

God Save The Zine

Issue 1



This is a Diplomacy zine from:

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DEADLINE

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My Bit

Wow, it's been a long time since I've pulled a zine together. Thank you to everyone who has been in contact to subscribe - and an especially thank you to the brave volunteers who have stepped forward to play a game of Diplomacy. It has always been good luck to have a gamestart in your first issue - and to manage it in 2023 is really cool.

You might ask why I am launching a zine, when the decline of Diplomacy zines seems terminal. We are down to just a handful now, maybe 13-14 at most. Half of those are in the UK, which is surprising. It's not that Diplomacy is no longer played, it's just that people play through old-fashioned judges with a fancy webpage front end. They don't need to get a zine to play the game - and they can play to quick deadlines for the adrenaline hit that a 21st century lifestyle expects.

I certainly get why anyone who just wants to play the game will do that. But they are missing out too. Zines are communities, they encourage interaction, and you get to know people. The games are important but at the same time incidental. No one ever published a zine just to adjudicate games. Well, almost no one. So, this is my attempt to begin a crossover - to encourage players who would ordinarily never even consider a zine, to start getting one (or two). In the long term it's the only way to save the zine.

For me a true zine is printed on paper. It isn't just nostalgia, there is plenty of research that shows that the degree of interaction and

memory encoding substantially increases when people interact with paper as opposed to looking at a screen. If any of you have kids doing exams, try to encourage them to write or print their notes out and hold them in their hand to read / revise. They will remember more that way.

When I worked for Royal Mail we commissioned research whereby test subjects were given the same financial information on different media - and when they were asked about it 24hrs later, those that had been given physical media that they could hold in their hands (i.e. paper) had an almost 50% better recall than those who had read it on a screen.

Anyway, I digress. If any of you would like this zine printed on good quality paper mailed to them the old-fashioned way, you have only to ask. It will only cost you £1 an issue in the UK (£1.50 abroad) - which only just covers the postage).

Inside this issue you will find the rules for Cannibalism. I would like to make this an "mass participation" game. It requires very little effort, if you choose to negotiate you may do better - but you can just negotiate through the press, And it is all about eating each other. What's not to like? I'll put a gamestart in the next issue, but if you really don't want to be washed up on the dessert island, just let me know.

As we have managed to start a game of Diplomacy this issue, I'd better say something about Diplomacy House Rules. We all know that no one ever reads House Rules - they only really exist in order to provide aspiring editors with something lengthy to put in their first issue. However, if, like me, you haven't played much Diplomacy lately - or you've been playing via Diplomacy a web page, they are worth a quick read (particularly if you are not used to conditional retreats and builds).

For example, I couldn't remember the rationale for one of my old House Rules, so I changed it. My House Rules used to say "3.9 A misordered unit purporting to move cannot be supported in place." However, I've changed my mind on this - it now reads "3.9 A misordered unit purporting to move can be supported in place." I thought this is more within the spirit of the rules.

I don't like NMRs and I don't like players dropping out. With that in mind some other rules which I have included may be thought controversial, but you can't say you haven't been warned:

“3.11 Late orders will usually not be accepted, but the GM reserves the right to accept late orders at his discretion if not to accept them would result in a NMR. Therefore, you should never assume that it is safe to reveal your plans after the deadline.”

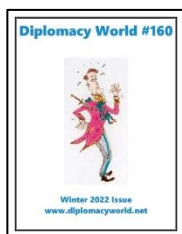
“4.5 NMRs ruin games. The GM will endeavour to remind all players shortly before the deadline. The GM reserves the discretion to prompt a NMRing player to send in some orders in order to protect the integrity of the game but doesn't guarantee that he will.”

There are two issues that I think should be put to the players to vote on at the beginning of every game. 1. Should we use standbys in the event of a dropout?. 2. Should we have 2-week or 4-week deadlines? Each group of players can decide before their game starts.

If any of you would like to play a simple game without negotiation, can I put in a plug for Intimate Diplomacy. I am still hoping to get 8 players so we can put together a mini-tournament. 2 players already, only 6 to go

I would welcome feedback on more or less anything - and suggestions for things you would like to see more of (or less of). Until next time...

Some Zines Seen



Diplomacy World 160

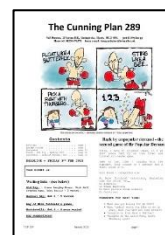
Diplomacy World has been the flagship zine for the Diplomacy hobby since it's foundation by Walt Buchanan in January 1974. A quarterly zine, **DW** doesn't run games but instead collects together original articles from across the hobby on all manner of subjects - tactics, variants, tournaments etc.

Doug Kent has worked wonders in not only managing to maintain quality, but also in keeping **DW** right at the centre of this diverse hobby. Although Doug has recently announced his decision to run down his zine, **Eternal Sunshine**, to a fold, I really hope he perseveres with **DW**, as I can't think of anyone big enough to fill his shoes.

Issue 160 has 20 different features spread over 38 pages with content far too varied to go through here - but I particularly enjoyed David Hood's hobby history pieces, the Empire City variant (the Battle for New York) and Russ Dennis's feature on his autographed Diplomacy board.

David Hood has also written in this issue (and the previous one) about the Hobby Awards we used to have. Some new hobby awards have now been organised by Diplomacy Briefing (see back page), which is excellent. Would there be space for one award to promote zine-based Diplomacy as well? And maybe a "Con of the Year" award?

If you are interested in Diplomacy, you should read **Diplomacy World**. Go to www.diplomacy-world.net. The **DW** website has all of the back issues to download all the way back to 1974. It is a treasure trove of material if you are in need of some bedtime reading.



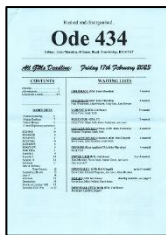
The Cunning Plan 289

TCP started about the same time I started **Spring Offensive**. However, I could never have matched Neil's stamina, as he is still going strong 20 years later, Not only that, Neil finds the time to edit a punk music zine and play in a band as well.

Neil puts a lot of his own personality into **TCP** and he has an easy writing style and a gentle line in self-deprecating humour. However, the heart of **TCP** has always been its large letter column and it is still a massive (13 pages), amusing and entertaining eclectic read. Neil is blessed with a great group of contributors - Alan Frost alone is worth the subscription (if you can afford the blood pressure pills).

Lists open for Diplomacy (three wanted - join me on the list) and Machiavelli - highly recommended. Available by email or as a paper zine.

Email Neil at issuepunkzine@hotmail.co.uk.



Ode 434

I enjoyed the most recent issue of **Ode**. I dimly remember reviewing the first issue of Ode back in October 1979 – and the fact that John Marsden is still producing a reliable zine a whole lifetime later is miraculous. If ever a UK Diplomacy hobby lifetime achievement award is created, John is a shoe-in.

Ode is a general postal games zine, with games of Railway Rivals, Sopwith, Acquire, Maneater, Hare & Tortoise etc. with a few Diplomacy variants thrown in. A few pages of letters, mainly from names I recognise, which is oddly reassuring.

There are four people on a waiting list for Mercator – I don't remember seeing a game of Mercator being run anywhere for ages - it would be great to see John get that game underway. **Ode** is a super-reliable zine and definitely recommended. Available by email or as a paper zine.

You can contact John at johnmarsden_ode@yahoo.co.uk.



Last Orders! 43

The first thing to say is that the thumbnail above doesn't do **Last Orders!** justice. It is very much an online zine, built using Microsoft Sway to be seen as a webpage viewed on a device, rather than as a printed document. **Last Orders!** is very much the new boy out of these zines as it's "only" been around for 3 years – though Simon himself is a Diplomacy player of a similar vintage to me.

Issue 43 is a entertaining read with an intelligent centre-left prog-rock loving letter

column and some really good book reviews. The zine has the feel of a well-produced Sunday supplement in one of the quality newspapers. I don't know how Simon (and his subscribers) finds the time to read so many books – my pile of "books to read" just keeps on getting bigger and bigger. And yet I still keep buying them.

Without doubt a zine I look forward to receiving. Lists open for Dip, Intimate Dip, Chaos Dip and Election 3.

Email Simon at LastOrdersDip@gmail.com.

Letters etc.

Mark Nelson

I miss the days when fanzines arrived in the snail mail. You may be surprised to hear that I also agree with you about what to do in one's retirement! This year, for the first time since I folded, I have started thinking about how great it would be to run a fanzine.

Probably, sometime between six and twelve years time there will be another crises in university financing; at which point staff past the age of sixty will be encouraged to go. Conclusion. I have somewhere between six and twelve years to come to my senses and decide that publishing a fanzine is NOT a good use of my retirement income!

