

The Queen's Lane Advertiser

(Incorporating Convention News)

Issue Number 14

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Edited by Jeremy Tullett



Editorial (Jeremy Tullett)

I tell you what would be nice ... some feedback.

I know that Nick's article in the last issue generated some response, and I can infer that this 'zine is serving some perceived purpose, because David has managed to persuade Psychocon and Frome GamesCon to contribute to this issue.

It is hard for me to judge the impact of these 'zine on the registrations for Midcon 2006, but at the moment, I would say 'not much'. However, the last issue appeared in July, which was quite a while ago, and this issue may provoke more response, being closer to the event.

Frome GamesCon 2006

Following the success of this year's Frome GamesCon, the 2006 Frome GamesCon will be held at the Cheese and Grain Building in Frome on Sunday July 9th. The Frome GamesCon will run from 10am till 5pm.

The GamesCon will be once again organised by Wassail Games of Frome. The eagle eyed amongst you will have noted that this is the day of the World Cup Finals. The GamesCon will finish at 6pm and as the match starts at 8pm, so there is no overlap. We are trying to negotiate a projected transmission of the game for those who might like to stay on, watch this space for more details.

The 2006 Frome GamesCon will follow the same format as this years, where we were supported by oodles of games manufacturers, companies promoting their games and of course many, many games there for everyone to play! We had around 80 explainers helping us out; we also had direct support from companies ranging from WizzKids and Days of Wonder through to Twilight Creations and Rio Grande Games. Games authors were in attendance demonstrating their games, giving strategy tips and chatting to all and sundry. Prototypes that will be on the shelves soon were unveiled. Food and drink were available all day. The GamesCon even had it's own specially commissioned beer brewed for the occasion called "WassAle". The cost of entry was a mere pound. Although we clashed with not only the hottest day of 2005 and a massive free jazz concert in a local park we attracted 300 people.

This was a family driven event not just for experienced gamers that introduced new people to the wonderful world of modern games. Not only board games but CCG's, RPG's CSG's Miniatures, Fantasy, War Games and Puzzles were alongside well loved classics like Chess, Scrabble, Go and Backgammon. Most of the games played were available to buy on the day and the range went from board games to miniatures. A team attended promoting the "Call of Cthulu" were admirably supporting their game. There was a great display featuring 3D terrain for Pirates of the Spanish Main where every Pirate and Buccaneer who played was given a free ship. The manufacturers and authors of Cirondo, Bloody Legacy and Treasure Island were also there to help and explain their games to all and sundry.

There were many spot prizes held during the day with heaps of goodies given away ranging from limited edition games, tee shirts, board games and puzzles. Games that proved to be unexpectedly popular on the day were Hive, Confrontation and Fluxx and the ever popular Tantrix, Carcassonne, Memoir 44 and Ticket to Ride seemed to be constantly played!

We had many feedback forms handed in after the event and all were universally positive, the only criticism being that it only happens once a year.

Below is a review that appeared in the local press of the 2005 event.

Frome Festival GamesCon Sunday 10th July, Cheese & Grain

Following its successful debut last year, the second Frome GamesCon moved to the Cheese & Grain this year to create more room for players. It proved a wise choice given the growing interest in one of the festival's more unusual offerings.

The GamesCon was organised by Wassail Games and Iksentrik Models, both of Catherine Hill. Like last year, a lot of effort had gone into ensuring that there was something going on to interest everyone. The organisers were ably assisted by a friendly and enthusiastic team of games-players in green shirts ready to explain a huge range of games from family favourites, abstract puzzles through to historical battles.

There were also guest demonstrators exhibiting their own games or introducing visitors to role-playing games, card games such as Magic and miniatures games, such as War Machine and Confrontation. A team from Wales demonstrated the fast, furious and frustrating card game Fluxx.

A popular participation game was Pirates of the Crimson Coast where players tried to amass booty by sailing their model pirate ships to treasure-filled islands. Other popular games (there were dozens!) were the train-themed Ticket to Ride and the tile-laying puzzle game Tantrix, where you could be taught to play by not only the current British numbers two and five but by the runner up in the 2004 World Championships!

Food and a keg of Wass Ale, brewed specially by the local Milk Street Brewery, were available at the bar to keep visitors and organisers refreshed.

The aim of GamesCon was to attract a new gaming audience. From the numbers that flowed through the door this year, the word is spreading.

Toby Whitty

Tournaments at PsychoCon 2005 (Mike Dean)

Puerto Rico

The most popular game at PsychoCon 2004 was Puerto Rico which was new to about half of the players. In Puerto Rico the players are plantation owners in the days when the ships had sails. Growing up to five different kinds of crops: Corn, Indigo, Coffee, Sugar and Tobacco, they must try to run their business more efficiently than their close competitors. A unique game system let the players choose the order of the phases in each turn, and the player who understand to employ these most effectively, will win the game. Puerto Rico is the number one rated game on BoardGameGeek.

