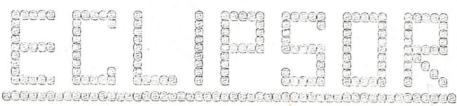· Is this what they call a blue magazine?

ECLIPSOR

Eclipsor is a limited issue zine for the express purpose of play-testing a game called ECLIPTIC, of which the rules form the succeeding pages of this issue. It is sent out by Paul Willey, Escultor Jose Capuz 15, Puerta 34, Valencia-6, Spain, who can be reached by the plutocrats on (010 34 63) 333 49 30 before 2.30., or after 9.30. GMT. Normally it will be absolutely free to players, but 50p to non-players, including Richard Sharp -(in fact, especially Richard Sharp!)- which ought to put off anyone from making me go to the inconvenience of photocopying!

Thank you for your suggestions of titles. Eclipsor, however, came to me in the bath as (a) the obvious word for a purveyor of an Ecliptic, and (b) the name for something which enshadows such previously highly-regarded works as Jigsaw, Uriah's Heap, Trojan Horse, Rocinante, Turn of the Screw, Misteimer, Spread Vulture and An Anthology of Letters from Pete Nunn, etc...

I said that it would normally be free (except for postage), but the last four pages of this issue are photocopies, which cost me slightly more than 4p each. Since I told you the zine would be free, I can't make you pay that, but I should be grateful if your conscience drives you to increasing my credit by 25p for this issue (including postage). To make up for the extra cost I've coloured them in, to make them look beautiful and a bit clearer. You'll have to trim the edges off the photocopies, and hopefully they will go together to form the map of the game. If you then cut round the dotted lines of the planetary systems (or do I mean satellite systems?), you will be able to place them on the board as the rules require. (Like one of those things on the back of a cornflakes packet, isn't it?) I recommend that you stick the satellite systems to pieces of stiff card, otherwise you'll get very annoyed with them. You'll also lose them. Even better, make your own copy of the map at about twice or three times the size of the one supplied.

Anyway, on with the business. Here, to get you diploming, are your potential allies and potential foes. Good luck to you all, your under starter's orders, and here goes the whistle!

EARTH   Andy Evans, 36, Brynmill Terrace, Brynmill, Swansea, South Wales.

MARS   Dave Ross

JUPITER   Roger Kitchener, 74 Stoneyard Lane, Poplar High Street, London, E14 0BX

SATURN   Doug Wakefield, ~~117~~ 115 Acre Lane, Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle, Cheshire. SK8 7PB.

URANUS   Martin Hammon, 28, Beckenham Drive, Allington Park, Maidstone, Kent.

STAND-BY   To be announced Steve Doubleday, Stanwell Library, Hadrian Way, Stanwell Middx.

Can the stand-by please send in orders for all the planets, and if anyone NMR's, you'll be in. Incidentally, I found, to my cost that it's worth diploming with a stand-by; I advise you not to leave him out in the cold. The deadline is first post (12noon) on
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     Friday 23rd January, Viernes 23 Enero, Vendredi le 23 Janvier.
EDEADLINEDEADLINEDEADLINEDEADLINEDEADLINEDEADLINEDEADLINEDEADLINEDEADLINEDEADLINEDEAD
ND the next issue should reach you within 7 days after that. Lots of press, please,
I don't have to write space fillers like these, and the one at the top of the page
d now: The rules!

ECLIPTIC

A Diplomacy Variant designed by Paul Willey, 1976

The game is set in the thirty-first century, when all the habitable planets and satellites of the Solar System have been colonised by Earthmen, and have become independent. There are five Great Powers: Earth Mars, Jupiter, Saturn and Uranus. The giants (Jupiter, Saturn and Neptune) are uninhabitable due to their excessive gravity, but their satellites represent the supply centres. Apart from the Great Powers, there are other independent colonies on the satellites of Neptune (including Pluto), Luna, some satellites of Saturn which are not part of the Saturnian Union, the inner planets, and the larger asteroids. Each of these colonies is insufficiently strong to enter into the war, but may be used as supply centres for conquering powers.