SA: I used to do similar calculations about when I would leave Royal Mail – but when it's your time to go it can be very quick. Covid hit and the company got rid of more than 50% of their senior management. It was very sudden and though not a surprise intellectually, it was a shock emotionally, especially after 29 years with one employer.

However, contradicting what I wrote above one of the attractions of publishing in the new era is that I wouldn't need to pay for the printing of fanzines and I wouldn't need to pay large sums to have a fanzine posted out as I'd make the zine a PDF. (But would secretly print it out for a few people....)

So, if I don't come to my senses, I look forward to trading with you again!

SA; Yes, it's a lot cheaper and more time efficient than the good old days. I remember the fun of folding and stapling 150 issues, then stuffing them in envelopes and putting the stamps on. It used to take a whole evening. Let's hope you never come to your senses as a new Mark Nelson zine would be a wonder to behold.

Sandra Bond

I'll admit I am curious to see what a Dipzine will look like in 2023. I still attend sf cons, and I am very active in sf fandom (got to sell the books somehow) but it's been a good while since I attended a games con. What options are there nowadays?

SA: Well, there's still MidCon and ManorCon, but I'm not the person to ask really. Any others out there?

James Hardy

Great to see you are getting back in the saddle.

Please could you send me ish 1 of your latest DipFest. I need to be prepared for any historic references that would nowadays preclude me from being an MP or get me strung up by the local LGBTQXYZ branch. I remember ending one **SNOT** lettercol with "what do you expect from a dwarf, a dyke and someone who thinks they're a Viking?" in reference to Tony Dickinson, Louise Auty (or Kim Head) and Bryan Betts, so I think I have ample reason to be disconcerted...

*SA: I'm sure I have said a lot worse than that before now - and **SNOT** was a funny and affectionate zine that wouldn't have hurt a fly. Of course, these days you would need a trigger warning on every page. A bit like **TCP** does.*

Graham Tunncliffe

Please sign me up. I'll take the PDF version to start with if I may and then consider the good old paper copy once you are in your stride. (By the way, will you be taking the subs for the latter by bank transfer or other forms of electronic payment?)

SA: If I ever get around to taking money from anyone, I guess Paypal is probably the easiest - or a cheque in the post (if you still have a cheque book).

Does the Sex Pistols/Prince Harry logo presage the nature of the content? Not that either would put me off!

SA: I think you have to be over 60 to even get the Sex Pistols reference at all. I'm not very punk - more prog rock... Any Yes fans out there - "Tales from MAO"?

Did you note a zine called "In off the Post" in the zine poll? Did you know this is Pigmy Soccer Supremo still going strong and on its 4th GM?

SA: Wow. That is so cool. I may have to subscribe!

Poetry Corner

New York Mining Disaster 1941

By Sandra Bond

Hushed be thy speech, and silent be thy breath!
Talk in low whispers, if thou talk'st at all.
Too loud a sound will make the roof-beams fall,
And in this cavern we'll be crushed to death.
Mayhap e'en now they delve toward this place,
And till they find us they will labour on;
Mayhap they think us crush'd and all hope gone,
By hungry earth devour'd, to leave no trace.
Shines still the sun outside? or is it night?
Dost hear the sound of spades? or do I dream?
Is that a creaking from the broken beam?
Will we be rescued from this sorry plight?
I fear I reach the closing of my life. -
Meantime, hast seen this picture of my wife?

Diplomacy Variant

Father Mauro's Map

It is very difficult to come up with any scenario which has not been covered by a Diplomacy variant at some time or the other. In search of originality, I thought I would go back to an idea I had way back in my teens, but never got around to developing.

One reason why I like Diplomacy variants is the fact that I have always liked maps. And one map in particular has always stood out for me - it is the map created by Father Mauro, a Venetian cartographer around 1450 (which is shown on the cover of this issue). He tried to place accuracy over doctrine by not showing Jerusalem at the centre of the world, But he did not appreciate that the earth was a globe and of course this was forty years before Columbus.

Fra Mauro's map was a remarkable achievement for the time - it is a circular map with a diameter of over 2 metres, surprisingly orientated with

the south at the top. It included more than 3000 annotations and is a work of art in itself.

However, it is not at all accurate compared to any map of the world that we would recognise today. So I got to thinking – what if you took the 1450 Mauro map and used that as a basis for a Diplomacy variant? It would have to be a global variant (maybe a bit like Zeus), but with crazy geography based on a 15th century understanding of the world.

The map itself has many rivers and lakes, but it is not a political map in the sense that it has no political borders. Also, given that this will be a mini-global variant, it is going to be more about competing cultures than about competing countries. I originally played with the idea of generating a seven-player variant, but in the end I came down to five powers. These are Christian Europe, the Khanates, the African states, the Indian states and the Eastern states (China and Japan).

Having a circular map with a sea all the way round certainly makes it an unusual map. I thought the sea spaces could be used to facilitate movement around the globe, increasing tactical options. However, if you have large sea spaces with the standard fleet rules, then the game could become very static with stalemate positions stopping movement around the globe. To prevent this and to encourage use of the sea I have made all sea areas special spaces where any number of units can reside, and no conflict is allowed within them. Thus, units can pass each other in opposite directions and stalemate lines cannot be established.

I then decided to go all the way and abolish fleets entirely. Therefore, units in Known World can move on land or sea. This makes the game far more fluid and creates extra strategic options. I was concerned that keeping the armies/fleet distinction would unduly constrain the directions some powers could move in.

Comments welcome!

New Diplomacy Variant

The Known World

By Stephen Agar

0. All the usual rules of Diplomacy shall apply, save where modified below.

1. The game shall commence in 1451, Each turn shall equate to one calendar year, every second

year constituting “Autumn”. Thus, the first builds/removals would take place at the end of 1452.

2. There are no armies and fleets in this variant, only units. Units may move on sea or on land.

3, Sea space are special spaces in the any number of units may be present in them and no combat within them is possible. However, units in a sea space can influence events in coastal spaces in the usual way – e.g., by moving there or supporting an action there. A supported offered from a sea space cannot be cut. It follows that if a power has two units in the same sea space he can order (for example) U(North Atlantic) s U(North Atlantic) – Norway.

