS) s F(ION) - Tun (CUT); F(EMS) - ION (FAILED)

Autumn 1905 Adjustments:

E: Edi = 1; No change.
F: Lpl, Spa, +Rom, Bel, Por, Bre, Mar, Par = 8; Gains 1. Builds F(Mar)
G: Mun, Kie, +Swe, Lon, Den, Hol, -Ber = 6; No change.
I: Tun, Ven, Nap = 3; No change.
R: Tri, Ser, +Ber, +Smy, Nwy, Vie, Con, StP, Bud, Bul, Rum, Sev, Mos, War, -Swe = 14; Gains 1. Builds F(StP) nc, F(Sev).
T: Gre, Ank -Rom, -Smy = 2; Loses 2. GM removes F(WMS), F(ION), (NRO).



Lazarus (Spring 1909)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Noris The Brain)
A(Tus) - Ven (FAILED); A(Sev) - Arm (FAILED)

FRANCE (Griffin)
A(Pie) - Ven (FAILED); F(ENG) s F(NTH); A(Bur) s A(Ruh); F(NTH) s F(NWG) (CUT); F(NWG) s F(NTH); A(Hol) s A(Ruh); A(Ruh) s A(Hol) (CUT)

GERMANY (Fraternal Order of B)
A(Kie) - Ruh (FAILED); A(Mun) s A(Kie) - Ruh; F(HEL) s F(Den) - NTH; F(Nwy) s F(Den) - NTH; F(Den) - NTH (FAILED);

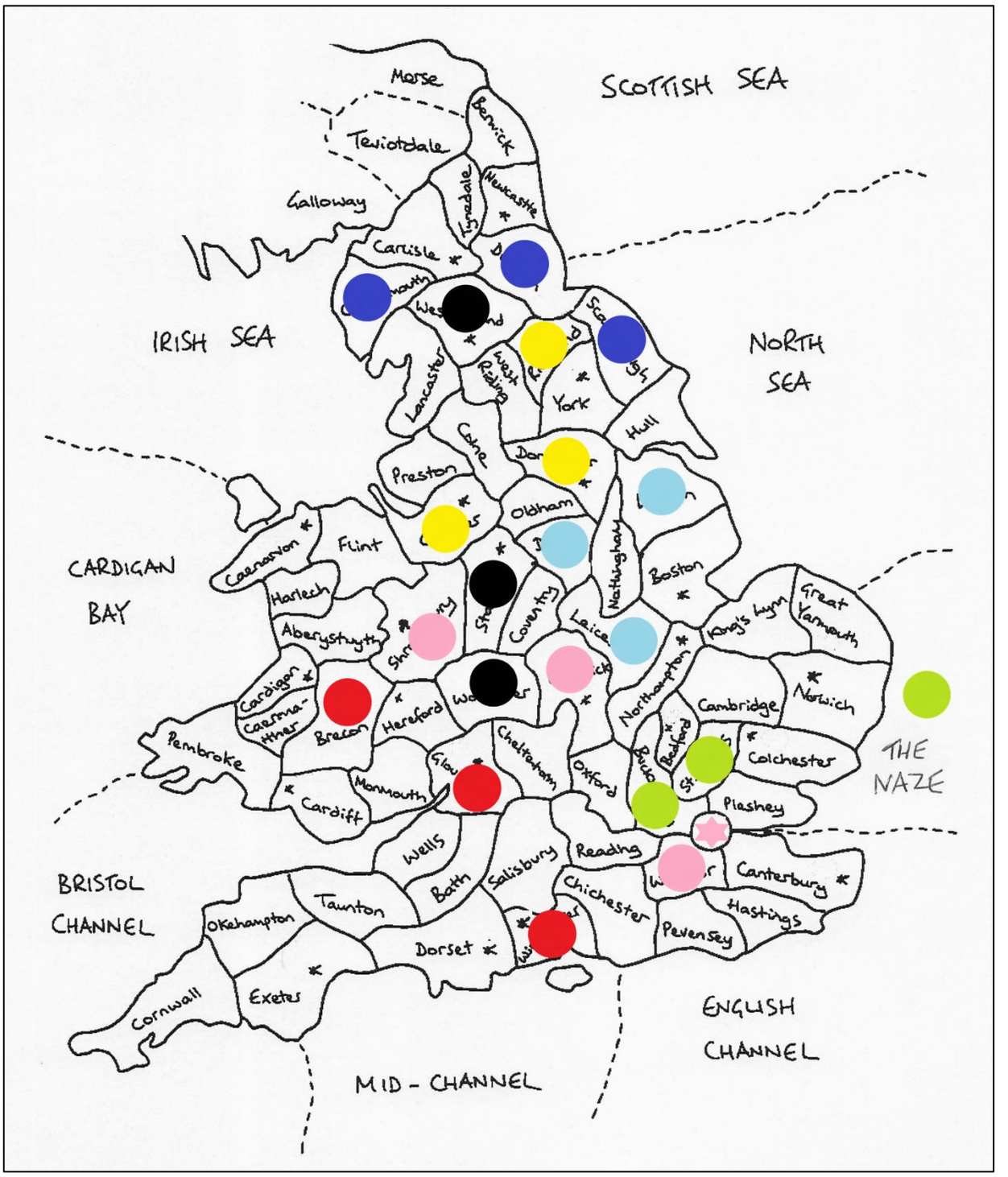
TURKEY (Bismarck)
F(Arm) - Sev (FAILED)

We have three draw proposals. (1) Concession to Germany; (2) Concession to France; (3) French/German joint win. Votes on all three please, unanimity required, abstention = No, NMR = Yes.