Of course, nuclear weapons are fearfully strong, and cannot be excluded from a game set in this period. However, most of the chemical sources of energy have been exhausted, and plutonium is in great demand, so it cannot be wasted on a useless stockpile. The number of nuclear missiles is therefore limited.

Earth, as the mother planet, is terribly overcrowded, but her technology is some way in advance of the other colonies. Just prior to the outbreak of war, she has developed faster-than-light drive, and her ships can travel through warps in space more quickly than standard space vessels. On the other hand, her natural resources have been under exploitation for longer than those of the other planets. Her own supply centres are consequently limited in number.

1. The rules shall be as in the 1971 Diplomacy rule book, except as below.

2. The Board. (a) The board represents the plane of the ecliptic of our Solar System, divided into orbits, where relevant, spheres of influence of space stations (given the names of letters of the Greek alphabet), uninhabited areas of space, and the planets and their satellites. (The space stations play no part in the game, and are not marked.) The map is not drawn to scale, and may be regarded only as a schematic.

(b) The outer planets are not shown on the board itself, since they move during the course of the game. Each game period is ten years, (Earth years), so the orbits of the inner planets are not shown, being irrelevant. (Each period of revolution is less than ten years, so these planets remain, to all intents and purposes, in the same relative positions.)

(c) At the outset of the game, each movable planet is set on the dividing line between its highest and lowest orbit sectors. That is to say, Pluto begins dividing PU24 from PO1; Neptune divides NO16 from NO1 — (both its moons begin in NO1, and always move ahead of the planet) Uranus begins dividing UO8 from UO1; Saturn divides SO3 from SO1; and Jupiter begins with Gan intersecting Rho and Pi. All planets move clockwise. They should always be positioned so that their orbit lines continue those on the board, and any space area lines do likewise. This means, of course, that most of the home supply centres border on two or more areas of space. It should, however, be noted that the intersecting line on the inner side of Uranus is meaningless while uranus is between UO5-6 and UO 7-8. It should also be pointed out that Io borders on the Asteroid Belt.

(d) Space is, of course, three dimensional, but the areas marked on the board are considered to be effective in the third dimension, above and below the ecliptic (the board).

(e) (f)
3. Units. There are three types of units. Fleets (F) are moved in the same way as in ordinary Diplomacy. Hyperfleets (H) can move in the same way, or can move up to three spaces in one move, provided that the starting and finishing positions of that move are both in space and not on a planet or satellite. They can similarly support and retreat over such a distance. It does not matter if the intervening spaces are occupied. (g) The third type of units are missiles (M). rule 4.

3.(Cont'd.)(d) At the beginning of the game, only Earth holds the secret of hyperdrive, but it becomes available to any nation who takes a supply centre formerly held by a nation who had the secret. Thus, for example, if Earth takes Luna, which is subsequently taken by Martian units, the secret becomes available to Mars. If, for instance, Phobos is then taken by Jovian units, the secret becomes available to Jupiter. (If Phobos were already held by Jupiter, the Jovians would not, of course, receive the secret.) This rule does not apply to supply centres which have been radioactive between the times of occupation. (See rule 4).

(e) Once a nation receives the secret of hyperdrive, any of its subsequent builds may be of hyperfleets. Ordinary fleets remain as such unless they return to a home supply centre for a build season, when they may be refitted to become hyperfleets.

4. **Missiles.** Missiles never exist for more than two moves. (They may be represented by Diplomacy fleets turned on their sides). They may be launched by any unit into an area of space adjacent to the one occupied by that unit, and the target (which must be specified at the time of launching) must be in an area adjacent to that one. It may not, of course, be the area from which the missile was originally launched. The target is never a unit, but an area of space, or a zone of territory.

(e) Missiles may move into areas already occupied by other units, but those units are unaffected unless detonation occurs in that area, in which case the unit is annihilated. The area in which detonation occurs becomes radioactive, and uninhabitable for 99 years (nine moves), and any unit forced to retreat into the area is immediately annihilated.