4. The starting positions shall be as follows:

The African States: Units in Ako, Kho and Swa

The Eastern States: Units in Nan. Bei and Jap

The Europeans: Units in WEu, Neu and SEu

The Indian States: Units in Del, Guj, Vij

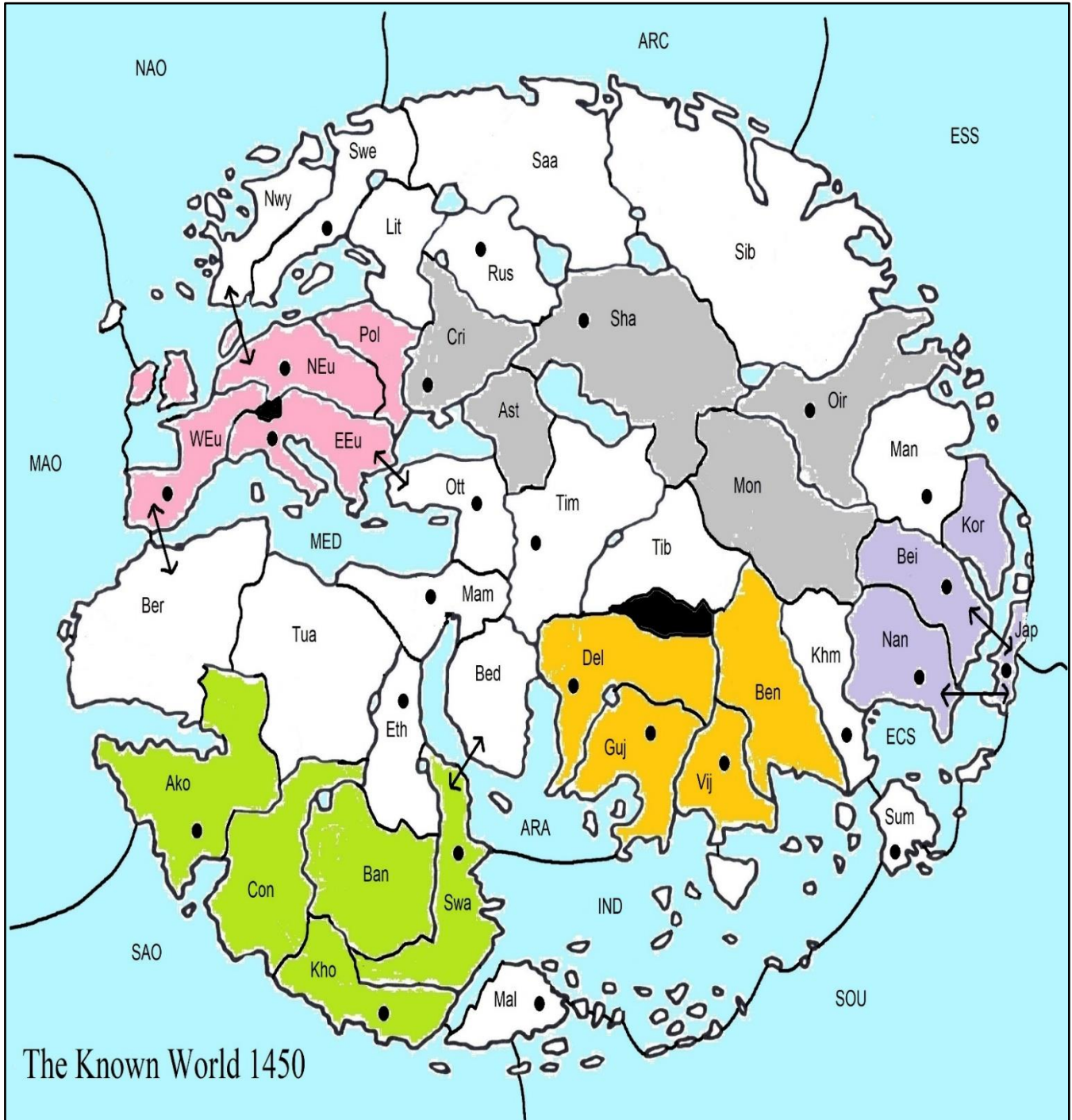
The Khanates: Units in Cri, Sha. Oir

5. There are 25 supply centres. 13 centres are needed for victory.

6. Map clarifications. The British Isles is not a space. As units can travel on land or sea, a unit can enter a land space from the sea on one side and exit it on the other side. Sea spaces or lakes that don't have names are not spaces (e.g. the Caspian Sea). For the avoidance of doubt. the Mediterranean Sea includes the Black Sea as well (and the NAO includes the Baltic). There is a land bridge from Eastern Europe to Ottoman Empire; Northern Europe to Norway; Swahili Kingdoms – Beduins; Nanjing – Japan; Beijing – Japan; Western Europe – Berber Peoples

7. Abbreviations

Ako Akon States (*)
Ast Astrakhan Khanate
Ban Bantu Peoples
Bed Beduins
Bei Beijing (*)Ben Bengal
Ber Berber Tribes
Con Congo
Cri Crimean Khanate (*)
Del Delhi Sultanate (*)
EEu Eastern Europe (*)
Eth Ethiopia (*)
Guj Gujerat (*)
Jap Japan (*)
Khm Khmer (*)
Kho Khoisan Peoples (*)
Kor Korea



The Known World 1450

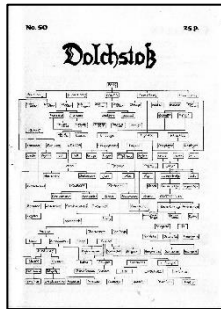
Lit Lithuania
 Mal Malagasyan Peoples (*)
 Mam Mamluk Sultanate (*)
 Man Manchuria (*)
 Mon Mongolia
 Nan Nanjing (*)
 Neu Northern Europe (*)
 Nwy Norway
 Oir Oirats Khanate (*)
 Ott Ottoman Sultanate (*)
 Pol Poland
 Rus Russia (*)

Saa Saami
 Sha Shaybanids (*)
 Sib Siberia
 Sum Sumatra (*)
 Swa Swahili Kingdoms (*)
 Swe Sweden (*)
 Tib Tibetan Kingdoms
 Tim Timurids (*)
 Tua Tuareg Tribes
 Vij Vijayanagar Empire (*)
 WEu Western Europe (*)

ARA Arabian Sea
 ARC Arctic Ocean
 ECS East China Sea
 ESS East Siberian Sea
 IND Indian Ocean
 MAO Mid Atlantic Ocean
 MED Mediterranean Sea
 NAO North Atlantic Ocean
 SAO South Atlantic Ocean
 SOU Southern Ocean

Out Of The Archive

In *Dolchstoss* 49 Richard Sharp asked his readers to provide some Diplomacy anecdotes (probably to help him put together some content for his book). The following issue Richard published the response. It would be fascinating to find out if this sort of thing still goes on in the realms of Internet Diplomacy – or is there no scope for such things anymore?



The Department of Dirty Tricks

Reprinted from *Dolchstoss* 50 (February 1977)

Response to my request for tales of skulduggery under the Diplomacy board was of small volume but high quality. Rather than print all the letters, I'm giving the edited highlights here.

John Piggott reminded me of the Great Davidson Scandal. In January 1972 when John and Andy were both second-year students at Jesus, Cambridge. It happened to be a couple of days before the deadline for *Ethil* 21 when John returned early unexpectedly one Thursday having decided not to attend a physics practical.

In his room, John found the luckless Davidson copying out other people's orders in the games he was in. The indignant Piggott confiscated the evidence, but knowing Davidson's memory to be adequate, felt that further sanctions were called for.

"That night I happened to be visiting Don Turnbull", John continues, "and resolved to pick his brains" (the standard procedure for all baffled GMs in those days). Don was quite positive that the (unnamed) offender should be ejected from all games. John felt reluctant to do this, curiously enough, and decided that Andy's units would stand unordered, a reasonable compromise. No one objected to John's ruling; Richard Walkerdine commented at the time, "I expect you 'd like to forget about it as soon as

possible; it certainly leaves a nasty taste in the mouth."

But does it? And isn't Diplomacy meant to? I agreed with John at the time, but now I'm really not sure. It is deceiving the GM, I suppose, and that's taboo by most written and unwritten house rules ... but within the meaning of the act? A very difficult one, I think.

Nicky Palmer offered several - one highly complicated fraud perpetrated by Robert Correll in BDC 41 I, one fake letter enclosing another fake letter. A particularly good one, I thought, was Nicky's own effort in a game GM'd by John Leeder, who datelined his press 'Moose Factory'. Nicky submitted press date lined "Moose Factory" (sic: it's illegal to use the GM's dateline!), "reminding" players of a new rule whereby the strongest and weakest countries after 1905 swapped players. This misfired tragically when the intended target, Richard Sykes, wasn't fooled but Nicky's ally was, and failed to support Nicky's units because he thought someone else was ordering them!

Nicky's last offering concerned NGC 100, which started as an anonymous game in which players who were correctly identified by other players would be kicked out. Nicky offered to tell two other players his identity, as a gesture of good faith, so that if ever he stabbed them, they had only to expose him to get him out. He accompanied this magnanimous offer with a xerox of a driving licence, to prove that he was who he said he was ... namely Wink Thompson! Brilliant, I call that. Unfortunately, neither of the suckers (Steve Doubleday and Duncan Morris) sucked, though Steve was later very apologetic at spoiling the coup. 'One day, sighs Nicky, 'a plot is going to work.'

Rob Chapman delighted me with a story of a swindle I once thought of myself but couldn't afford to implement. Evidently Duncan Adams, playing Austria to Rob's Turkey in NGC 122, asked for a support, and when Rob demurred sent him a £10 note as an indemnity. Rob pointed out that he wasn't getting much out of it, since he would have to return the indemnity on Duncan's moving as agreed, which was to Duncan's advantage, not his. He also made the good point of saying that he could threaten to withhold the £ 10 unless Duncan supported him into the disputed centre!

The reply I regard as a classic among Diplomacy letters and I shall quote it in full (or nearly): "There is a general rule of Diplomacy that no holds are barred, and one is not bound by what one says; the Courts could clearly not interfere

in such affairs and serious offences such as forgery have no meaning in a Diplomacy context. However, this is not a Diplomacy contract; it is a separate contract depending on a specific performance in the form of an indemnity. The indemnity is above the Diplomacy contract which in itself is voidable ab initio. Should you retain my £10 I should certainly sue for the return and expect to succeed. But far more seriously, if you did refuse to return it unless I supported you this would constitute an unwarrantable demand with menaces, the old Blackmail offence now an offence under the Theft Act 1968. If you were to plan this with ((Italy)) you would be guilty of conspiracy and could serve life. In short you are the bailee of the £10 and must behave accordingly. I half wish you would keep it; the joys of being the first Diplomacy litigant would outweigh the other disadvantages." Rob finishes: "I supported him in and returned the £10 note." Quite right too, he deserved it. The sheer gall of instituting a ploy which leads to your threatening your opponent with life imprisonment strikes me as irresistible.