Press:

Griffin- FOBP: Complete stalemate so what do you say to the various draw options?
FOBP to Griffin: Not in much position to assist taking anyone out. Unless some unforeseen error allows a breakout, things seem kind of stuck. Norris can't disengage to turn east unless we have a better view of just what's on the board. My pokes at you in the NTS are more to keep you honest than anything else.
Griffin – Norris: As you attacked me last time I am retaliating. But I'm still open to considering a draw.
Noris-Fraternal and Griffin: Personally, I think Turkey has played well, but if he must go, so be it.
Griffin- Bismark: I have not attacked you, only Austria has. I do not rule out working with you if he remains hostile.
FOBP to Norris: If Griffin is prepared to support you turning west, you needn't worry of me. As I said above, mainly I'm keeping him honest and am in no position to do other than contain Bismarck.

Turkey Proposes one of: German Solo, French Solo, French German Draw. Turkey will never interfere deliberately with F/G operations. As Austria shafted me twice I will never vote for Draw which includes Austria. All other votes will receive the full support of Turkey!



Warwick II (Spring 1471)

Yorkists (initially declared for Edward IV)

Neil Duncan (Edward IV) (PINK):
A(London)-Windsor, A(Northampton)-Warwick, A(Shrewsbury)-Hereford (FAILS).

Martin Davis (Richard of Gloucester) (YELLOW)
A(York)-Richmond, A(Doncaster)-West Riding (FAILS), A(Chester) Stands

Charles Welsh (Lord Hastings) (SKY BLUE):
A(Boston)-Lincoln, A(Leicester) S EDWARD IV A(Northampton)-Warwick, A(Derby) Stands.

Lancastrians (initially declared for Henry VI)

Vick Hall (Earl of Warwick) (BLACK):
A(Warwick)-Worcester, A(Westmorland)-West Riding (FAILS), A(Stafford) S A(Warwick)-Worcester.

Mike Pollard (Duke of Somerset) (RED):
A(Gloucester)-Hereford (FAILS), A(Cardiff)-Brecon, A(Dorset)-Winchester.

Uncommitted

Jed Stone (Earl of Northumberland) (BLUE)
A(Newcastle)-Durham, A(Durham)-Scarborough, A(Carlisle)-Cockermouth.

Geoff Wilde (Duke of Norfolk) (LIGHT GREEN):
A(Norwich)-THE NAZE, A(Colchester)-St Albans, A(Bedford)-Buckingham.

Rule clarifications:

London has a garrison which declares for any Faction occupying London and adds 1 to the strength of any such occupying army. It acts as a bonus and cannot be supported in place without an Army being present. However, the garrison remains loyal to the last Faction to occupy London and will therefore add one to any move by that Faction into London.

Henry VI can be transferred by a unit carrying him to an adjacent unit either before and/or after combat.

EXCALIBUR - JEAN GENIE (Autumn 459AD)

PICTS (Martin Davis):
A(Tweed)-Bernicia; A(Bernicia)-Solway; A(Lancaster)-Elmet (FAILS); F(Deira)*-WASH (FAILS, DISLODGED, RETREATS TO Cleveland); F(GERMAN SEA)-FORTH; F(Cleveland)-GERMAN SEA; F(DOGGER) Stand; A(Strathclyde) Stand; F(HEBRIDES)-NORTH CHANNEL; A(Cumbria) S A(Bernicia)-Solway;

SCOTS (Kevin Wilson):
F(NORTH IRISH SEA) S F(SOUTH IRISH SEA); F(SOUTH IRISH SEA) S A(Dublin)-Ulster (CUT); F(Wexford)-Dublin; A(Dublin)-Ulster; A(Galloway) Stand;

SAXONS (Graham Tunnicliffe):
F(ATLANTIC) S FRISIAN A(Caerleon)-Wexford; A(North Gyrwas) S ANGLES F(Lincoln); F(FRISIAN SEA) S ANGLES F(WASH); A(Mercia) S FRISIAN A(Seguntum); A(Deva) S ANGLES A(Mersey)-Elmet;

ANGLES (Neil Duncan):
F(North Folk) S F(WASH); F(Lincoln) S A(Crowland)-Deira; A(Mersey)-Elmet; F (WASH) C A(Crowland)-Deira; A(Crowland)-Deira

FRISIANS (Andrew Greco):
F(North Wales)-SOUTH IRISH SEA; F(West Wales) S F(LUNDY); A(Seguntum) Stand; F(LUNDY) C A(Caerleon)-Wexford; A(Caerwent) Stand; A(Caerleon)-Wexford; A(Sumers Aetan) Stand

