

ECCLES

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No telephoned orders, please.

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Dave Ross is on his way by to England (via Morocco and Madrid) and by the time you read this, he will be back at 99 Richmond Avenue, Hillingdon, Middx., UB10 9BJ. He'll be off again to college on April 26th, if I remember correctly, and that address you will find at the end of my zine review on page 5.

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PAUL'S PRATTLE (Slightly less pretentious than "Editorial", don't you think?)

Following on from the COA, you will see I have switched to a four-week deadline. Now Dave's back in England, it will be a lot easier to diplomate with him (if anyone wants to!) and five weeks has stretched it out a bit.

We've got a bad attack of the NMR's this month, so can Richard have a look at the standby request with EC 1, please, and Dave for EC 2?

As regards the price of this little zine, it seems we're unanimous in the willingness to pay a whole 4p plus postage for it. Those of you who didn't comment either forgot, or didn't read last issue's Editorial, but I've taken that for acceptance, as I said I would. Just in case there are some people not reading this, I'm going to double space the next announcement:-

THIS ISSUE COSTS YOU FOUR P L U S P O S T A G E

Dave has told me that he's going to do a straight swap for Rocinante, because he's such a generous fellow, and, since Andy hasn't told me what my credit is recently, I suspect he's already doing likewise. Thanks chaps. The rest of you pubbers, out there, I don't mind whether you do that ('he's the best!') or whether you add 14p to my credit for each issue of Eccles you receive. (But I'd be grateful if you'd let me know which way you're doing it.) Those of you who are not pubbers, or who I don't pay directly for their zines - Roger, Martin, Doug - can you send me some money, please (or put it in my bank account, of which there were details last month) and I'll list your credit each month. In case my bank forgets to tell me who deposited what, you'd better let me know how much you put in, if you do it directly. If you don't know how much you owe me, those of you who were with me since the beginning owe me 59p, including this issue, (because in Issue 1, you were to pay for the photocopies of the map.)

No-one won the competition, but Richard Walkerdine came very close. Hard luck Richard. This month's is dead easy if you're not a word expert, so I'll look forward to receiving your entries. Have a go at the Scrabble problem, too, which should be a lot easier than last month's. By the way, apart from Richard, who told me, in case you didn't WXM read the list of Scrabble winners in this month's G & P, I shall blow my own trumpet: that vast fortune will come in very handy some time. After all, you never know when 38p will be the difference between being able to afford a Diplomacy set and not. (I must buy one soon!)

In case you don't want to plough through six more pages of my elegant prose, for the time being, the game is on p 7 - Yes, a bumper size this month!

TACT AND DIPLOMACY

Alf, Bert and Claude regularly played Diplomacy, but, being just the three of them, they played with total elimination of the other two being the victory criterion. Also, to save time, they started with all 34 centres being divided among them. It was a disproportionate division, based upon each player's success (or lack of success) in previous games - something like a golfing handicap.

On this particular occasion, the handicap calculation was to give Alf half the centres, Bert a third of the centres, and Claude a ninth of the centres. This proved somewhat difficult since 34 is not readily divisible by three or nine.

It was David (who had agreed to GM the game) who came up with the solution. "I'm going to make North Africa and Albania supply centres," he said. "That means there are thirty-six. Alf, you will start holding Turkey's three, Austria's three, Italy's three, Russia's four, Rumania, Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria and Tunis, for 18 - half the thirty-six. Bert, you will hold England's three, Germany's three, the three in Scandinavia, the two low countries and Portugal, for 12 - one third of the thirty-six. And Claude, you'll get France and Spain for four - a ninth of the thirty-six. All right?"

"Wait a minute," objected Claude. "That means there are two left over - North Africa and Albania."

"No problem," smiled David. "We'll make them neutral again. All right, gentlemen, your orders for 1901, please..."

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1938- A NEW GAMESTART

While I was in Cordoba with Dave Ross, a few weekends ago, just after the last issue of Eccles, I came across a five-player variant in a copy of Diplomacy World. It was called 1938. and, since I was planning an FTF meeting which looked as though it might be two players short, I copied out the map and the rules.

I never got round to playing it, but I set the board up and considered it from the various player's viewpoints. It looked so interesting (somewhat to my surprise) that I decided to try to start a game in Eccles. I'm not lashing out on photocopies until I know whether you're going to play, and if you sign up, I'll send you a photocopy next time. Meanwhile, I'll describe it.