The place of these money deals, though, intrigues me. I once offered Brian Yare (in BDC4) £2 to switch his support from Andy Holborn to me, which would have won me the game; he said, "Make it £5 and I'll do it." Couldn't afford it. Especially since I knew he'd probably double-cross me anyway unless I could cross him first.

Malcolm Griffiths had a story of a con which has happened before but rarely been successful, I think. In BDC 40, he received a letter from John Coombe announcing that the **Pendulum** deadline had been deferred two weeks. At least, the letter was illegibly signed on yellow paper, and posted in St Austell ... as was the copy of **Pendulum** that arrived a couple of days later, bang on schedule as usual. Also as usual, no one eventually owned up; and John subsequently revealed that five other players had later tried the same thing- none of these, not surprisingly, succeeded. This is a good example of why GMs should be reasonably strict about late orders: the 'miss' might just be due to good planning on the part of another player.

That's all I've got on that front, I think- thanks to all contributors, and I'd be glad to print any more of that calibre. I think Nicky's 2nd one is the most elegant and imaginative, but that letter from Duncan Adams is a beauty.

Afterthoughts: someone asked about the Boardman hoax mentioned in the letter from Hartley last issue. This was perhaps the most famous of all, John Boardman entering one

game as two players, himself and 'Eric Blake'. Not surprisingly, he won it.

Finally, may I commend from my own repertoire the 'alliance-splitter'. This consists of faking a letter to yourself from another player and sending it to the other player's ally. It should be not merely treacherous but utterly defamatory. My finest success with this was when facing a vengeful alliance of Ron Kelly and Mike Sherrad, both of whom I had recently stabbed in other games, making this an unfortunate draw for me. The alliance made slow headway, because Sherrad, a notorious move-misser, either failed to move when Ron supported him, or supported moves Ron didn't order. My forged letter pretending to be from Sherrad to myself, accused Ron of being a vacillating imbecile who was incapable of ordering as he promised, and continually caused Sherrad to miss deadlines by not answering his letters. This monstrously unjust tirade against a highly reliable player produced the desired result, and I treasure the rabid letter I got back from Ron.

My request for Diplomacy records was rather less productive; few of the claims seem very strong to me. John Piggott reminded me of the 'most expensive season', when Dave Johnson crashed his car while rushing over to my house for a pre-deadline meeting about BDC 41, and not only got stabbed but cost himself £60 into the bargain. Ron Canham mentions a Germany eliminated in 1902, which certainly must be rare (with no NMRs)- this was in **Jigsaw 'Gore'** game. Ron's Russian A(Bur) in Spring 02 is nothing much, though I'd like to know what the record is for a fast-travelling unit; in a FTF game I once had Austrian F(StP)(nc) in Autumn 06- anyone beat that?

Graham Buckell mentions 8 drop-outs, including 2 GMs, in BDC 29 (the oldest NGC game still going), but a **Der Krieg** game had 9 drop-outs, and the game I was in in **Bellicus** also had 8 (all of the original players); American games often hit double figures.

Odds and ends: Greg Hawes's survival with F(BLA), supported from a SC in Edinburgh; Denmark neutral until 1905 (BDC 15), and Robert Correll's amazing position as Turkey in BDC 41. In A12 he controlled Con, Ank, Smy, Bul, Nap and had A(Bul), F(MAO), F(IRI), F(ENG) and F(Cly). He was also abetted by a Russian F(NAO) which had started life in Sev.

Out of the Archive

This article is reprinted from Diplomacy World issue 54 (Spring 1989). I thought it was interesting to see how things could change in just over 30 years. Anyone else remember The Armchair Diplomat? I think all my issues disappeared when I started using a windows client instead of a DOS one. Is there an archive somewhere? And look at the costs \$50 a month (in 1989) if you log on daily!

The Ultimate in Diplomacy Gaming: Electronic Mail

by Steve Smith

Thought I would throw my two cents worth in since most of the articles I see in **Diplomacy World** about Diplomacy via electronic mail seem to be written by someone who has never played PBEM or worse, has a computer phobia.

One of the best ways to play Diplomacy is via electronic mail. Anyone who has computer and a modem can play. Play by Electronic Mail (PBEM) is much faster and more involved than play by mail, which many Diplomacy fans now enjoy. I personally find it more rewarding than I do face to face Diplomacy. In many of the FTF Diplomacy game which I have played, some of the players get fatigued after four or five hours and tend to lose interest if they aren't doing well. In addition, the game can be severely disrupted if someone has to go home half-way through the game. And FTF Diplomacy assumes that you can find seven backstabbers in the first place. PBEM offers a solution to these drawbacks.

And there are numerous computer forums which have a section devoted to games like Diplomacy, but I still describe the one which I subscribe to, Compuserve Information Services (CIS). CIS is a computer information network which has about 500,000 subscribers and about 700 access numbers located throughout the nation.

At present, there are about 10 Diplomacy games being run on CIS. Deadlines tend to be every two weeks, though they speed up to once a week, if everyone playing agrees to the faster pace. This often happens about half-way through the game. Games take about six months to play. The quality of play is high and should someone drop out, the position

generally only suffers one NMR as there is always someone standing by to take over. Contrary to some reports there are large amounts of press which adds a great deal of spice to the game. Moves are due on Sunday at noon EST and reported Tuesday night via TAD. TAD stands for THE ARMCHAIR DIPLOMAT which is the weekly magazine. Ken Hill is the editor who has selflessly dedicated large amounts of time to the smooth operation of the forum.

For those of you unfamiliar with the way electronic mail works, here is a brief description. Every User has an account number and a password. The account number is public while the password is known only to the player. Only the owner of the password can post messages with the associated account number. On CIS there are two ways to send messages to someone else. All messages can be sent either publicly or privately. Messages are composed off-line *at one's leisure and then sent at the press of a key or two. Those messages which are sent publicly can be read by everyone visiting the Diplomacy sub-section, those messages which are private can only be read by the person whose account number you have sent the message to. Messages are available to the recipient within 20 minutes of posting.

Costs are \$.25 a minute at 1200 or 2400 baud or \$.10 a minute at 300 baud. Currently, I am playing in three games and gamemastering another. I log on daily and my costs are about \$50.00 a month. You can play a good game without logging on nearly as often, though I would recommend twice a week if you hope to survive diplomatically. Accessing the system only twice a week should cost you somewhere around \$25.00 a month. Expect to spend a little more the first month as it takes a little time to become proficient.

How to join your friends and allies on Compuserve? Obtain a Compuserve subscription packet from just about any computer software store. Cost is generally \$35.00 but includes about \$35.00 of credit for signing up. If you can't find a store selling the subscription packet you can call Compuserve at 1-800-848 8990. Follow the packet instructions to get yourself signed up.

Once online, type "GO GAMES" from any prompt. Set your subsection to 5 by typing "ss5". This is the section devoted to the play of Diplomacy.

Leave us a message saying, hi, and we will get you going from there. To leave a message, just

type, "L" from the forum prompt and start typing away. When finished type "/EX" on a new line and then type "POST 5", which means post the message on section 5. It is really quite simple. My account number is 71340.1001 and would love to see some of you join us in the ultimate in Diplomacy.

Con Report

MidCon 2022



I was trying to remember when I last attended a Con. I think it was 2003, but it might have been 2004 at a push. Anyway, almost 20 years. I probably wouldn't have pushed myself to go to MidCon last November, but when I looked at the website and recognised a few names, I thought, how different can it be?

I knew it was no longer in Birmingham at the rather grotty Angus and I knew that the Con that was once the home of the National Diplomacy Championships now basically didn't have any Diplomacy at all. So, I was braced for change.

I also felt just a little nervous, as I knew that every game at the Con would be unfamiliar to me. Truth to tell, I am not much of a gamer – except for family favourites (we must own 7 or 8 versions of Monopoly), I really don't play board games much. I blame being an only child and never having anyone to play with. Some of the games played at Cons can be REALLY complicated and everyone else seems to know what they are doing.

So, I turned up at the Mickleover Court Hotel slightly nervous. The hotel itself is fine for a games Con, particularly the big reception area with many seats and tables. Having lifts and a couple of coffee machines out of action was an irritant, but not the end of the world. The only real downside is that it is a little out of the way for walking out to restaurants. Wow – there was

a list up for a game of Diplomacy with five names on already!