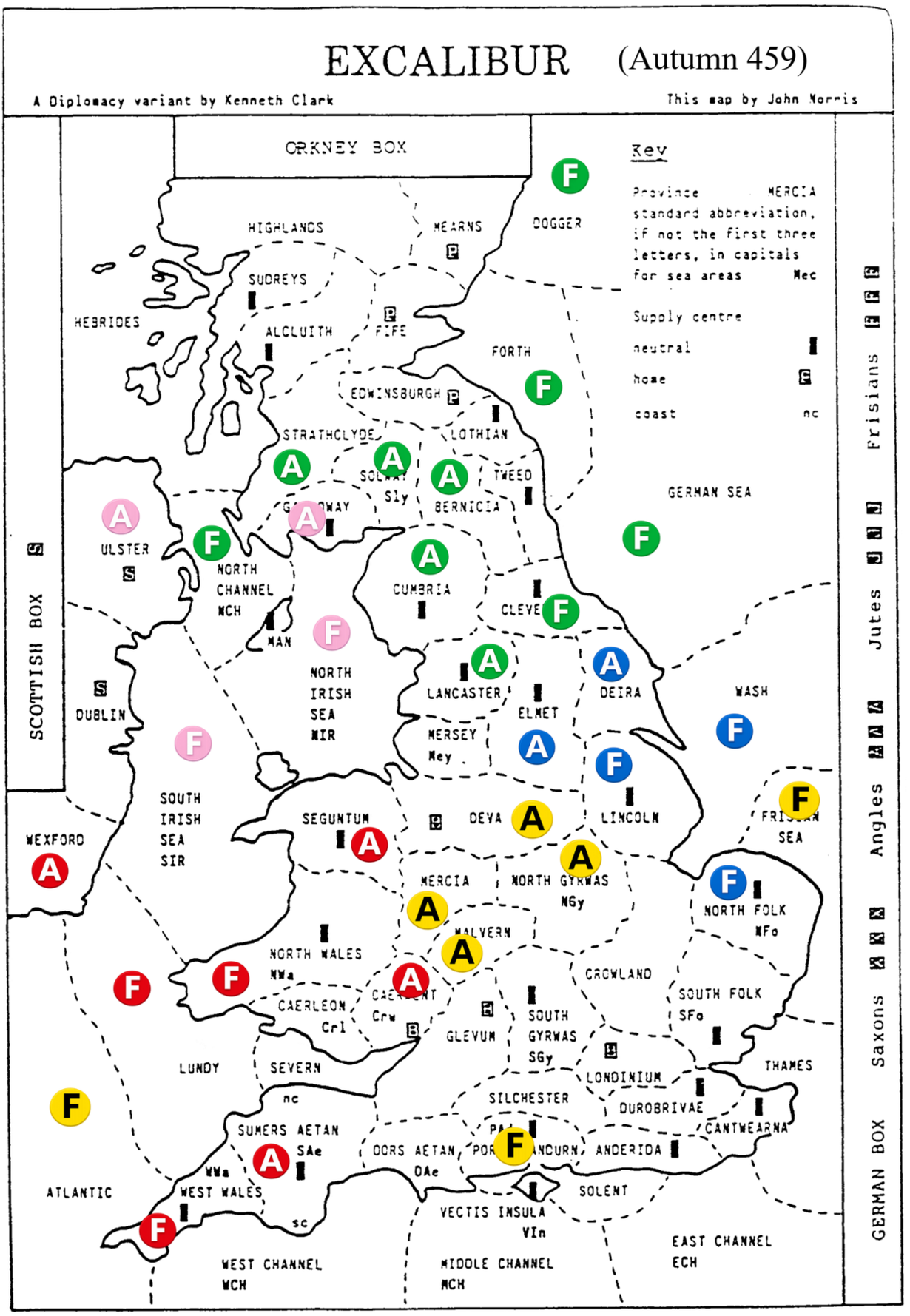
Autumn 459AD:

PICTS: Mea, Fif, Edw, Sud, Alc, Twe, Cle, Lot, -Elm, -Dei, Cum, +Lan = 10. No change.
SCOTS: Dub, Uls, Gal, Man, -Lan = 4. Removes F(Dublin)
SAXONS: Dur, Can, And, Pad, SGy, Mal, +Dev = 7. Builds A(Malvern), F(Portus Andurn).
ANGLES: SFo, NFo, Lon, Lin, -Dev, +Dei, +Elm = 6. Builds 1. No build ordered. 1 short.
FRISIANS: SAe, VIn, WWa, Gle, NWa, Crw, Seg = 7. No change.

Camelot: Last time we had two endgame proposals both of which failed.

(1) DIAS, 5-way draw. Abstentions = YES. 3 YES, 1 abstain = YES, 1 = NO. FAILS
(2) 4-way draw Picts/Saxons/Angles/Frisians, Scots 5th. Abstentions = YES. 2 YES, 1 abstain = YES, 2 = NO

Both endgame proposals are reproposed, with abstentions = YES.