The differences from the Diplomacy map are minimal, but basically they are as follows. Piedmont comes up as far as Munich, Tyrolia/Vienna is shifted over a bit and called Austria, while Bohemia is united with Galicia and called Czechoslovakia. Trieste is called Croatia, and Budapest, no longer a supply centre, is called Hungary. Kiel is made smaller and divided from Berlin and Munich by a non-supply centre, Central Germany. Silesia is out, so Berlin goes down as far as Czechoslovakia (Bohemia/Galicia). Prussia is moved east and becomes a supply centre, divided from the rest of Germany by an off-shoot of Poland which comes up to meet the Baltic coast. The rest of Poland, a supply centre, is made up of what was Warsaw and the Ukraine. (It is neutral.) Livonia is now called the Baltic States, and is neutral, though not a supply centre, and Finland also becomes neutral, though it is a supply centre. Moscow is not a supply centre, but Ural, a new state east of Moscow, is. Ural adjoins St. Petersburg and Volga, another new state dividing Sevastopol from the south of the board. Armenia/Syria are combined to become Middle East, and the rest of Turkey becomes a single supply centre. Other changes are that Tunis, Serbia, and Bulgaria are no longer supply centres. - Oh, and nor is Denmark.

The rules are fairly simple. The first move is Spring 1938. England and France begin as they do in Regular, Germany has an extra army in Prussia, Italy's fleet begins in Rome (with armies in Naples and Venice), and Russia begins with a fleet in St.P (north coast) and an army in Ural and Sev. Now, here's the clever bit: Swe, Spain, Turkey and Poland are occupied by an army in civil disorder. There are 29 sc's and the victory criterion is 16. If you can see the possibilities this offers, you'll be anxious to sign up. I'll hope to start next time.

C O M P E T I T I O N S

Last month, as I think I told you, no-one went in for the competition. This month, I don't know (since I'm typing this in advance of deadline day). If so, the name(s) of the winner(s) are in the Editorial. Anyway, in case some of you tried it, and didn't win, or didn't send it in, here is the

SOLUTION TO LAST MONTH'S COMPETITION

...if you look with CARE, ERStwhile paupers... ...rags-to-riCHES Stories...
 ...up the River Limpopo, KERnels of which... ...African safARI, SKIing in...
 ...with TEN NISSen huts, in which he cultured hyBRID GERanium plants...
 ...on the way back, stowING IN some rare pelICAN ASTARboard...
 ...swimming underWATER, LOOKing for... ...the crew tALKING. "MAKE Ready to...
 ...some young whipperSNAPper making Out he's...
 ...getting my dipLOMAS. TERM IN December is... ...the whole DIPLOMA Cycle...
 ...(tape and diSC) RABBLerousing until... ...got a CLUE. "DOne the math's...
 ...that's COMMON. O, POLYthene, couldn't you...

Only 17. If you can't read the above, ~~XXXX XXX'XX XXXXX of XXXXX~~, here's the list written plainly: Careers, chess, poker, Risk, tennis, bridge, gin, canasta, Waterloo, Kingmaker, snap, go, Mastermind, Diplomacy, Scrabble, Cluedo, Monopoly. Can anyone successfully hide "Mah Jongg"?(!)

THIS MONTH'S COMPETITION

I wasn't going to have one, but I've been thinking about this while typing. As I told you last time, I now type out the whole zine twice, each time with a number of carbon copies. The original idea was to improve the quality, but since the number of subscribers has gone up, you probably haven't noticed too much of a change. Anyway, although I type it twice, the second run-through is never quite the same as the first. There are typing errors which occur in one and not the other, slight rephrasings, etc., and, if I wished, I could make it so that no two of you received identical zines. Assuming that there is no limit to the number of carbon copies I could take from one typing, and I typed each of five pages twice, what would be the maximum number of subscribers to whom I could give different copies? (I keep one for myself). Free Eccles to anyone who solves it.

THAT WELL-KNOWN WORD GAME MARKETED BY SPEARS'

Last month's solution Using the P of PICTURE, the R of RIVAL, the E of EXAMINERS, you can make EUPHROSYNE for a total score of 267. This brings your score up to 515. Your opponent's score of 522 is reduced by the letters left in his hand, so you easily win the game.