To my great fortune, no sooner had I bought myself a pint at the bar then I saw Andy Bate sitting with a group of his friends – and Andy invited me over. They invited me to join them playing something – and I think I made things a bit difficult for them as they now unexpectedly had 7 players. We ended up playing King of Tokyo – a game where you play as a massive weirdly enhanced powerful Lizard trying to defeat all the other massive weirdly enhanced powerful Lizards so that you can proclaim yourself King of Tokyo. It was great fun – so much so that I gave a copy of the game to my son Fred for Christmas.

As it happens, I didn't take many photos at MidCon, but this picture from the MidCon Facebook group shows us playing King of Tokyo (I'm the extremely fat one at the right of the picture – thank God I'm on a diet). Others around the table include Richard Minson, Andy Bate, Sandy Tollhurst, Rosie and Eva.

After a bite to eat I have a vague recollection that we played Quartermaster General, which was OK, but the fact that I remember very little about it speaks volumes. Maybe I was tired.

I missed breakfast on Saturday as getting up early at the weekend has never been one of my superpowers. My newly acquired friends from the previous day were already playing a game, but I managed to join a game of Terraforming Mars that Steve Jones was setting up. Steve loves complicated games and Terraforming Mars is incredibly complicated for a total newbie. It is an entertaining game, and I didn't come last – but it did take several hours, so lunch never really happened.

Giles Bennett ran a very large and well-organised second-hand games stall which seemed to be a great success. 416 games on sale and 165 sold. Also, Spirit Games were selling a large selection of brand new games. I

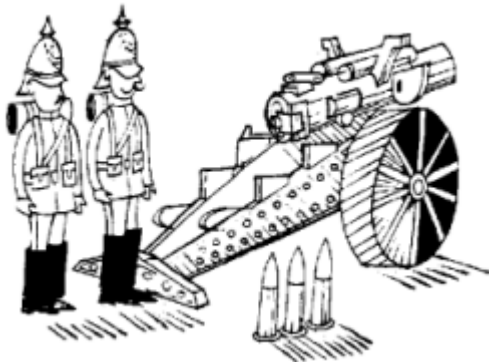


was tempted, but as I had no idea what the games were like I would have been buying on the strength of the packaging - which I've learnt from music, usually disappoints. Difficult to see that people would have enough space in their cars for even more games, given the vast piles of games on show dotted around the convention rooms. After a very late lunch, Steve Jones and I played a game of Cosmogogenesis. Yep, that's a game about creating solar systems - you really do get to play God. A far simpler game than Terraforming Mars and a quite clever mechanism. I'd definitely play that one again. Saturday evening was the MidCon quiz (still going strong after all these years) where I teamed up with Andy Bate and a couple of others and we did marginally above average. But it was an entertaining evening.

For Sunday morning, see Saturday morning above. Who wants breakfast anyway. Turned up for the Diplomacy only to find that it was only Andy Bailey and I. No one else showed up. So, having abandoned Diplomacy we had a game of Istanbul with Stephen Skeates. That finished about lunch time, so I gave up for the weekend and headed back to the M1.

On reflection, I would happily go back to MidCon next year - but I did find it difficult to break the ice and play games with strangers. I got the impression (possibly unfair) that a lot of people play with the same group all weekend - people they already know, even people they play with at local games clubs. That makes it harder to get games and the fact that space is a premium means you can't just walk around the tables and see what is going on. Or maybe I'm just too shy.

Next year I will try and get a game of Diplomacy organised well in advance. Anyone else fancy it?



Cannibalism IV

By Jeremy Maiden, Andrew England and Stephen Agar

*This is not a Diplomacy variant, but in a way, it is nicely within the spirit of the original game. In **Cannibalism** each player plays her or himself, a person stranded on a desert island (along with many of the other passengers) after their cruise liner sank unexpectedly. Sadly, there is only enough food on the island to support one person, so players must fight (and eat) each other to survive. Players don't have to interact - but if they do they stand a better chance of surviving for longer. This revision of **Cannibalism III** simplifies the rules significantly, adds debris and the map has been re-designed.*

Survivors

1. There can be any number of players (the more, the merrier). Each player has a single unit representing themselves called a Survivor. The contact details for each player will be published in case any players wish to negotiate. Each Survivor may move one space per turn and more than one Survivor can co-exist in any one space at a time. A Survivor cannot be stopped from entering an area (except for the Cave rules - see below). Each Survivor begins the game at a randomly determined beach space and with internal nourishment worth 20 meals inside him/her. This includes the nutritional value of fat and various tissues and organs which can be absorbed by the body if starved.

The Map

2. The map represents a desert island, most of the spaces being numbered for identification. There are only two spaces where food is available namely (1) the Orange Grove and (2) the Lake. There are also two secure areas, namely the Dark Cave and the Tree House. Impassable areas (swamp, jungle, mountains) are also marked on the map.

Turns

3. There are six turns in a day, each turn representing four hours of real time. The turns are Dawn, Morning, Afternoon, Dusk, Midnight,

and Early Hours. Each player submits a set of orders for the current turn. Valid orders are Move, Sleep, Stand (i.e. do nothing), Fight and Eat (a dead Survivor). Each Survivor may perform only one of these actions each turn. A Survivor who is alone with a corpse may elect to take it with them when they move. If no moves are received for a player, they stand around looking puzzled, but they will defend themselves. If no moves are received for a player for a second time in a row they fall asleep (even if not due sleep). If no moves are received for three turns in a row, they expire, leaving behind a tasty meal.

Sleeping

4. Survivors need to get enough sleep. Each Survivor must average a maximum of 1 move in 3 asleep – thus the first move a Survivor could sleep would be turn 3. A Survivor cannot go to sleep unless he needs to (i.e. you can't store up sleep in advance). A Survivor is deemed to be Tired after 3 consecutive turns awake. Sleeping Survivors have no combat value and once asleep they do not wake up until they have caught up on all the full periods of sleep owing to them (disregard fractions). For example, a Survivor who has slept 4 periods after 16 turns is owed 1 period of sleep. After a continuous period of 6 turns awake a Survivor but will be deemed to be Very Tired and will have a 50% chance of automatically falling asleep the following turn unless they are ordered to sleep.

Meals

5. Each Survivor consumes 1 meal from their reserves for each turn they are awake or asleep. A Survivor may hold up to 40 meals in its body, but if the number of meals stored drops to below 6 meals, then she/he is incapable of defending themselves and if the total drops to 4 meals, then they can no longer move. At 2 meals they die (leaving a measly 2 meals of rotting corpse available for other players to feast on). If a Survivor is killed, then their body is worth half the number of meals they had in them after the turn in which they died (rounded down).

6. The Orange Grove and the Lake each provide 2 meals a day at the beginning of Dawn, which disappear if not claimed. The meals produced in each place go to the Survivor who spent the most of the previous day's daylight hours (Dawn, Morning, Afternoon & Dusk) in that space alone. In the event of a 2-way tie the meals are divided between the two Survivors. In the event of a 3-way or greater tie, then no one

gets them and they are eaten by animals (i.e. disappear).