As in 2004, there will be an ad-hoc tournament where players will count the best 3 or 4 games (depending on number of players and games played) to decide the winner. Each game is worth 25 points per player and these are shared on a pro rata basis. Open to all ages, second place in 2004 went to a 13 year old who had never played before.

Formula Dé

Formula Dé is a fast-paced racing game in which the cars' top speeds are limited by having to end a certain number of turns in each curve of the racetrack. This can be tricky, because although players can regulate their speeds by choosing which gear to be in and each gear allows a certain range of movement, the exact amount is determined randomly.

Formula Dé was popular with the gamers in 2004. The tournament consisted of two semi-finals with the top half of each competing in the final. 18-year-old Stephanie van Bommel looked like a certain winner until she over reached just before the final bend and had to change down to a low gear and was overtaken down the home straight. Great fun for a large group, there will be a tournament in 2005.

Diplomacy

Diplomacy needs no introduction here, so none will be given! This year, there will be a diplomacy tournament at PSYCHOCON organized by none other than Manorcon 2005 winner, John Stratford. Competition looks set to be fierce!

Acquire

In this game, each player strategically invests in businesses, trying to retain a majority of stock. When the various companies start to grow (through tile placement) they also start to merge giving the majority stockholders sizeable bonuses that they can then use to reinvest in other businesses. The game is a race to acquire the greatest wealth. The tournament will run on an ad-hoc basis and is sponsored by FLAGSHIP magazine.

Settlers of Catan

Settlers of Catan is a simple 4-player development game, which is easy to pick up for those who have never played before. Players try to be the dominant force on the island of Catan by building settlements, cities, and roads. On each turn dice are rolled to determine the current production on the island. Players collect raw materials to build up their civilizations to gain enough victory points to win the game. The tournament will run continuously over the whole weekend: all games played will be recorded and players ranked according to the total victory points of their top 4 games. Rules and instruction available; any level of players welcome.

Backgammon

Registration for the Main backgammon tournament will start at 12pm on Saturday and will have a 4 level progressive consolation system (Main, Consolation, Last Chance and Suicide). The Last Chance and Suicide Tournaments will start at 10:30am on Sunday with multiple re-entry and will also be open to players who did not register for the Main tournament. There will be the following optional pools: Main tournament: £10, Consolation: £10, Last Chance: £5, Suicide: £3. Pools will be split 70:30 between the highest and second highest rated players in the pool. In addition, if a player wishes to play but cannot commit to taking part in the Main or Last Chance tournaments, there will be smaller tournaments and friendly games available on demand.

More tournaments are likely to be announced either before or at the event. Additionally major games companies such as Steve Jackson Games, Rio Grande, Mayfair and Twilight Creations have offered prize support and demo games. All in all, it looks set to be a great games weekend!

PSYCHO CON 2005
2pm Friday 21st - 6pm Sunday 23rd OCTOBER 2005

THE
CROWN HOTEL
HARROGATE

A BOARD GAMES CONVENTION

£8 per day, or £15 for the weekend if booked before 31st July 2005.

£10 per day, or £20 for the weekend thereafter, or if paying on the door.

[Children under 7 are free. Children 12 or under are half price]

ACCOMMODATION is to be booked directly with The Crown Hotel.

Convention Rates: £30 pppn B&B in a twin/double room. £37.50 pppn B&B for a single room.

Please note: Rooms are held for the convention at this price only until the end of August!

Please call reservations on: 0870 609 6115 and Quote: Group 1392

For hotel details check out their website: <http://www.corushotels.co.uk/hotel.asp?hotelID=82>

Latest Con details at: <http://www.psychozine.co.uk>

PSYCHOCON REGISTRATION FORM

Please use a separate form for each person. * Mandatory Fields

FULL NAME *		Male / Female	<small>OFFICE USE: I</small>
Prefer to be known as		Age (if 12 or under):	
ADDRESS* including postcode			
TELEPHONE *			
MOBILE		Please provide an e-mail address so that we can confirm receipt of your form and cheque!	
E-MAIL ADDRESS			
Days Attending*	Friday / Saturday / Sunday / All		
Booking Rates* £10 per day or £20 for the weekend. [Children under 7 are free. Children 12 or under are half price]	One day: £8 / £10 Weekend: £15 / £20 Please make cheques payable to: Mike Dean To pay using on-line banking, please contact Mike via email: psychocon@psychozine.co.uk		
I am willing to help out on the Registration Desk:		YES / NO	
I am a qualified First Aider:		YES / NO	
Data Protection: I understand that my details will be stored on a computer system for the purposes of maintaining records for PSYCHO CON only. I do/do not give permission for my details to be passed to other convention organisers in the UK.			
Signed		Date	
.....			
What games would you like to play at PSYCHO CON 2005?			