If a unit moves into, or already occupies the target area of a missile, it may, on the next move, launch a missile into the area the offensive missile occupies. In this case, the offensive missile does not move from the area into which it was launched, and detonation occurs there. It is not necessary for the unit launching the defensive missile to be in the target area, but it must, of course, be in an area adjacent to the one occupied by the missile. If two missiles are launched into the same area (by different units, of course) neither affects the other.

There are only the same number of missiles in the entire game as there are home supply centres (20), and they are distributed the same way those centres are. If any Great Power occupies a home supply centre of another, the conquering power has one missile added to its supply, while the losing one has one deducted. (This does not apply if the same centre is subsequently taken by another, or the original power, for it is assumed that the retreating fleet takes the necessary plutonium with it. [If the fleet is annihilated, the plutonium is destroyed, and the invading Power has the missile deducted from its tally again. Naturally, if there has been a movement to and from the centre, this does not apply.] These parenthetic remarks apply only if the original invading fleet remained in the same position until its annihilation). The exception to the "one missile per supply centre" rule is Earth, who may launch any number of missiles from her home supply centres (Nor and Sou), even if there is no unit there. This exception also applies to any Great Power controlling one or both of the Earth home supply centres.

To exemplify the use of missiles, a unit on Dei may launch a missile from there to Mars. The missile would move first into Mu (or KAP) Any unit in MU is unaffected. In the following move, however, a unit on Mars (or in AST, KAP, Cer or Phs) may launch at MU , in which case both missiles detonate and MU becomes uninhabitable for nine moves. The hypothetical unit in MU is then annihilated.

(f) It is obviously necessary for gamesmasters to keep a running tally of each Power's stockpile of missiles. *

4. (Cont'd.) (g) If the area of detonation of a missile is a supply centre, that supply centre is deducted from the tally of the player controlling it, and may not be again occupied until the nine moves are up. The first player to occupy it for a build season becomes the new owner.

(h) It should be noted that missiles can be launched from _any_ unit, even if that unit has previously launched a missile, and it is also worth pointing out that there is no prohibition against launching a missile at a target area occupied by one of the player's own units.

(i) (j) (k)
5. Starting positions   Each great power begins the game with a unit in each of his home supply centres.   In the case of Earth, these are hyperfleets, and in all other cases they are fleets.
EARTH   H Northern Hemisphere,   H Southern Hemisphere   (a)
MARS   F Mars,   F Phobos,   F Deimos   (b)
JUPITER   F Io,   F Ganymede,   F Europa,   F Callisto   (c)
SATURN   F Titen (Tan),   F Mimas,   F Iapetus,   F Tethys,   F Rhea
URANUS   F Uranus,   F Titania (Tia),   F Oberon,   F Umbriel,   F Miranda,   F Ariel

6. Game Periods (a) The first game period is 3010. The second is 3020. Builds follow those periods in which the penultimate figure is even. Hence the first builds take place after 3020, and subsequent ones after 3040, 3060, 3080, etc.

(b) The planets move at the end of each game period. They may move through an area which is occupied by a unit without dislodging it, even if the planet is itself occupied. Likewise they may move through radioactive areas without becoming contaminated. Players launching missiles at planets must launch them at the place where the planet will be on the period in which it detonates, and not where it is at the time of the launch.

7. Prohibited areas (a) No unit may be ordered into a radioactive area (One in which a detonation has occurred within the previous nine moves.) It may, however, be retreated there. Since units may not be disbanded in place of retreating (unless there is no retreat space available), this facility may be of value. For these purposes, Corona may be regarded as a permanently radioactive area.

(b) Similarly, units may not be ordered to any of the giant planets (Jupiter, Saturn or Neptune), though they _must_ be retreated to one if within an adjacent area and no alternative retreat orders are given. Likewise, unordered units adjacent to a giant planet or Corona, will be moved there. (This need not be the case with NMR's).

(c) Units on the giant planets may not move off, and may not be disbanded.