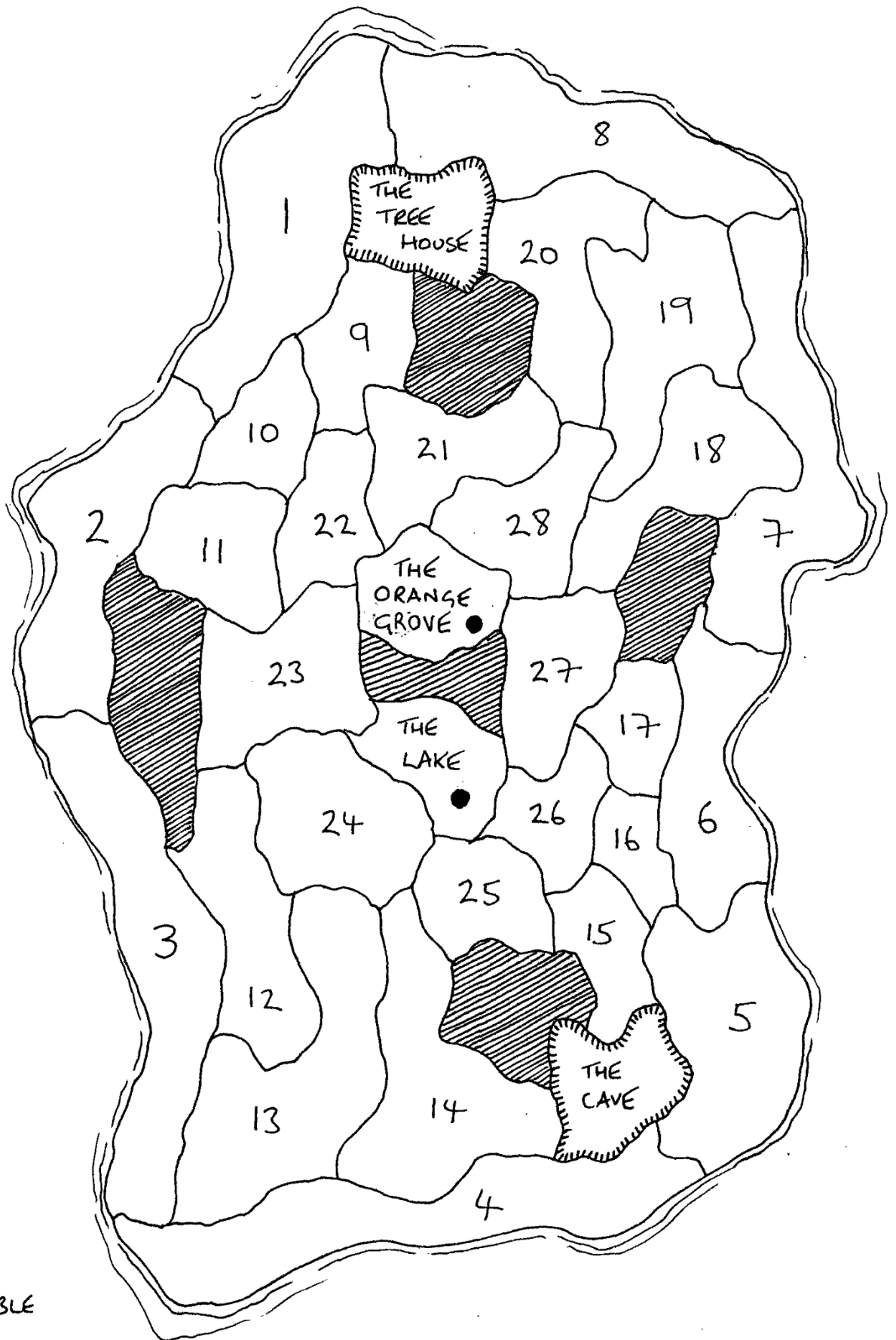
Combat


7. Only Survivors that start the turn in the same space may fight each other. A Survivor can only attack one other Survivor at a time. All combat is adjudicated first before anything else.

8. The Combat Value of a Survivor is the number of meals within her/him at the start of the turn. When a Survivor elects to Fight he/she will divide their Combat Value into Attack points and Defence points to defend themselves. All attacks are simultaneous. A sleeping Survivor has a Defence value of zero and cannot defend themselves. A Survivor who is Moving, Eating or Standing has a defence value of half of its Combat Value (rounded down) but cannot attack. All Survivors will lose an additional 2 Defence points if they are Tired and 4 if they are Very Tired (unless they possess an energy drink – see rule 13 below).

9. Combat is resolved by adding all attacks made on players and then subtracting any defence value. A Survivor is killed if the attack points used against him/her exceed the defence points available by either 10 points or a factor of 2, whichever is the less (e.g. 24 attack points kills a Survivor with 14 in defence, and 12 attack points kills a Survivor with 6 defence points). A Survivor who is attacked when leaving a space either dies or successfully leaves. A Survivor who is attacked by more than one other Survivor has his fate determined by the totality of the Attacks upon him/her. As all fights are simultaneous it is perfectly possible for both/all Survivors in a fight to end up dead! If a Survivor is attacked and not killed, 2 meals are deducted from him/her (which may have unpleasant consequences (see rule 5 above).

Example: Iain (24 meals and Very Tired), Robin (10 meals), Nicholas (18 meals and Tired) and Anne (22 meals) are in a space together at the start of a turn. Iain was going to move out but instead falls asleep (50% chance). Robin wants to move out to another space. Nicholas allocates 10 combat points to attack Iain and 8 points to defend himself. Anne allocates 12 combat points to attack Nicholas and 10 points to defend herself. Iain has a defence strength of 0 (he's asleep) so he is killed (10-0). Nicholas also dies (12-6), though he would not have died if he had not been Tired. Robin moves out of the space, leaving Anne with 2 corpses to chew over – Iain (worth 11 meals) and Nicholas (worth 8 meals).



 = IMPASSABLE

Eating Corpses

10. A Survivor sharing a space with one or more corpses may decide to eat them to a maximum amount of 5 meals per turn.

11. If there is more than one corpse, Survivors may not elect which corpse they wish to eat, it is assumed that Survivors start eating the biggest corpse first and only start on the smaller corpse when the bigger corpse is finished. When there is more than one Survivor in the space with the corpse(s) they submit eating orders in which they specify how much they want to eat and what they are prepared to let others eat. The GM implements the unanimous overlap of the orders. All eating is simultaneous (one meal for each Survivor at a time) until all have had their share or the available food runs out. If (for example) there are 2 meals left and 3 players entitled to eat, none of them eat and the 2 meals remain uneaten.

Example: Toby, Andy and Danny are in a space with the corpses of Kris (7) and Maddi (5). Therefore, there are a total of 12 meals available. Toby wants 5 for himself, none for Danny, but will allow Andy 3 meals. Andy wants 5 for himself, none for Toby and 2 for Danny. Danny wants to split the corpses 4 meals to each Survivor. The result is that Toby gets nothing (prevented by Andy), Andy gets 3 meals and Danny gets 2 meals. Thus, the remains of Kris are now worth 2 meals, while the body of Maddi is still worth 5 meals.

Safe Places

12. Violence is not allowed in a safe place. Any player occupying the Cave or the Tree House on their own can, provided he/she is awake, additionally deny access to that area to any other Survivor/s attempting to move there. However, if they do this they cannot do anything else (e.g. sleep or eat). Even if there are several Survivors in the safe place, it only takes one of them to prevent access to anyone else attempting to move there. Access can be denied selectively - e.g., "deny access to everyone except Roger". A good place to enjoy your meal in peace.

Debris

13. Every move from Turn 4 onwards, some debris from the ship will be washed ashore on one of the 8 shore spaces (determined randomly by the GM). What the debris is will depend on a throw of a D6. 1 = a tin of beans (a one-off +3 meals); 2 = a tin of spam (a one-off +5 meals); 3 = a chair leg (useful as a weapon

+2 to anyone wielding it); 4 = an energy drink (cancels the combat effect of being Tired or Very Tired); 5 = a knife (+4 to anyone wielding it); 6 = a new Survivor (who starts the game with only 20-X meals (where X = the number of the turn on which they appeared) as he/she is tried from swimming around for so long).

14. A Survivor who is alone in a space with debris acquires it permanently. If more than one Survivor is in the space, the debris remains unacquired. No space can ever have more than one piece of available debris in it. A Survivor who is killed while possessing a chair leg or a knife leaves it on the ground to be picked up by someone else, however any energy drink is sadly spilt.

Winning

15. The winner is the last Survivor left alive who reaches either the Orange Grove or the Lake. However, it is quite possible that no one may be left alive at the end of the game, in which case all the players lose and the GM wins.

So, What Shall I Call My New Zine?

Zine titles are difficult things to settle on. You have to be sure, as you can end up living with it for a long time.

In search of inspiration, I asked Doug Kent for some ideas - here are some of his suggestions:

Leela, Take K-9 for Walkies; Last Man Standing; House of the Wicked Witches; Lollipop Guild; Up The Junction; Screen Door on a Submarine; Buggy Whip Ltd; One Hand Clapping; Paul is Dead; Green Higgs and Am; Unmutual; Poke and Prod; You Scratched My Anchor; Safety Not Guaranteed; Numb From The Waist Down; I'll Tell You What To Think; The Zine of Truth; Piglet Bacon; No Rush... Are You Done Yet?; Just Curiosity; Being Mice Elf Again; The Wobbly Wheel; The Voices In My Head Stutter; Mop Garden; Elvis Is Everywhere; Nothing But A Grind; Cold Poison; Satanic Autotune; Corporate Zipline; Insert Clever Title Here; Rotten Peaches; The Nasal Swab; Devoid of Ideas; MetaLoser; Would You Like A Mint?; It Didn't Work; A Good Run; Toothless Grin; Shake Well and Chill; Cruel and Random; Dinosaur Rock; Downward Spiral; Epilogue; Cue The Credits; Writing In Cursive; Pleasant valley Zine.....

Did I miss a trick with one of these?