This month's problem

B	R	E	A	K	I	N	G			"	"	Y	C		
O	*	L								J	O	V	I	A	N
W		E								A			D		
"		V	A	P	I	D	I	T	Y		*			"	
		A	*							*					E
		'	T							'					G
		E			"	"									X
P		S	H	A	D	I	N	G		S					E
H		"			"	U	"	Q	U	O	T	A	S		
Q	'				'	M		R							'
S					R	E	F	E	R	C	E				
G		*			R	M		*							"
F	T				T	"	A	"	E			*			
N	I				I	T	'							*	
E	N	C	I	R	I	C	L	E			"				£

Key * = double word score; " = double letter sc;
 £ = triple word score; ' = triple letter score

A mammoth game with countless 50 bonuses (boni?) Your opponent has just taken the last letters, and you are to play. The scores are level and your hand is ~~XXX~~ A L N O Z - - (2 blanks) What would you play, to be fairly sure of winning, even if your opponent is able to use all his letters if he gets another turn?

A solution better than mine, or as good as mine gets a free Eccles.

IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED, ALL THE COMPETITIONS ARE EASIER THIS MONTH, SINCE I'VE OBVIOUSLY BEEN AIMING AT TOO HIGH AN I.Q!

AN OBITUARY

In fact, two obituaries: Fifth Column After a wasting away malady, Fifth Column has finally been laid to rest. Plenty of other people have mourned its passing, and I can add nothing new, except to say that for the short time I knew it I enjoyed reading it, and waited for it to come through the letter box. Richard handled the demise of his zine very well, leaving no orphaned players hanging around for months while they waited for new zines to be arranged, but organised new homes for the games before he allowed the zine to fold. A pity others don't follow his example.

Uriah's Heap An infant mortality, for after only six ~~XXXXXX~~ issues, (the last one being No. 5 - typical Roger!) it went to an early grave. Pity Roger found it a drag, because every page was packed with his way out sense of humour ~~and his~~ ~~zine~~. Roger, too, handled the fold responsibly and gave his games, lock, stock and subzines to Ron Rayner, which brings me neatly from the Deaths Column to the Births Column, or rather

REBIRTHS

Gummiballs (What an odious sensation that title calls to mind!) Like Trojan Horse before it, Ron ~~XXXXXX~~ has seen the limitations of working within Shenandoah Services framework and has made his zine independent. The issue I received looked good, and I hope Ron will want to trade with me. ~~That was~~ ~~the~~ ~~best~~ ~~zine~~ ~~yet~~. One thing in it which shines above UH is in spelling. Ron knows how to spell "too". Unfortunately, like Roger, he can't spell "you're". We can't all be perfect, though.

Rocinante Before long, Dave will be slaving over the presses again to revitalise his brainchild. Pity about the title, though, Dave. If I remember my "Don Quijote de la Mancha", Rocinante was a skinny, useless old nag which Quijote thought was a wonderful charger. Perhaps that's an example of your natural modesty. Anyway, I shall look forward to seeing its return. One good thing about the temporary halt to which the zine has led, is its introducing me to another excellent zine:

AND NOW THE OTHERS

Ad Nauseam (This article has turned into a zine review, so I might as well comment on them all. Or, at least, all the ones I get.) This one, I have to tell you, is high on my top ten list. (That should offend anyone, because I think I only get about ten!) Not only is the content interesting, well written, comparatively free of typos, constructed wittily and grammatically, but it is well-laid out. That may seem an unimportant point, but too many editors cram everything together to save paper. Steve makes his zine look as though it's worth reading.

Trojan Horse Another one high on my list. Also well-laid-out, but doesn't quite take the prize from Steve. Good illustrations (Andy draws Snoopy better than Schultz does!) and not many typos. Very witty, and full of good articles ~~and~~ ~~zine~~ ~~yet~~. ~~And~~, apart from that, I'm in a lot of games in it. Andy also knows how to write English.