Gamestart – Regular Diplomacy

PANIC IN DETROIT

AUSTRIA: Gerry Bayer
Gerry Bayer <starhop8@gmail.com>

ENGLAND : Mike Benyon
Mike Benyon <mikebenyon@mail.com>

FRANCE: Harvey Jones
Harvey Jones <jmharvey@bigpond.net.au>

GERMANY: Ron Fisher
Ron Fisher <deadron3@gmail.com>

ITALY: Charles Welsh
Charles Welsh <welsh_stroud@msn.com>

RUSSIA : Andrew Malcolm
Andrew Malcolm <andymal@netvigator.com>

TURKEY: Joakim Spangberg
Joakim Spångberg <b.joakim.spangberg@gmail.com>

If anyone has had a late change of mind, please get in touch ASAP. House Rules are available here.

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INTIMATE DIPLOMACY TOURNAMENT

FINAL 1 – 1901 Bids

James Hardy (Germany) vs. Richard Williams (France)

	Richard (France)	James (Germany)
Austria	5	2
England	6	7
Italy	5	6
Russia	3	6
Turkey	1	1
Points Remaining	15	3

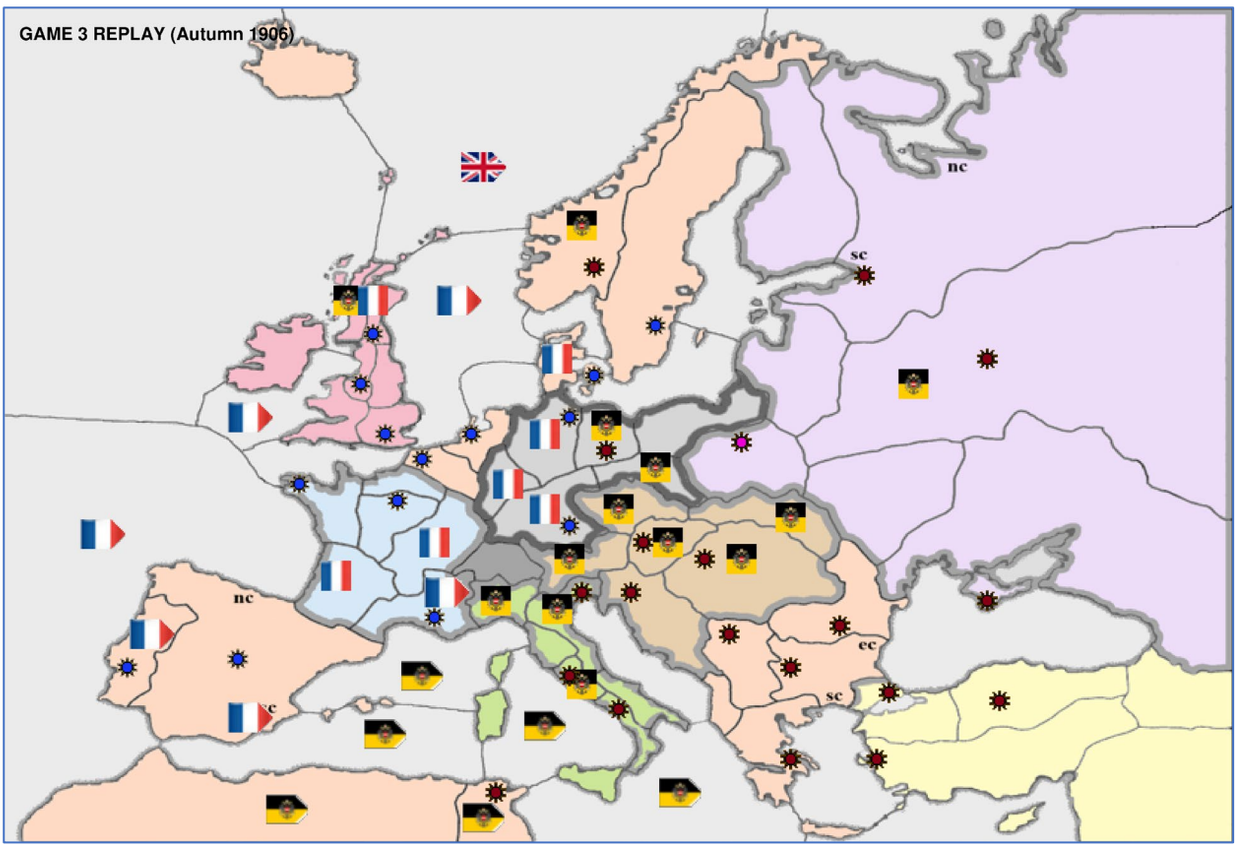
Spring 1901 orders please. Richard has Austria and James has England, Italy and Russia.

FINAL 2 – 1901 Bids

Brian Frew (France) vs. James Hardy (Germany)

	Brian (France)	James (Germany)
Austria	4	2
England	8	7
Italy	5	6
Russia	3	6
Turkey	0	1
Points Remaining	8	9

Spring 1901 orders please. Brian has Austria and England and James has Italy, Russia and Turkey.



