

ECLIPSOR

NUMBER THREE
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Published by Paul Willey
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Valencia-6, Spain. Phone 3334930
BUT I WON'T GET ORDERS SENT HERE

On March 19th, I shall be moving out of my flat - or rather
March 20th so the 19th will be the last day you can catch me
here. I'd be grateful if you would all publish my COA,tbus:

Paul Willey, %La Casa Inglesa, Avenida Marques de Sotelo 1, Valencia-2, Spain.

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The deadline will be first post
(12 noon GMT) Friday 2nd April.
Allow seven clear days from UK.
No telephoned orders please.

EDITORIAL (I've dignified it with a title this time!)

Two things to say before I get to the meat of the article. Firstly, if you should want to phone me after I've moved, I can be reached between 4 and 10, usually (that's 3 and 9 GMT) on 321 99 45. For the international dialling code, consult your little orange book, or ring enquiries.

Secondly, I've decided to try to improve the look of the 'zine by typing it twice, so that the lowest copy - i.e. the worst - will be the fourth one down. Most of you will therefore (I hope) notice an improvement in the quality and readability of the thing.

And now to the main point. I've been doing some sums, and have realised that Eccles is costing me about 35p per issue, which is not a vast sum, but, supposing the game runs only 20 moves, that's £6, which is more than I would like to spend for the privilege of bestowing a new variant upon the world. (Actually it's £7, which shows how good I am at sums!) Now, admittedly, I enjoy giving you the benefit of my genius each month, and the zine has expanded more than I originally intended. I'd like to keep the novelty item each month (like the "Have you got the right wife?" last month, and the "Calculated Insult" below), and I hope that Mastermind, at least one ID game, and Eccles 2 (the second Ecliptic game) will have got under way by this month. (Since the only person I've heard from so far is the new stand-by, I don't know whether any of those have provoked any response, for I'm typing this in advance of deadline day for a faster turnaround.) There will also be a competition puzzle each month, and I'm even thinking of introducing a Scrabble page. There is no game fee for any of the games, and I'm thinking of running a Formula 1 game if at least four of you tell me you'd like to join in. So I don't think Eccles can be bad value for money - and that's the point: would you be prepared to pay for it, and keep it as it is, or shall I go back to the newsheet that I originally envisaged? That would give only moves and press for the one original game. It would not be of paramount interest for either you or me. There ~~XXXX~~ is a further alternative, and that is to go "sub", as it were. If one of you offers, or I find someone else willing to carry Eccles as a sub-zine, then I could reach a wider audience, and you would still get it free (provided you already trade or subscribe to the zine we go in.) This would, however, pose pragmatic problems. Due to the time-lag in the fact that I'm living in Spain, I would have to leave at least a fortnight clear to type up the skins and send them to the publisher, so it would probably be necessary to go on to a bi-monthly arrangement, which would slow the games far too much.

If we were to continue as we are, the cost of the zine would be 3½p for a four-page issue, or 4p for a five-page one. That, I think about sums up the choices:
(i) Eclipsor as it is now for 13½p or 14p, inc. postage
(ii) A boring newsheet for 10p postage
(iii) A bi-monthly sub-zine.
I would like you to tell me which of the three alternatives you would prefer, when

you send in your orders. If you plump for the sub-zine, perhaps you would say whether you would be willing to carry Eclipsor in your zine (assuming four sides). I would type out the skins and send them to you for duplicating. If you say nothing I shall assume that you have chosen the alternative I would prefer - namely, carrying on as we are with an extra charge to cover the cost of materials. (The reason that cost is so high, by the way, is that I use light-weight paper so that the bottom copy is as clear as possible, but it is fairly opaque paper so that you can read the thing!) As I say, this is the alternative I would prefer, but, having promised you a free zine, I don't think I can make the decision without your approval.

You may be interested to know that you have so far accrued a debt of 45p (inc postage for this issue, which is free). You may already have added that figure to my credit, but, if not, I'd be grateful if you would. Martin and Doug (if you're still with me), perhaps you'd like to put some money into my English bank account, and tell me how much you have given me. A credit transfer to William's & Glyn's Bank, Reading branch, code 16-29-25, account number 13797665, should not be difficult to arrange.

Okay? I shall await the majority decision, and, if I've got anything more to say, I shall say it on the last page. So, now, on with the business...