Japhidrew I may be in the minority, but I'm not overly keen on Japh. There are a great many articles which I feel have no place in a games zine. If I wanted to pay for the paper and postage most of this uses, I'd subscribe to Melody Maker, and get it written by somebody who knows what he's talking about. Not that Phil necessarily doesn't, but I'm not happy about paying for LP reviews I don't want to read. However the zine is worth getting if only for the subzine inside, whose name ~~is~~ I'm not sure of. It's either Fastanbulbous or it's the Blimp. Perhaps it's both, but whatever it's called it's worth reading. And, Martin, no matter what Sharp or any others say, I like the way you lay out the games. Keep it as it is.*

Misteimer Well, this brings us to the Shenandoah Services of such notoriety. I feel that poor Graham Mills has been misjudged by others. It seems to me that what he was trying to do was worth doing - namely set up a self-supporting, non-foldable zine. A good idea. But just because (as I understand it) the wording of his letter cancelling his trades - (I'm going to continue this on the next page. You may wonder why I break off in mid-sentence to tell you that, but I think I'll let you go on wondering.)

What I was going to say is that due to an ~~XXXXX~~ insufficient use of tact, he suddenly became the big black villain of Postal Diplomacy. The NGC Committee, who, I have to admit, introduced me to the hobby, but who, in my view, wield far too much power, stamped on him, and are apparently trying to force him to fold. While I'm on the subject of the NGC Committee, all I can say is thank God there are the Steve Doubledays and the Richard Walkerdines to make up for the John Piggotts and the Richard Sharps and the... Well, I won't go on. Some of you might actually like other members of the Committee. I suppose somebody must!

Anyway, to get back to SS it seems to me - and perhaps I don't know all the facts, in which case, I hope someone will apprise me of them - that what Graham was trying to do was a good thing for the hobby as a whole, and if the small group of people who have the most influence over it (in this country at least) cannot look beyond their petty prejudices and piques, it is more than a great pity.

Mad Policy Is there anybody who doesn't get MP? If so, he can't be a very keen member of the hobby. Richard, I understand, is one of the longest running pubbers in the country, and, in everyone else's opinion, not just my own, one of the best. He's also a thoroughly nice fellow. Apart from all that he's just started running a fiction page - and I won't tell you the author, but he's one of the best and the most modest writers playing Diplomacy. No, that was a rather feeble attempt at wit. If you play postal Dip, get MP.

Jigsaw Nicely laid out, well illustrated, extremely fast on turnaround. Style of writing leaves a little to be desired, but you can't have everything. His GMing is good, and he gets it to you quickly.

Turn of the Screw Full of typically undergraduate political satire, I'm afraid, but since a large proportion of the hobby enthusiasts are undergraduates, I suppose it will be popular with them. Not my cup of tea, though. I just happened to get landed with a game there.

WHERE YOU CAN GET THEM:

Gumbiballs Ron Rayner, 32 Wentworth Avenue, West Finchley, N3 1YL. Price unstated. NGC.

Rocinante Dave Ross, U of Essex, Rayleigh 5, Wivenhow Park, PO Box 26, CO4 3UE.

4p + postage, NGC ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~

Ad Nauseam Steve Pratt, 15, Craneford Close, Twickenham, Middx TW2 7SD. ~~XXXXXX~~
NGC and independent. Price varies between 5p + post and 20p inc post.

Trojan Horse Andy Evans, 36 Brynmill Terrace, Brynmill, Swansea, SA20BA. NGC, 6p + post

Japhidrew Phil Stutt, 10, Muller Road, Bristol. Averages about 20p + post. DF

Shenandoah Services Graham Mills, 89 Mayfield Road, Sanderstead, Surrey CR2 0BJ

20p + postage (a lot) Independent and NGC

Mad Policy Richard Wakerdine, 43 Cahpel Grove, Addlestone, Weybridge, Surrey KT15 1U

7½p + post. Independent.

Jigsaw Roy Taylor, 63a St Nicolas Park Drive, Nuneaton, Warks CV11 6DZ (6½p. NGC

Turn of the Screw Greg Hawes, Corpus Christi College, Oxford OX1 4JF. 6p + post. NGC

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THIS MONTH'S QUESTIONS

- Q. Steve Pratt; Does Neptune border on INN? ie, if a unit is left in INN for two consecutive seasons, it would be sucked into Neptune.
- A. Neptune does border on INN, but the unit would only be drawn into Neptune if unordered. "F INN stand" would be sufficient to keep it safe. If the hypothetical F INN is not mentioned, though, then it becomes trapped on Neptune.
- Q. Steve Pratt. When Pluto is at PO1/PO24 and PO12/PO13, does it border on Neptune orb?
- A. Yes, but not on Neptune itself, of course if Neptune is at NO1/16 or NO8/9.
- Q. (Steve continues) ie can you go NO1-PO1?
- A. Yes. In fact there is a four-way join at those points, so you can go NO1-PO24 etc., but two units cannot cross at once. That is to say if one unit were ordered NO1-PO24, and another NO16-PO1, they would stand each other off, for the same reason that units cannot change places with each other: two units cannot cross the same frontier moving in different directions.