GAME 3 REPLAY (Spring 1906)

Richard Williams (Austria) vs. Brian Frew (France)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Richard Williams)
F(Tun) s F(TYS) - WMS; F(Nap) - TYS; F(ADS) - ION; F(GoL) s F(TYS) - WMS; F(TYS) - WMS; A(Pie) - Mar (FAILED); F(NAf) - MAO (FAILED); A(Rom) Stands; A(Sil) - Mun (FAILED); A(Boh) s A(Sil) - Mun; A(Ven) - Pie (FAILED); A(Cly) - Edi (FAILED); A(Pru) - Ber; A(StP) - Nwy; A(Ukr) - Mos; A(Tyr) s A(Sil) - Mun; A(Vie) - Gal (FAILED); A(Gal) - Sil (FAILED)

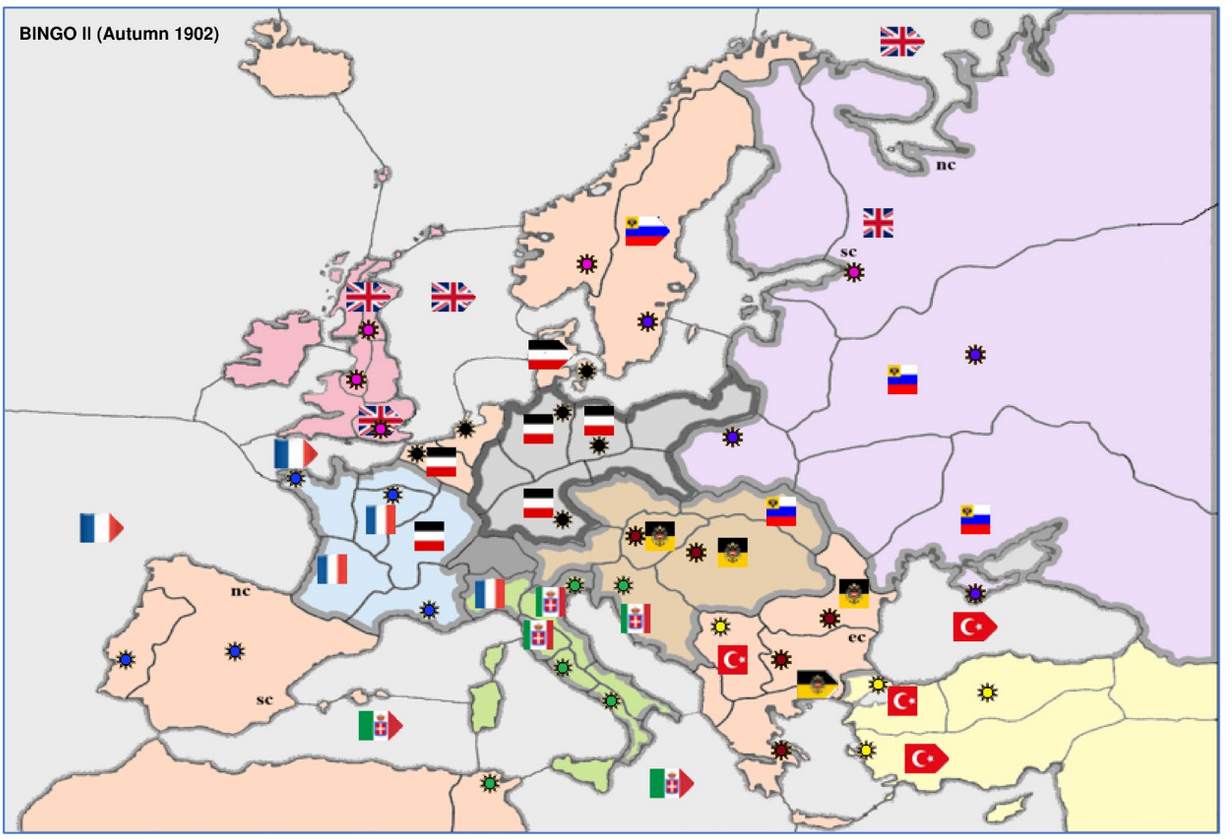
ENGLAND (Mercenary)
F(NWG) s AUSTRIAN A(Cly) - Edi

FRANCE (Brian Frew)
F(MAO) s F(Spa) sc - WMS (CUT); F(Spa) sc - WMS (FAILED); A(Swe) - Den; F(Por) - Spa sc (FAILED); F(Mar) s F(Por) - Spa sc (CUT); F(NTH) s A(Edi); A(Edi) Stands; A(Ber) - Mun; A(Ruh) s A(Ber) - Mun; A(Kie) s A(Ber) - Mun; A(Bur) s A(Ber) - Mun; F(ENG) - IRI; A(Gas) s F(Mar)

Autumn 1906 Adjustments:

A: Tun, Rom, Ven, +Ber, Nwy, Mos, Vie, Con, StP, Sev, Nap, Bul, Smy, Ank, Rum, Gre, Ser, Bud, Tri = 19; Gains 1. Builds A(Bud).
E: War = 1; No change.
F: Spa, +Den, Por, Mar, Edi, Mun, Kie, Swe, Hol, Lpl, Lon, Bel, Bre, Par, -Ber = 14; No change. No build ordered. 1 short.

Versailles: So, the question is whether nor not this game is a draw? Votes please.