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CALCULATED INSULT

Do you play "Advanced Monopoly"? (Fancy inventing a Monopoly variant!. Dave, you should never have encouraged him - and however did you cope with the spelling errors? You should have printed it as it ~~was~~ was, with (Sic) after every other word! But, I digress.) If you do, (fool!) then you have a pocket calculator - or some other device for working out 19.4% of the risk. All this is a very complicated way of saying that for this little item, you will need a pocket calculator.

The question is who invested £14 million plus a further shareholders' sum of £215,469 over five years in exploitation of the Arab race?

To find out, put 14,000,000 into the calculator, add 215,469, and multiply the total by five. Then turn the calculator upside down and read off the answer!

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COMPETITION

This month's competition is very simple. Even you folks will be able to do it. A free issue, and free postage goes to the person who can find the complete list of hidden games in the following paragraph. When I say "hidden" (or even "hidden") I mean that letters are adjacent, even though there may be punctuation marks between them. For example: "We'll have shallLOT TO eat. - Wait, I haven't finished, come BACK. GAMMON and chips..." If this were the passage, your list would be Lotto and Backgammon. Get the idea? I won't tell you how many there are, but it's more than two! Now read on:

Among a list of the world's millionaires, if you look, with care, erstwhile paupers can be found amidst those who were born with silver spoons in their mouths. The number of rags-to-riches stories is immense. There is that fellow who made a fortune by finding some obscure kind of nuts half way up the River Limpopo, kernels of which contain all the elements of a balanced and healthy diet. And you must have heard of the fellow who crammed his garden with ten Nissen huts in which he cultured hybrid geranium plants, to sell to an unsuspecting public.

There's a lot to be said for having money. Life can be a long round of African safari, skiing in winter, cruising round Greek islands and swimming underwater looking for undiscovered pearl beds. Then, on the way back, stowing in some rare pelican astarboard so you can flog it for a fortune to London zoo. Of course, you have to put up with the annoyance of overhearing the crew talking: "Make ready to raise sail - and mind you don't hang

that bloody bird!"

Money can buy a decent education, too. You can hear some young whippersnapper making out he's the bees' knees: "Mater makes such a fuss about me getting my diplomas. Term in December is such a bore, though. In fact, the whole blasted diploma cycle's a bit of a drag." While at night, the walls vibrate from the sound of his hi-fi-(tape and disc)-rabbleroising until all hours, instead of doing his homework, about which he hasn't got a clue! "Done the maths, Smith Minor?" you will hear, the next day. "I'll give you a quid for letting me copy." And all because his old man made a fortune in plastics, even though he's representative of a

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX type that's common.

O, polythene, couldn't you have waited to be discovered? But what I always say is, whether you're rich or poor, it's nice to have money!

There, easy, wasn't it? If you've got more than twenty, you're doing extremely well - because there aren't that many there. More than ten, you're on the way. In fact you may even have them all. So don't forget to send in the list with your orders. If you entered for last month's competition, turn to page 4 to see whether you won.

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THAT WELL-KNOWN WORD GAME MARKETED BY SPEAR'S

(Well, Games & Puzzles have got into trouble by using the trade name that's an anagram of CRABBLES, so I'm not taking any chances!)

			S	O	J	O	U	R	N	S		
			Q	U	O	D						
P	I	C	T	U	R	E						
			A									
R	I	V	A	L								
			I								B	
H	A	D	D	O	C	K					A	
			O		(H)	A	R	R	I	E	R	B
		Z	O					T	E	V	E	
E	X	A	M	I	N	E	R	S			I	
		N	F								E	
F	E										W	
A	L										I	
T	E	L	E	T	Y	P	E				N	
(E)	A				L	A	G	G	I	N	G	

The board is as shown at the side. You started off well, with 64 points, but your opponent came back with a score of 106. Since then, things have gone from bad to worse. There have been several changes of letters, but each time you made a good score, he made a better one, until now, with the final fourteen letters resting on the racks, the scores are 248 to you and 522 to him. Although there doesn't appear to be much hope of winning the game, you now want to get as good a score as possible, with what may be your last turn. The letters on your rack are:

E H N O S U Y

The sender(s) of the correct solution (or one better than mine will get next issue plus postage free.