Variants

Black Hole Diplomacy II

By Randolph Bart, Rob Nelson
and Harry Drews

This is a game which becomes very silly very quickly. The history of Black Hole Diplomacy is a little murky. The first Black Hole Diplomacy was created by Randolph Bart, but he seems to have envisaged a Black Holed province as simply an impassable space. In Black Hole Diplomacy II, Rob Nelson and Harry Drews then added the rule that "Any province adjacent to a black-holed space becomes, by virtue of that black-holing, adjacent to any other space also bordering that black-holed space."

That addition makes the game much more interesting as Black Holes open up the board, rather than creating obstacles. I've never seen Black Hole III and IV, though I suspect they are just restatements rather than new rules. Anyone got copies?

1. The standard rules of DIPLOMACY apply except where noted below.
2. After each Spring and Autumn turn, after retreats (but before adjustments), the GM will randomly select one of the 75 spaces on the board to become a BLACK HOLE. The province selected can be either a land or a sea province. Switzerland cannot be black holed.
3. The space selected by the GM will cease to exist immediately, and any unit in that space is annihilated. If the space is a supply centre, it is removed from the adjustment chart, reducing the total number of spaces by one. Black-Holing lasts for the rest of the game.
4. Any province adjacent to a black-holed space becomes, by virtue of that black-holing, adjacent to any other province also bordering that black-holed province. This can result in previously land-locked spaces becoming coastal (E.g. if Bulgaria was to be black holed, Serbia would be a coastal space adjacent to both the Black Sea and the Aegean Sea and also F(BLA)-AEG would be possible.
5. Each player may designate with his Spring 1901 orders ONE home supply centre to be immune from the effects of Rules 2 and 3 for as long as he controls it. If no preference is indicated, the GM will select one. The choice of exempted home centres is not revealed. The decision cannot subsequently be changed, with

only ONE exception: if a player loses control of his exempt centre to another power and is left with only two home centres, then if one of the latter is black-holed his last remaining centre becomes exempt. This may only be done once per player during the game.

6. The victory criterion is a majority of UNITS on the board at the end of any move. Note that victory can thus occur after a Spring move as well as an Autumn move.



The Turnbull Archive

Sometime in the early 2000's, Richard Sharp invited me to come over to his house in Amersham to collect some Diplomacy material that Don Turnbull had passed on to him in the early 70's. Don Turnbull

was the founding father of postal Diplomacy in the UK as he had published Albion, the first Diplomacy zine on this side of the Atlantic. When I got there, Richard handed over six black ring binders and without further ado we headed for the pub.

Three of the ring binders contained issues of **Diplomania** and **The Gamesletter** (both edited by Don Miller) covering the period 1966-1972. The other three binders had various pages from early US Diplomacy zines that Don had kept from the same period. Rather than keep a lot of complete back issues that were mainly game reports, Don had apparently just kept whatever pages it was that interested him that he thought he might want to refer to sometime.

As most of this is pre-1971 there is an awful lot of discussion on the ambiguity in the rules of the regular game as well as a sprinkling of early variants.

Don has his own Wikipedia page, if you want to look him up. Above is a picture from circa 1977. Sadly, he died in 2003 So, for posterity I have uploaded Don Turnbull's Archive, as it was handed to me. Each ring binder has been scanned into separate PDFs.

www.diplomacyzines.co.uk/?page_id=7070

Regular Diplomacy – Gamestart

All The Madmen

AUSTRIA: Neil Kendrick

jethro1326@hotmail.com

ENGLAND: Lindsay Jackson

l_c_jackson@yahoo.co.uk

FRANCE: Mike Benyon

mikebenyon@mail.com

GERMANY: Toby Harris

toby@responsiva.biz

ITALY: Colin Smith

cardadvantage@hotmail.com

RUSSIA: Simon Billenness

simon.billenness@gmail.com

TURKEY: Neil Duncan

issuepunkzine@hotmail.co.uk

Thank you, gentlemen. For next time can I have:

(a) your vote on whether or not this game should use standbys;

(b) a vote on whether this game should be run to 2-week deadlines or 4-week deadlines and

(c) your orders for Spring 1901 by **Friday 24th February**. I think it's always a good idea to send in some orders early, just in case.

Please read (or at least skim) the attached House Rules to refresh any memories that need refreshing.

Some press would be nice – do you remember the days when press releases were almost novellas in their own right?

I did agonise over whether to give this game a name. It became de rigueur sometime in the early 70s to give games name – my first game was “Frodo” in **Turn of the Screw**. When it came to printing the endgame reports in **Ethil the Frog** John Piggott absolutely refused to use the name “Frodo” as it had (in his view) a perfectly good name as “NGC 184”.

Previously I've called games after ancient battles and WWI battles, but this time to save on imagination I was going to go for Game One. Then it occurred to me – what if there is never a

Game Two? Also, it looks a little underwhelming when compared to **Ode's** game 157eme. I did briefly consider naming games after punk rock songs – in which case this game could have been “Anarchy In The UK”. Neil might have liked that.

Instead – for absolutely no underlying reason at all – I have decided that all games just have to be named after David Bowie songs. On that basis this game is *All The Madmen* from Bowie's 3rd album *The Man Who Sold The World*. What a fitting name for a zine-based game of Diplomacy. Game Two will be *Blackstar*, of course, while if we ever get to Game Three it will be *Cygnets Committee*.

The UK Diplomacy Archive

The final resting place for UK Diplomacy Zines



Enter Site

diplomacy-archive.com - variantbank.org - diplomacyzines.org.uk

NEW DIPLOMACY ZINE
godsavethezine.com

I have removed www.diplomacy-archive.com, www.variantbank.org and www.diplomacyzines.org.uk from the web and amalgamated all three sites at www.diplomacyzines.co.uk.

Most of variantbank.org didn't work anyway, as it was built using Frontpage which isn't supported anymore. This site has all the contents of all three sites, plus quite a few more variants that I have been uploading over the past couple of months.

My aim is to use spare time to add more and more to this site until it has everything I have – including the complete NAVB and the UK Zine Archive. That may take a long time though, as that is a lot of scanning.

Although it is my intention to pass all the zines to the British Library, it would be nice to have them available online as well.



Backbit

Waiting Lists

Regular Diplomacy (3 wanted) Doug Kent, Scott Camplin; John Galt; Derek DeRooy. It would be nice to have two games running if we can manage it.

Black Hole Diplomacy II (rules inside) David Partridge, Philip Murphy (5 wanted). A fun game!

Intimate Diplomacy Tournament: Will Haughan, James Hardy (ideally another 6 wanted) for a three round tournament.

Cannibalism IV: Rules inside. Everyone on the GSTZ mailing list is automatically opted-in to this game **unless they specifically opt-out**. WARNING - If you remain in the game and don't submit orders, you will be eaten! The game start will be announced next issue.

The Known World - Rules inside. 5 wanted. I know the map isn't very pretty, but I'm useless at art software. Any brave souls up for a playtest?

Another Diplomacy Variant or Two - Expanded regular board or historical - anyone any suggestions? Maybe Diadochi or Gesta Danorum? Or even Abstraction? With Multiplicity rules?

Other Games: Are there any non-Diplomacy games that there is any desire to play? Write, or email me with your suggestions. Jed Stone has offered to help me out in this department - for which many thanks.

2022 Hobby Award Winners

Hobby Ambassador of the Year Markus Zijlstra

Markus Zijlstra was nominated based on his work as a co-founder of the DiploStrats Youtube channel, organizing tournaments, and founding the Blitz Diplomacy Discord server.

Diplomacy Literati of the Year Ed Sullivan

Ed wins for his article "How to Make Others Love You as Much as They Love Me" in Diplomacy Briefing Issue #157.

Many thanks to Diplomacy Briefing and a cast of thousands (well, double figures) for organising these awards. If you want to subscribe to Diplomacy Briefing go to www.diplomacybriefing.com.

Face-to-Face Diplomacy - London

Conrad Woodring is organising a game of Diplomacy at Covent Garden, London on Saturday 4th March. I hope to be there. Check out the London Diplomacy Club on Facebook.

Thank Yous

To **Doug Kent** for being both unfailingly supportive, but also disturbingly pessimistic. We need you Doug, keep going.

To **Neil Duncan** for suggesting the name for the zine and being enthusiastically encouraging

To **Sandra Bond** for providing the first pop sonnet - I hope the poetry corner will prosper and thrive. Checkout Sandra's first novel *The Psychopath Club* - available at Amazon and all good bookshops.

To everyone who has given this zine a plug - not just zine editors (thanks guys), but also Diplomacy Briefing and several of the new friends I've met through Discord and even Diplomacy podcasts.