Bingo II (Autumn 1902)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Alan)
A(Bud) s A(Rum); A(Rum) s F(Gre) - Bul sc; A(Vie) - Tri (FAILED); F(Gre) - Bul sc

ENGLAND (Erica)
A(StP) Stands; F(Edi) - NTH (FAILED); F(BAR) - Nwy (FAILED); F(NTH) - Nwy (FAILED)

FRANCE (Fred)
F(MAO) - Spa sc (FAILED); A(Gas) - Bur (FAILED); A(Mun) - Sil; F(Bre) - ENG; A(Bur)* - Ruh (FAILED, DISLODGED TO Par); A(Mar) - Pie

GERMANY (Gertrude)
A(Ruh) - Bur; F(Den) - Swe (FAILED); A(Bel) s A(Ruh) - Bur; A(Ber) - Mun; A(Kie) s A(Ber) - Mun

ITALY (Isaac)
A(Tri) Stands; A(Ven) s A(Tri); F(WMS) - Spa sc (FAILED); F(ION) - AEG (FAILED); A(Rom) - Tus

RUSSIA (Ruby)
A(Ukr) - Sev; F(Sev) - Arm; F(Swe) - Nwy (FAILED); A(War) - Gal; A(Mos) s A(Ukr) - Sev

TURKEY (Trevor)
F(BLA) s A(Bul) - Rum (MISORDER); A(Bul) - Ser; A(Con) - Bul (FAILED); F(Smy) - AEG (FAILED)

Autumn 1902 Adjustments:

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

We have only 8 players this time. The most popular orders were F(WMS)-Spa sc and A(Rom)-Tus, whereas A(Vie)-Tri, A(Mun)-Sil, F(Den)-Swe, A(Ukr)-Sev, A(Mos) S A(Ukr)-Sev and A(Con)-Bul all succeeded with only 1 vote and thus were worth 10 points each. A(Rum) and A(Bur) were both unordered. The current scores after Autumn 1902 are:

Dane 117 points
Hugh 116 points
James 111 points
Ian 108 points
Mark 102 points
Jed 100 points

Leif 89 points
Kevin 80 points
Peter 61 points
Eddy 50 points
Colin 27 Points
Toby 25 points

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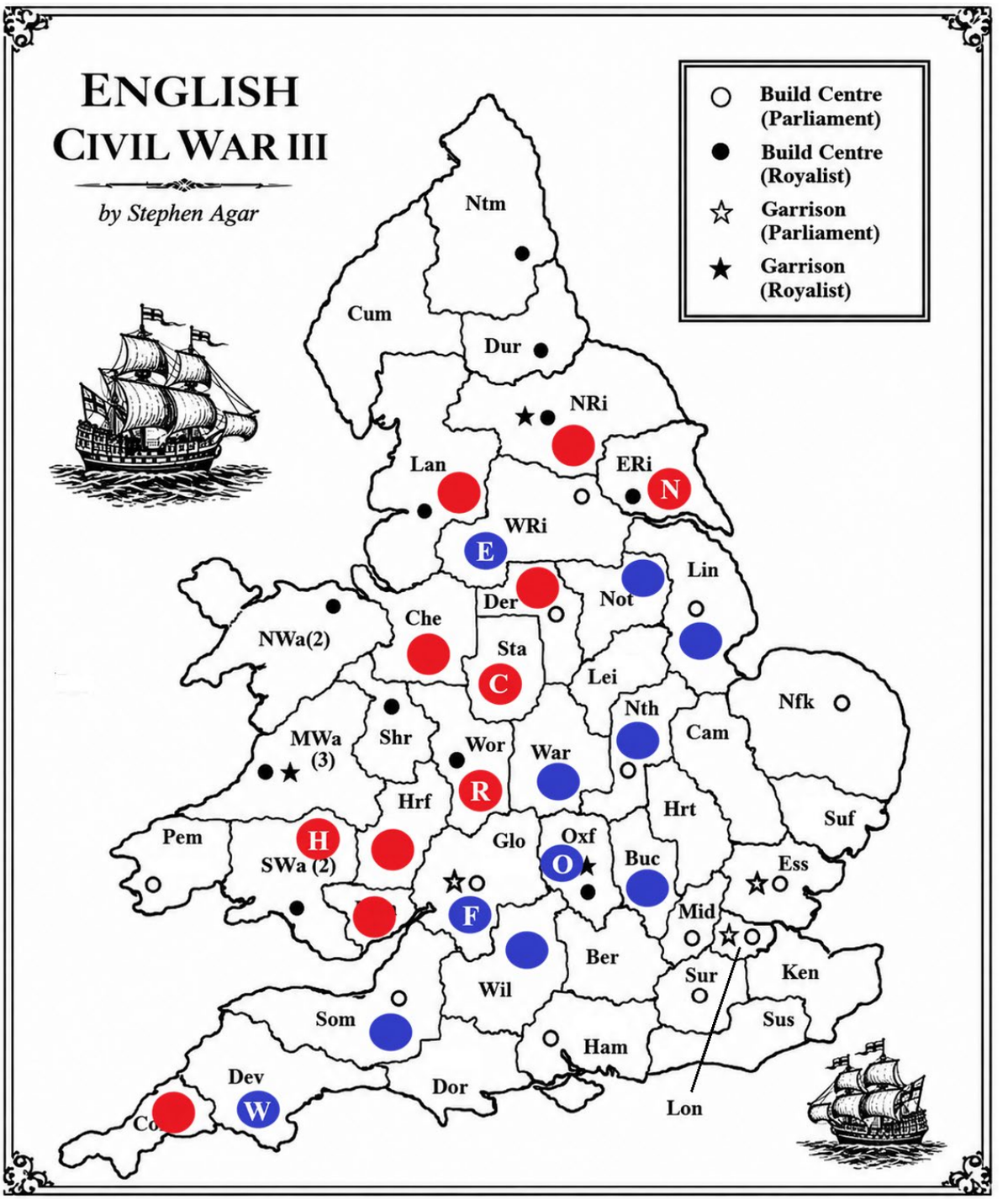