And, on the subject of Sc - (oops! You know what,) anyone want a game? I'll print the changing board in the 'zine, and send separate letter "racks" to the players. Takers

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MASTERMIND

I forgot to tell you, last month, to keep a check of your guesses. I expect you did that anyway, but just in case you didn't, I'll write on your individual copies what letters you used. You recall that they were A - F for the standard game and G - N for the deluxe game (or rather any combination of four or five of those). Anyone who wishes to join now may submit two guesses for each and add 5p to my credit for one game, or 10p for both. First results are:-
 (Key: X = black peg - right colour right place; O = white peg - right colour wrong place)
 You rotten lot! There aren't any first results because no-one wanted to play. All right, forget it. (But if two or more people send in Mastermind guesses next time, I'll revitalise the idea.) And no-one's bothered to try the competition either. In the face of such underwhelming difference (as opposed to indifference), I won't bother to print my own solution. Okay, well, if you want Ecliptic, turn over.

But, before Ecliptic, some ID CHALLENGES, and I've made them all anonymous!

Top of the list - guess who - Wakers!

DOUG WANKFEELED I'm determined to avenge myself for that stab in NGC ((CENSORED)) and therefore challenge you to single combat over the ID table. Mxyplkt.

THREE-FACE ((It has to be Doug!)) Do you dare try a game where lying and cheating get you nowhere? If so, I will be delighted to take you on. ((at ID I suppose)) Frgmkt.

MARTIN How do you fancy Intimate Abstraction or Intimate Multiplicity? Krud Flu.

URIAH KITCHENER You are hereby challenged to defend yourself alone and single-handed at the game of ID. Will you have the nerve to be beaten in public? Horse Chestnut.

There they are. It seems no-one dare take on Dave or Steve - or maybe it's just that they're such nice fellers no-one wants to humiliate them by smashing them in public (as I'm going to do in TotS - see press for Eccles 1). How about a game with each other, you two? Oh, and Richard Walkerdine will, I hope, be joining the select circle of Eclipsor readers. Anyone want to take him on?

I think Krud Flu had a good idea. Intimate Variants. I'm prepared to run:
Intimate Abstraction (with optional starting rules)
Intimate Multiplicity (with the original Walkerdine rules)
Intimate War of the Roses (White Rose v. Red Rose to be decided by chance means)
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ XXX (Forget it!)

Those, together with the most boring game I've ever played*, are the only variants with which I'm familiar, so I'd have a job to GM any others. Intimate Ecliptic might be interesting, but no two people would ever send in different preference lists!

Anyway, if you want to find out the identity of Mxyplkt, Frgmkt, Krud Flu or Horse Chestnut, send in acceptances and preference lists. I'll send results by return of post and hope to get the game off the ground by next issue. If you want to play an Intimate Variant, let me know.

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E C L I P T I C

First the inevitable rule addenda, prompted by your questions, which I'm glad to receive because they make me realize that what I've taken for granted needs to be put in black and white.

QUESTION (Steve Pratt and Dave Ross) Can hyperfleets move safely through radioactive areas, provided they don't end up in such an area?

ANSWER The relevant section of Rule 3 will now read "...It does not matter if the intervening spaces are occupied or radioactive, since the units will be considered to travel through 'hyperspace' and not ordinary space..."

QUESTION (Steve Pratt) Are hyperfleets stood off in the ordinary way?/

ANSWER Rule 3 will also contain the further addition "Hyperfleets may be stood off in the ordinary way. That is to say, if a hyperfleet is ordered from space 1 to space 4 (via spaces 2 and 3, or any other way), and another unit is ordered to space 4 with the same amount of support, the hyperfleet remains in space 1 and not space 3."

QUESTION (Steve Pratt) Can hyperfleets move by ambiguous routes or must intervening spaces be named?

ANSWER The updated rules contain the words "It is recommended that, when writing orders for moves through hyperspace the intervening spaces are named. This is in case of any dispute over the legality of a move, and, provided the GM can see that a move is legal, he cannot disallow a move on the grounds of an error in the meaning of these areas." In the game(s) I am running, if the intervening spaces are not named, and I cannot see how the move can be legal, I shall disallow the move even if it is subsequently proved that the move was legal. Moral: write the names of the intervening spaces.

QUESTION (Dave Ross) I take it Earth cannot fire an unlimited number of missiles from its ships? Can it fire any?