And finally, to everyone else who got in touch to subscribe - without you there wouldn't really be any point.

If you want to be added to the *God Save The Zine mailing list*, then email me at godsavethezine@gmail.com or visit www.godsavethezine.com where there is a website of sorts.

God Save The Zine

Diplomacy House Rules

(Version 1)

1. General

1.1 Except as mentioned below the 1971 Diplomacy Rulebook will be used (though the Revised 2/5/89 UK is the same in all material respects - just less clearly written).

1.2 Deception of the GM is never allowed and in particular it is not acceptable to forge orders from another player. All players must be open and honest in their dealings with the GM.

1.3 The GM's decision is final on any interpretation of the rules of Diplomacy, these House Rules or any eventuality not covered by the two documents combined. Where the GM has discretion under these House Rules, his decision will be final and accepted in good grace by all players.

2. Starting a Game

2.1 Players should apply to me (Stephen Agar) if they wish to play a game of Diplomacy. Preference lists for countries will be used if supplied, but final allocation of countries is entirely at the GM's discretion.

2.2 The GM must be aware of the real identity of all players. It is not necessary for a player to play under their real name - using a false name / email address is permitted provided that the GM is aware of the true identity of the player concerned.

2.3 Obviously, a player cannot play more than one Power in any given game.

2.4 If a player changes his email address he should inform the GM and the other players immediately.

3. Game System and Orders

3.1 The game will be played on a **TWO SEASON** game year. Thus, Spring orders should contain retreats (which may be conditional on that season's moves) for vulnerable units, in the absence of which any dislodged unit will be disbanded. Autumn orders should similarly include conditional retreats and conditional builds/removals. The conditional builds may be conditional on the previous season's moves or

retreats. This is not as difficult as it sounds. Trust me, I used to be a lawyer.

3.2 If two or more players attempt to retreat to the same space they will stand each other off and both will be removed from play, though a player may indicate which unit is to have priority if both units are his.

3.3 If a player fails to submit build orders in an Autumn move then no builds will be made even if due.

3.4 Unless there is a clear instruction to the contrary "Remove A(Par)" means "remove the army that was in Paris before this season was adjudicated but may not be now." - though if there was no Army in Par at the beginning of the move, but there is at the end of the move, then that A(Par) will be removed instead.

3.5 If a player fails to submit removal orders in an Autumn move (or the country is in Anarchy) then the GM will disband units which are not in supply centres as necessary. The distance of any such unit from the nearest home sc will be calculated and the furthest unit removed. In the event of a tie units in sea spaces are removed first, then units outside the home country, fleets are removed before armies and if all else fails disbands are made alphabetically. Thus, England would remove F(HEL) and F(SKA) before A(Pic), but A(Pic) would go before F(ENG) or F(NTH). A(Bel) and F(Hol) would not be removed.

3.6 Orders should be clear. However, the GM will accept any orders that are unambiguous, however badly written.

3.7 It would greatly assist if orders for different games were sent in different emails. Ideally, each set of orders should state player's name, game, country, year and season.

3.8 Implied orders will be accepted, for example "A(Mun) S A(Ruh)-Bur" is a valid order to both units, however, a contradictory explicit order (E.g. A(Ruh)-Bel, A(Mun) S A(Ruh)-Bur;) will override an implied order, the unit is not considered to be ordered twice. Thus, in this instance A(Ruh)-Bel would be a valid order while A(Mun) S A(Ruh)-Bur would be a misorder.

3.9 A misordered unit purporting to move can be supported in place.

3.10 Orders should be submitted in good time for the deadline set in the most recent issue of the zine. It is a good idea to send a set of provisional orders upon receipt of the game report, just in case.

3.11 Late orders will usually not be accepted, but the GM reserves the right to accept late

orders at his discretion if not to accept them would result in a NMR. Therefore, you should not assume that it is safe to reveal your plans after the deadline.

4. No Moves Received (“NMR”)

4.1 Failure to submit orders by the deadline will result in an NMR (“No Moves Received”)

4.2 The effect of two successive NMR's means that the offending country will be placed in Anarchy.

4.3 When a country goes into Anarchy all its units will stand unordered, but may be supported by other players.

4.4 The GM will not start a game with a NMR even if it means holding the game over and finding a new player.

4.5 NMRs ruin games. The GM will endeavour to remind all players shortly before the deadline. The GM reserves the discretion to prompt a NMRing player to send in some orders in order to protect the integrity of the game but doesn't guarantee that he will.

5. Abbreviations

5.1 In game reports provinces will be abbreviated to the first three letters of their names, capitals for sea spaces, lower case for land spaces.

5.2 Exceptions are: GoB = Gulf of Bothnia; GoL = Gulf of Lyons; Lvn = Livonia; Lpl = Liverpool; MAO = Mid Atlantic Ocean; NAF = North Africa; NAO = North Atlantic Ocean; NTH = North Sea; Nwy = Norway; NWG = Norwegian Sea; TYS = Tyrrhenian Sea.

5.3 Other abbreviations used in game reports are: NMR = No Moves Received; NRO = No Retreat Ordered; NPRO = No Possible Retreat Ordered; MS = Mutually Supports; Std. = Stands; A(Kie)-Hol = Failed Move; A(Kie)-Bur = Illegal or Impossible Move or non-existent unit; * = Retreating Unit

6. Errors

6.1 In the rare instance of an error creeping into an adjudication the error should be brought to the GM's attention immediately. Do not assume that someone else will do this.

6.2 Any errors carried over for more than one season will stand, however bizarre.

6.3 Obvious errors (e.g. failing to underline a failed move) should not delay the game and players should always submit orders on the basis that the moves printed were correct (even

if the game report was incorrect as to the consequence of those moves).

7. Skulduggery

7.1 Impersonation of the GM is not allowed. This is a departure from the traditional rule in postal Diplomacy games. However, given the ease with which the technologically competent can forge emails (and the difficulty of detection by those less well versed in the skill of reading email headers) this rule has been altered to take account of the realities of the situation.

7.2 On the other hand, it would be a shame to outlaw all skulduggery, therefore impersonation of another player is allowed, other than in dealings with the GM.

7.3 Forwarding an email from one player to another player is allowed (though some may think it bad manners). Of course, recipients of such emails will be aware that the contents of forwarded emails are easily altered.

7.4 A player may “cc” or “bcc” another player in on any emails he sends, including communications with the GM.

7.5 Players must accept that Diplomacy is a game in which behaviour normally deemed unethical in civilized society is permitted. Therefore, they should not be offended if others attempt any manner of scams or confidence tricks not prohibited by these House Rules in order to gain an advantage.

8. Game Endings

8.1 A game may be ended at any time on any terms proposed by any player or the GM by a unanimous vote of the players.

8.2 Normally, the first time a game-end is proposed NMRs and forgetting to vote will be taken to be dissent. If the same game-end proposal is defeated but then then re-proposed the following season, then abstention shall be taken to be assent (whether or not the player abstaining on the second occasion voted on the proposal the previous season).

8.3 At his discretion when putting forward a proposal to end the game the GM may declare that abstention will be taken as assent on a first vote, so read endgame proposals carefully.

8.4 The GM retains a discretion not to end the game in accordance with an endgame proposal if more than half of the non-NMRing players have made no mention of the endgame proposal in their orders. This is to prevent absurd results.

8.5 The identity of the player proposing the game-end will not be revealed, nor how individual players voted.

8.6 The rules of Diplomacy state that "Draws include all survivors". However, players may agree an endgame result where surviving players are not ranked equally on the basis that all players are agreeing that if the game had continued it would have resulted in some of the extant players being eliminated.

9. Proxies

9.1 A player may sign over control of one or more units to another player at any time and indefinitely, provided that the player so doing continues to receive the zine. In the event that the player giving the proxy stops receiving the zine then the proxy immediately ceases to have effect.

9.2 Any proxy arrangement may be cancelled at any time, without notice, by the player concerned.

10. Press

10.1 Press releases for publication alongside the game are welcome and may be conditional on that season's moves.

10.2 The GM will have a reserved dateline that may not be used by the players. The reserved dateline for Stephen Agar is "**Old Bill**".

10.3 The names of the seven capitals (Vie, Lon, Par, Ber, Rom, StP, Con) or the seven Powers followed by "(Govt.*)" are reserved for the players concerned and are thus any press using this dateline is guaranteed to be genuine.

11. Maps

11.1 Regular Diplomacy games in the zine will usually have maps with the game reports, however they do not form part of the adjudication. The GM will have no sympathy with anyone who misorders on the basis of an error in a map, if the game report was correct.