ENGLISH CIVIL WAR III (March 1643)

[ENGLISH CIVIL WAR III (March 1643)

James Hardy (Parliament) vs. Jed Stone (Royalists)

Royalists (Jed Stone):

King Charles I [C] starts in Staffordshire
Prince Rupert [R] starts in Worcestershire
Sir Ralph Hopton [H} starts in Pembrokeshire
Duke of Newcastle [N] starts in West Riding

A(North Riding) S A(West Riding); A(West Riding* + [N]*) S A(Warwick)-Derbyshire (FAILS, DISLODGED, retreats to East Riding); A(Lancashire) Stands; A(Staffordshire + [C]) S A(Warwick)-Derbyshire; A(Cheshire) S A(Warwick)-Derbyshire; A(Warwickshire)-Derbyshire; A(Worcestershire + [R]) S A(Herefordshire)-Gloucestershire; A(Herefordshire)-Gloucestershire (FAILS); A(South Wales)-Monmouthshire; A(Pembrokeshire + [H])-South Wales; A(Devon)*-Dorset (Fails, Dislodged, retreats to Cornwall)

Parliament (James Hardy):

Oliver Cromwell [O] starts in Oxfordshire
Sir Thomas Fairfax [F] starts in Gloucestershire
Earl of Essex [E] starts in Derbyshire
Sir William Waller [W] starts in Dorset

A(Lincolnshire) S A(Derbyshire)-West Riding; A(Nottinghamshire) S A(Derbyshire)-West Riding; A(Derbyshire + [E])-West Riding; A(Northamptonshire)-Warwickshire; A(Buckinghamshire)-Northamptonshire; A(Oxford + [O]) S A(Northamptonshire)-Warwickshire; A(Berkshire)-Buckinghamshire; A(Wiltshire) S A(Gloucestershire); A(Gloucestershire + [F]) S A(Northamptonshire)-Warwickshire; A(Somerset) S A(Gloucestershire); A(Dorset + [W])-Devon

Units highlighted in yellow are contributing to influence.

Next move is a bid and build season.

Parliament has 22 counties which means they are unchanged on 11 units and have 8+1 =9 influence points they can spend.

The Royalists control 22 counties which means they are unchanged on 11 units and have 8 Influence points they can spend.

So, for next time just send my your influence points bids.

	County	Status	Old Score	Parliament Points		Royalist Points		New Score	Allegiance
	Initial Points			1		0			
				Bids	Occ	Bids	Occ		
Ber	Berkshire		-1					-1	Parliament
Buc	Buckinghamshire		-2					-2	Parliament
Cam	Cambridgeshire		-1					-1	Parliament
Che	Cheshire		+3				+1	+4	Royalist
Cor	Cornwall	RBC(RG)	+3					+3	Royalist
Cum	Cumberland		+3					+3	Royalist
Der	Derbyshire	PBC	-4					-4	Parliament
Dev	Devon		0					0	Neutral
Dor	Dorset		-2					-2	Parliament
Dur	Durham	RBC	+3					+3	Royalist

Eas	East Riding		-1					-1	Parliament
Ess	Essex	PBC(PG)	-4					-4	Parliament
Glo	Gloucestershire	PBC(PG)	-4		-1			-4	Parliament
Ham	Hampshire	PBC	-2					-2	Parliament
Hrf	Herefordshire		+2					+2	Royalist
Hrt	Hertfordshire		-3					-3	Parliament
Ken	Kent		-2					-2	Parliament
Lan	Lancashire	PBC	-1				+1	0	Neutral
Lei	Leicestershire		-3					-3	Parliament
Lin	Lincolnshire	PBC	-1		-1			-2	Parliament
Lon	London	PBC(PG)	-2					-2	Parliament
Mid	Middlesex	PBC	-4					-4	Parliament
Mon	Monmouthshire		+1					+1	Royalist
MWa	Mid Wales (3)	RBC	+4					+4	Royalist
Nfk	Norfolk	PBC	-4					-4	Parliament
Not	Nottinghamshire		-2		-1			-3	Parliament
NRi	North Riding	RBC(RG)	+3				+1	+4	Royalist
Nth	Northamptonshire	PBC	-3					-3	Parliament
Ntm	Northumberland	RBC	+4					+4	Royalist
Nwa	North Wales (2)	RBC	+4					+4	Royalist
Oxf	Oxfordshire	RBC(RG)	+4		-1			+3	Royalist
Pem	Pembrokeshire		+2					+2	Royalist
Shr	Shropshire		+3					+3	Royalist
Som	Somerset	PBC	-3		-1			-4	Parliament
Sta	Staffordshire	RBC	+4				+1	+4	Royalist
Suf	Suffolk		-2					-2	Parliament
Sur	Surrey	PBC	-4					-4	Parliament
Sus	Sussex		-2					-2	Parliament
SWa	South Wales (2)	RBC	+4					+4	Royalist
War	Warwickshire		+2					+2	Royalist
Wes	Westmorland		+2					+2	Royalist
Wil	Wiltshire		+1		-1			0	Neutral
Wor	Worcestershire	RBC	+4				+1	+4	Royalist
WRi	West Riding		0					0	Neutral
	Total Points			8 + 1 = 9		8			