ANSWER (Quote from last issue's rule changes) "The number of missiles is equal to the

*The most boring game I've ever played - Third Age II.

number of home supply centres. Whoever owns a home supply centre receives one missile. Earth's two supply centres (new italics) can each fire any number of missiles." NEW ADDITION (and this is not on even your copy, Richard) "In other words, Earth has 2 (shipboard) missiles + n home supply centre missiles at the beginning of the game. XX She gains extra shipboard missiles by gaining extra home supply centres."

QUESTION (Dave Ross) One more point about missiles. If someone launches a missile into a province, and during that move another fleet also moves into the same province, does anything happen or can the missile proceed to its destination next time?

ANSWER (Quote from rule 4) "Missiles may move into provinces (areas) already occupied by other units, but these units are unaffected unless detonation occurs in that area..." I don't think it makes any difference whether the "other units" move there during the same move. In other words, no, nothing happens, and, yes, the missile proceeds to its destination next time. Have a look at Earth's moves for this season.

QUESTION (Andy Evans) One question ... why did you make the game seasons every ten years? Surely it doesn't take me 10 years to get my hyperfleets into orbit round Earth.

ANSWER It appears to have taken you 20 years, Andy! But, seriously, the reason was to get some kind of overall realism in the timescale. Admittedly, moves such as getting into space are not realistic over ten years - but, then, taking from spring until autumn to move an army from one province to an unoccupied adjacent one isn't either, even in 1901. On the larger view, though, the areas between planets are so vast that 10 years travel is not unreasonable, even at an Earth-escape velocity of 25,000,000 miles per hour. The main point, though, is the time taken by Pluto to complete one revolution of the sun - 240 Earth years. Making each "season" ten years allows the revolution of the other planets to be scaled accordingly - except the inner ones. Your question ties in with a comment Steve Doubleday made: "One point I would make is that it is necessary to stress that the positions of the inner planets remain the same because of the physical difficulty of moving them round the board." Not true. As it is, the board is in no way related to true scale, so it would be no problem to increase the scale of the central area and decrease the rest slightly. Mercury's orbital period, however, is 96 days, so if we made 96 days the standard season, with only Mercury remaining in a fixed position, Pluto would require approximately 913 orbit sectors!!! I think that 24 is quite sufficient. As it is, it will be 48 moves before the planets are back in the positions in which they started, and I believe it would be wishful thinking to imagine the game will last even that long. For 913 moves, though... we should all be octogenarians by the time the game finished, even starting at the age of 4! (If it lasted until the planets were back in one place, that is.)

Those are the only questions I've had so far. If anything else strikes you as wholly, do ask.

There still appear to be misconceptions over the missile rules. A unit can launch or do anything else, but not both. The order must be written, for example, like this: F(PI)L(SAV). This means that the fleet in Pi launches a missile whose target is Saturn's Void. The following order must also be written: M(PI)-S02. On the following move, whether you write the order or not, the missile will move to Saturn's Void and detonate, unless it is prevented by a defensive missile launched into Saturn Orbit sector 2.

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Eccles 2 (The second game of Ecliptic)

This was the game I proposed last issue, and only Dave declined, by which I assume that the rest of you are in (or didn't read the bit which I said your silence would be taken as acceptance.) Before I give you the line-up, a RULE CHANGE FOR THIS GAME ONLY: I suspect that Saturn is overly weak, and the main reason for this seems to be that Uranus is overly strong. In this game, therefore, Uranus will begin with only three fleets, placed on any three of the six supply centres. Another rule change, suggested by Dave Ross is that the target of missiles be known only to the GM. He thinks this will encourage the use of missiles against other units, rather than supply centres. He has a good point, so we'll incorporate this rule, too, unless a majority of you votes against it. All right, get diploming. The line up is on the next page.

Second Ecliptic Game, Eccles 2 (Please read note at foot of previous page)

EARTH Martin Hammon, 28 Beckenham Drive, Allington Park, Maidstone, Kent.
MARS Richard Walkerdine, 43 Chapel Grove, Addlestone, Weybridge, Surrey KT15
JUPITER Andy Evans, 36 Brynmill Terrace, Brynmill, Swansea, South Wales SA2 0BA
SATURN Roger Kitchener, 74 Stoneyard Lane, Poplar High Street, London E14 0BY
URANUS Stephen Pratt, 15 Craneford Close, Twickenham, Middx., TW2 7SD.