ACCOMMODATION FOR PSYCHO CON 2005

ACCOMMODATION is to be booked directly with The Crown Hotel, Harrogate.
 Convention Rates: £30 pppn B&B in a twin/double room. £37.50 pppn B&B for a single room.

Please call reservations on: 0870 609 6115 and Quote: Group 1392
 For hotel details check out their website: <http://www.corushotels.co.uk/hotel.asp?hotelID=82>

Send completed forms together with your registration fee to:

PSYCHO CON Registration, 4 Windermere Avenue, Ilkeston, Derbyshire, DE7 4FQ

PSYCHOCON 2005

Starts @ 14:00 on Friday 21st October 2005

Ends @ 16:00 (approximately) on Sunday 23rd October 2005

Hotel address: Crown Place, Harrogate, HG1 2RZ, UK

Hotel Telephone: +44 (0)870 609 6115

Contact Telephone Numbers: Mike: 07866365112 or 00393471040453, Steve 07840869797

By Road: Exit A1 (J47) to Harrogate. Follow the A661 for Harrogate town centre into West Park one way system. After 2nd pedestrian crossing turn left down Montpelier Hill. Hotel is at bottom. There are 25 parking spaces at the Hotel.

Midcon 2005 (Jeremy Tullett)

Bookings are arriving at a steady rate, and I now have around thirty registrations, which is probably where I'd expect to be about now.

If you are intending to come, please note that the later you book, the more likely it is that you will not get a room at the hotel.

11th – 13th November 2005

Thistle Birmingham City Hotel

MidCon takes place in a comfortable hotel in the centre of Birmingham from Friday afternoon (4pm) to Sunday evening (6pm). It features:

- the opportunity to play boardgames¹ with like-minded adults²
- the National Diplomacy Championship
- the **MidCon** quiz for teams of 4 on Friday evening
- the chance to buy even more board games

MidCon is primarily about playing games and meeting people – whether you participate in the National Diplomacy Championships or play any of the number of games people have brought along with them, which may include spending the weekend playing 18xx or Civilisation. People have even been known to stay up late, drink too much and lose the shirt off their backs– but we don't recommend it.

Attendance at **MidCon** costs £15-£18 for the whole weekend (day rates of £8/£10/£8 for Friday, Saturday and Sunday) and accommodation is available in the Thistle Hotel at reasonable rates. The hotel is reachable by public transport and there's an adjacent car park.

If you would like to join us at **MidCon**, please write, with the convention fee of £15 a head (goes up to £18 on 1st November), to: Jeremy Tullett, **MidCon**, 7 Midland Place, Derby, DE1 2RR, or by e-mail to [bookings\(at\)MidCon.org.uk](mailto:bookings(at)MidCon.org.uk). For an electronic version of the booking form, see the website, www.MidCon.org.uk

OxCon 2006 Progress Report (James Rogers)

Things are coming along well in preparation for next year's OxCon, which will be held on the weekend of the 21st-22nd January, starting at 11am each day, with the main tournaments having a deadline for registration of 10.50 on the morning in question. We have booked the same venue as in previous years, the upstairs room in the Mitre Public House, Oxford. We have, in the past, had some complaints about the ambient light level in the room but I believe these concerns were satisfactorily addressed by the purchase of some freestanding lamps last year. Other than this issue we have had few problems with the venue.

¹ including some new ones straight from the Spiel games fair in Germany

² though children welcome as well!

We are currently in the process of contacting the TDs who ran our various competitions this year, all of whom have run excellent events in the past, and we hope to be able to assemble the same team for next year's convention. I am confident that the Diplomacy, Settlers of Catan, Lost Cities and 15-to-1 tournaments which have been the highlights of the event both this year and in previous years will once again be run to the extremely high standard we have come to expect. We are also hoping to once again enlist the aid of the various support personnel who have been so helpful in the past. There have been several suggestions for new events this OxCon, possibly including a Puerto Rico competition and these will be discussed by the committee once university term starts again.

Prices for next year's convention will be fixed at the same level as this year's event: £4 for entry to the convention only, £7 for entry plus entry to either the Dip or the Settlers tournament, £10 for entry plus both tournaments. We also offer half-price entry to students and unwaged people. Presently we do not organise any accommodation for attendees, although we will be more than happy to recommend places to stay in Oxford for those coming along on both days.

We are confident that next year's convention will attract the same good attendance that we received this year. We had 4 tables of Diplomacy on the Saturday, as well as groups of casual gamers. Sunday saw even better numbers, with 36 people playing in the Settlers tournament. Anyone who would like more information on the convention or who has any comments on how we could improve the event is welcome to contact the team by email at: diplo@herald.ox.ac.uk.