I have now produced a definitive set of rules for Ecliptic - at, least, I hope they're definitive - and I shall be sending a set off to Steve for him to forward to the new Variants archivist. I shall also be asking him to put me on the waiting list for the game. Anyone want to GM a game? Andy? Martin? Steve? Dave? You should all be now fully competent to do so. The rule about Uranus beginning with only three units, as in EC 2, is now law. So, Martin, I shall expect you to win EC 1. (Though, in fact, I suspect that someone else is going to...) I've also redrawn the map - a much more chi-chi version than the one you've got, though, of course, the same in principle, so I hope the NGC will be able to electronically duplicate it. Anyway, the following is a do-it-yourself kit to bring your rules (the ones in Eccles 1) up to date. (~~Richard~~ Richard, the rules you have are "semi-definite: they need fewer addenda than what follows.)

Each paragraph of rules is given a letter. Rule 2 is divided into paras (a) - (f). (A) - (d) is what is given on the first page of your rules, with (b) extended, giving the details I explained last issue of the rationale behind the game periods. (d) is also extended to say that units may move between orbit sectors even if there is a planet in the way. E.g. If Saturn were at S01/2, the move F (S01) - S02 would still be legal. Paragraph (e) notes when planets move, and recommends that GMs give the positions of the planets before and after moves. Paragraph (f) refers to the points about the Plu and Nep orbits given at the foot of the previous page.

Rule 3 is divided into paras (a) - (e). (a) - (c) are what are in the first paragraph of your rules, with an amplification and examples. The amplification is to say that the "common coastline" rule for Diplomacy does not apply. In other words, a unit can move from MED - Nor, for example, and then from Nor - BET. Paras (d) - (e) are the two at the top of p. 2 of your rules. One addition is that occupation of a supply centre for gaining the secret of hyperdrive may be IN SPRING ONLY. Rule 4 was updated in Issue 2. Paras (a) - (d) can be found in Issue 2, page 3, and Issue 3, page 5. (e) is the paragraph in the original rules beginning "Missiles may move into areas...", and (f) the one beginning "It is obviously necessary..." and has added to it "...and a note of which supply centres are still available for transfer of missile." The paragraph before that, in your rules, has now been deleted, and a much clearer example is given for para (j). Paras (g) and (h) are the ones at the top of p.3 of the original rules. (i) is new, and says that dislodgement of a unit launching a missile does not prevent the launch. (k) refers to the optional rule we are playing in EC 2 that the GM does not publish the target of a missile at the time of launching. (Note that this does not mean you do not need to tell the GM the target at the time of launching.)

Rule 5 is divided into paras (a) - (c), but the only difference from your rules is that Uranus starts with only 3 units, and gets one extra build for each build season until it is up to strength.

Rules 6 ((a) and (b)) and 7 ((a) - (d)), are as per your original rules. Rule 8 includes an example of each type of order, and an extension of Just's Right Hand Rule to cater for hyperfleets. Rule 9 is divided into two paragraphs, and explains the victory criterion if there is an odd number of habitable supply centres (i.e., half of them rounded up.) 10 is the list of abbreviations, and points out that the old maps - the ones you have - possess a neutral moon of Saturn called "Eoc". This should be "Enc", the abbreviation for Enceladus. It also points out the abbreviations which are not the first three letters of the areas, due to possible misunderstanding, but you can work those out for yourselves, without needing to bring to much brainwork to bear.

So there you are. If you tried to read that without reference to the rules, it probably didn't make a great deal of sense, and, Ron, if you're still with us, not even having a set of rules, I shall be very surprised. But, seriously, if anyone wants to GM a game, (and I hope someone does, because I want to play in one), write and tell me and I'll send you one of the new sets of rules. I've got three spare sets.

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There now follows a ~~XXXXX YZZZZ~~ (I don't use space fillers) - a joke:- ~~XXXXXXXX~~
What do you call a lumberjacks' folk tune? A logger rhythm. ((Stolen from John Leeder))