Doug, I've left you out of this game, because of your note about lack of time, but can you do standby duty until I can find someone else, please. It means sending in standby orders for all the planets this time. See note about other game, too.

.. .. .

Eccles 1, better know as NGC PT 762 Year 3020 NUCLEAR POWER UNLEASHED!

PLANETS Jupiter 1/2, Saturn 1/2, Uranus 1/2, Neptune 1/2, Pluto 1/2.

EARTH Nor L (ZET); MARS F(Lam)-Pal; JUPITER F(AST)-Ero; SATURN F(CHI)-Phe;
 (Andy Sou L (DEV); (Ross de F (MU)-Cer; (Uriak F (XI)-AST; (Vulture) F(SO1)-Enc;
 the M(Nor)-DEL; Cordoba) F(CSO)-THE. Kitchener) F(JO2)-NU; F(OMI)-JO2;
 Trojan) M(Sou)-MED; URANUS F(INN)-Tri; F(DOU)-U08; F(RHO) L (Iap) F(SO3)-RHO;
 H(Nor)-MED; (Colonel F(PSI)-Dio; F(UO2)-SAV; M(RHO)-SO3; F(PHI)-CHI;
 Blimp) F(UO1)-PSI; F(UMB)-INN. M(JO2)-OMI(Tet).

PLANETS MOVE TO: Jupiter 2/1, Saturn 2/3, Uranus 2/3, Neptune 2/3, Pluto 2/3.

Jupiter cannot have a missile in JO2 because there was nothing to launch it. Normally, if your orders are written incorrectly, but their meaning is clear and legal, I will alter them to read correctly. If my alteration makes something you didn't mean, too bad: you should have written them right!

Doug, due to lack of time, wants to drop out, and asked for permission to let Roger order his units. Normally, I would accept that, but a test game is a different matter, so I'm now asking STEVE PRATT (address above) to take over Saturn. Thanks for the unused standby orders, by the way Steve.

THE STATE OF THE WORLDS

Supply Centres
Earth Nor, Sou No change for 2;
Mars Mar, Phs, Dei + Cer, Pal Builds F (Phs), F (Dei) for 5;
Jupiter Cal, Eur, Io, Gan + Ero Builds F (Io) for 5;
Saturn Rhe, Tet, Iap, Mim, Tan + Phe, Enc. Bld F (Rho) & (Phi) 7;
Uranus Mir, Umb, Tia, Obe, Ari, Ura + Tit, Dio. Blds F (Obe) & (Ari) for 8.

Missiles All unchanged except for Uranus, who is -1. (E 2+n, M 3, J 3, S 5, U 6)

PRESS

From the Office of the President of the World ((Earth, I think he means)), Ambassador to the Five Planets, and War Chief ((Sic)) Extraordinaire Sod it!

Sirius Mind you, for a man with two units they were quite some orders, weren't they?

Xenophobes H(OUT)-PO18; H(GAC)-NO12; H(GPC)-NO4; H(OUT)-PO7. Here we come. Soon the whole system will be ours... Cackle, cackle...

Uranus City Blimp... Blimp... Blimp... Dcar standby, can you please tell me what you are going to do with your bits and pieces. I would presume that you intend going against Jupiter but I can ((can't?)) really be sure, as I can't follow this game at all. ((Why should this game be different?)) Blimp... Blimp... Blimp...

Sirius If you're lucky, he'll write and tell you. He just took control of Saturn.

Saturn It may look like Paul Willey is independant, but, like most people I really control everything he does.

Marsport ((I can't make up my mind whether to censor this or not!)) A short summary of the TotS ID game '0'. After New Year Build 1903, Russia (Ross), with 11 units and £8M remaining, controls England, Germany, Austria, Italy and Turkey. France (Willey) control nothing! Willey, you're dead!

Sirius If he plays his cards right, he stands a slim chance of winning that game...

A couple more points about the rules. If a unit is ordered to launch and is dislodged from its position, the launch still takes place. Secondly, a unit which has become unorderable due to an overlong period in AST (Rule 7, para d) may be dislodged by other units of the same power. Will write necessary addenda next time. See you in 3030.