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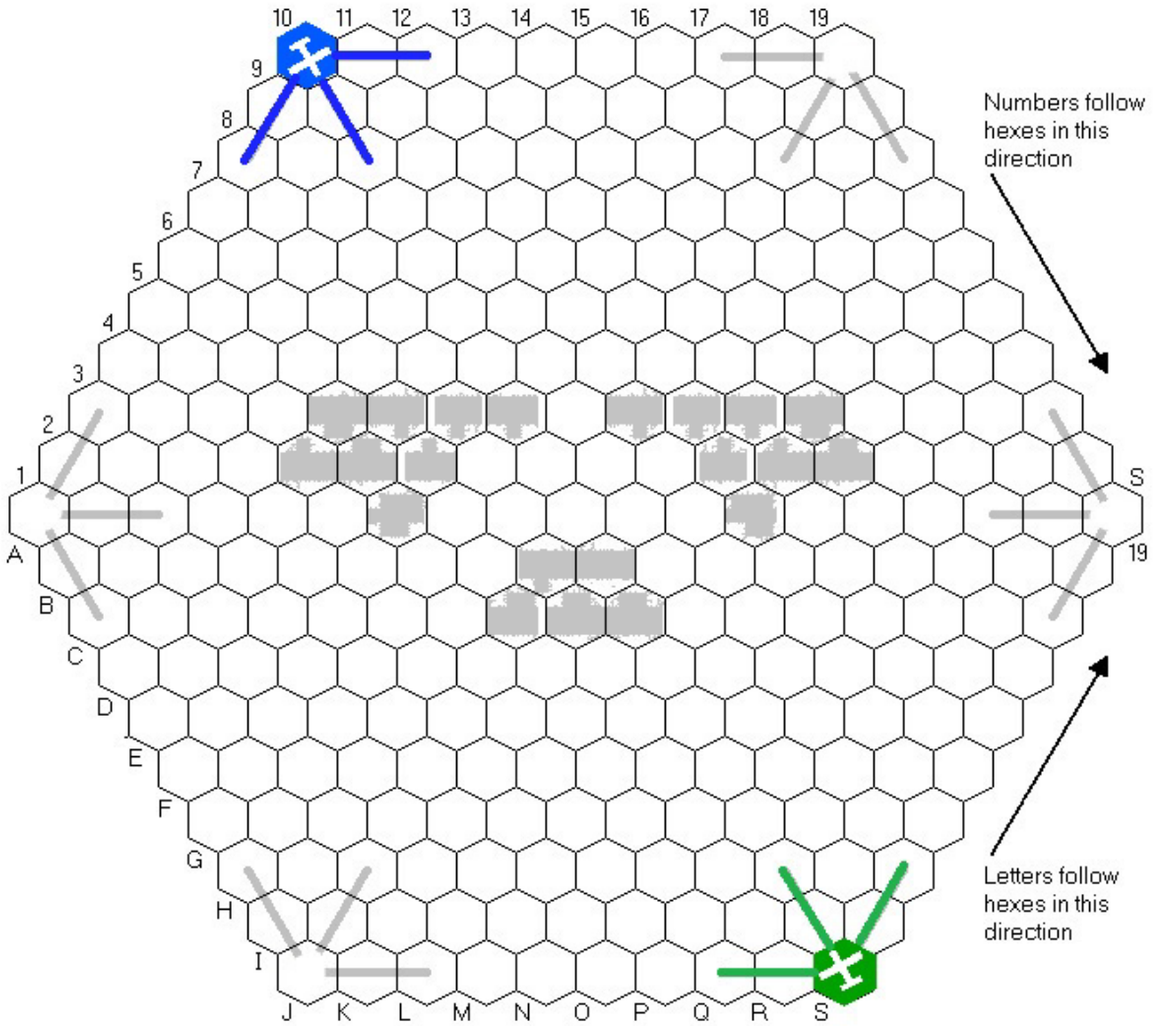
MAN-EATER Turn 13

I am afraid that I will have to send this adjudication out separately, as one players orders are clearly wrong. I will get the orders resubmitted and circulate an adjudication separately.



SOPWITH (Turn 25)

Turn 25 – Both pilots stay on the ground and repair.

Cliu Petre now has Ammo = 16; Health = 12; Points = 25

Baron Von Stinkhoven now has Ammo = 16; Health = 9; Points = 26

A few clouds have suddenly appeared and are moving Eastwards.

Orders for Turn 26 next time. Remember, for every full move (3 turns) spent at an airbase you repair 2 damage points. Cliu Petre is at full health and Ammo.