(d) Any unit remaining in the Asteroid Belt for more than one move, unless it is on Ceres, Eros, Vesta, Juno, Pallas or Io becomes wrecked. It may not be moved, and remains in the area it occupies until dislodged in the normal way. It may not be ordered, and it may not be disbanded. ✦

8. Orders (a) A unit may be ordered to stand (st.), support (S), launch (L followed by the target area in brackets), or move (-). (b) No unit may be disbanded if a retreat space is available, but it can be retreated to a radioactive area (even if another retreat space is available), in which case it is annihilated. In postal games, where no retreat orders are given, the gamesmaster must retreat a unit to either a giant planet or a radioactive area (in that order of priority) if this can be legally done. Otherwise, the gamesmaster uses Just's Right Hand rule. That is to say, if none of the retreat spaces are available, or if no retreat orders are given, the gamesmaster determines the retreat by moving the unit to the area to the immediate right of the 'front' between the attacker and the defeated unit. If that area is closed, then the area on the left. If that, too, is closed, then the province or area next nearest to the right, and so on. ✦

8. (Cont'd)(c) Where unordered disbandments are necessary, gamesmasters must disband fleets before hyperfleets, and units in space before those on planets. He will remove the space-bound planet farthest from home first, and if two or more units meet this requirement, then the unit in an area whose name is first in alphabetical order.

9. <u>Victory Criterion</u> (a) Any Power which controls 18 supply centres, or half of the <u>habitable</u> supply centres has won. (b) It is not illegal, when holding a large number of supply centres, to launch missiles at others in order to reduce the victory requirement.

10. <u>Abbreviations</u>

Abbr	Mark	Name
Adr	*	Adrastea
Ari	(U)	Ariel
ARM		Armstrong Gulf
AST		Asteroid Belt
BET		beta
Cal	(J)	Callisto
Cer	*	Ceres
CHI		Chi
Cor		Corona
CSO		Ceres Sound
Dei	(M)	Deimos
DEL		Delta
Dio	*	Dione
DEV		Devil's Void
DOU		Deeps of Uranus
Enc	*	Enceladus
EPS		Epsilon
Ero	*	Eros
Eur	(J)	Europa
GAC		Gulf of Alpha Centauri
GAG		Gagarin Bound
GAM		Gamma
Gan	(J)	Ganymede
GPC		Gulf of Proxima Centauri
Hyp	*	Hyperion
Iap	(S)	Iapetus

Abbr	Mark	Name
INN		Inner Void
Io	(J)	Io
IOT		Iota
JO1-2		Jupiter Orbit Sectors
Jun	*	Juno
Jup		Jupiter
KAP		Kappa
LAM		Lambda
Lun	*	Luna
Mar	(M)	Mars
MED		Mercury Deeps
Mim	(S)	Mimas
Mer	*	Mercury
Mir	(U)	Miranda
MU		Mu
Ner	*	Nereid
Nep		Neptune
NO1-16		Neptune Orbit Sectors
Nor	(E)	Northern Hemisphere
NU		Nu
Obe	(U)	Oberon
UME		Omega
OMI		Omicron
UUT		Outer Void
Pal	*	Pallas
Phe	*	Phoebe

Abbr	Mark	Name
PHI		Phi
Pns	(M)	Phobos
PI		Pi
Plu	*	Pluto
PSI		Psi
Rne	(S)	Rhea
RHO		Rho
Sat		Saturn
SAV		Saturn's Void
SIG		Sigma
SO1-3		Saturn Orbit Sectors
Sou	(E)	Southern Hemisphere
Tan	(S)	Titan
TAU		Tau
Tet	(S)	Tethys
THE		Theta
Tia	(U)	Titania
Tri	*	Triton
Umb	(U)	Umbriel
UPS		Upsilon
Ura	(U)	Uranus
UO1-8		Uranus Orbit Sectors
VED		Venus Deeps
Ven	*	Venus
Ves	*	Vesta
VOJ		Void of Jupiter
VOS		Void of Saturn
XI		Xi
ZET		Zeta

* = Neutral supply centre
(E)= Earth supply centre
(J)= Jupiter supply centre
(M)= Mars supply centre
(S)= Saturn supply centre
(U)= Uranus supply centre.

<u>Example of orders</u>
Jupiter: H AST-BET , F MED L (Lun), M MED-GAM, H Io-AST, F Iap st@ F RHO S FIap*
        F Iap annihilated, F RHO retreats to SIG