MASTERCON XIII
Hosting EuroDipCon XIV
3rd – 5th March 2006
Lee Valley Youth Hostel, Windmill Lane, Cheshunt, Herts
<http://www.yha.org.uk/hostel/hostelpages/861.html>

PROGRESS REPORT #1 incorporating the REGISTRATION FORM

MasterCon is on the move once again. Keith and Eve Smith have stepped down from organizing the event after 4 years. This MasterCon is unique in that it will be in a new location and will also be hosting EuroDipCon – the first time since 1998! The main organizer and Tournament Director for the Diplomacy will be Toby Harris. Toby needs no introduction; he is a larger than life character who has been in the hobby for about 20 years. In fact he was the winner of EuroDipCon the last time it was hosted by MasterCon.

I am Shaun Derrick, previous organizer of MasterCon from 1994 until 2001 and I am coming out of 'retirement' just for this particular convention. I will be taking a background role, having found a location for the event.

David Norman will be helping with the Diplomacy scoring. With his considerable experience in this field, things will, I am sure, run very smoothly.

Emeric Miszti is our website guru and he will be monitoring that side of things.

Of course, MasterCon isn't just Diplomacy. There will be lots of casual gaming and an 18xx tournament, which has been a mainstay of MasterCon since the convention began.

ACCOMMODATION

There are two main options for accommodation, the hostel accommodation and the Marriott hotel. There may be local Bed and Breakfast options, but you would need to arrange these directly if you wish to pursue that option.

The Lee Valley Youth Hostel has been completely refurbished and re-opened last year. For those of you who consider Youth Hostels to be shabby claustrophobic shacks, then you will be very pleasantly surprised how modern this one is. The rooms are all en-suite and have 2,4,6 or 8 beds in each. They are very spacious rooms with each lodge holding approximately 24 beds and have kitchen facilities and enough space for gaming away from the main gaming room if you wanted it. It is classed as a 5 Star Youth Hostel and is certainly much better than I expected it to be. Take a look at the website above.

The gaming room is in the main block with the restaurants, snack bar, shop and 'Games room' (This has a table football game). It also has a balcony for those who want to get some fresh air or do their diplomacy outside. Smoking is not permitted in any of the buildings so smokers will have to go onto the balcony of the gaming room or outside the building.

Access is very easy. By car it is just half a mile from the main street through Cheshunt town centre down Windmill Lane, plenty of parking available free of charge. By train you can alight at Cheshunt station, which is just across the level crossing – literally a one-minute walk! By air Stansted would be ideal as there is a direct regular rail service from Stansted to Cheshunt station. More specific details on train times and directions will follow in a future progress report.

Being close to London there may be a number of people who won't need accommodation, but will merely commute to/from the venue. There is a direct service from Liverpool Street station to Cheshunt.

The Marriott Hotel is about 2 miles away from the venue. This is for those who want rather more luxury than the Hostel. The hotel is on the junction of the A10 and A1170 at Turnford, the northern end of Cheshunt.

ACCOMMODATION RATES

The Lee Valley Youth Hostel

1 bed in a 4,6 or 8 bedded room - £20.00 for Friday 03 March
 £27.50 for Saturday 04 March
 £20.00 for Sunday 05 March

1 bed in a 2 bedded room - £40.00 for Friday 03 March
 £47.50 for Saturday 04 March
 £40.00 for Sunday 05 March

Note that there are a few rooms with just a Double bed, these are £80 for sole or couples use of the room on Friday and Sunday, £95 for Saturday.

The rate for Friday and Sunday includes breakfast. The rate for Saturday includes breakfast and dinner. The Saturday rate is a mandatory Dinner, Bed and Breakfast rate, whether you take the Dinner or not.

All hostel bookings must be booked direct with the Youth Hostel.

Lee Valley Village YHA,
YHA (England & Wales) Ltd,
Windmill Lane,
Cheshunt,
Hertfordshire (UK),
EN8 9AJ.

Tel: 01992 628392 (00 44 1992 628392),
Fax: 01992 643984 (00 44 1992 643984)
Email: leevalley@yha.org.uk, www.yha.org.uk

Please mention that you are part of EDC or European Diplomacy Championship so that they can apply the correct rate.

The Marriott Cheshunt Hotel

The hotel will hold some rooms off for me but I don't think this is necessary at this stage.

The rate is £80.00 per night for a room whether there are 1 or 2 people in the room. This rate includes breakfast and VAT. If anyone wants the rate for 3 people in a room, let me know. However, if you are certain that you want to stay at this hotel and can book in advance, there is currently a web fare of £76.00 for up to 2 people in the room B&B, but you have to pay in advance and the rate is non-refundable. If you want to book this hotel not using the web fare, then please contact me. I would advise anyone even thinking of booking the hotel to let me know so that I can calculate the number of rooms required. If there are any Marriott cardholders out there, you may get a better rate by contacting the hotel direct.

The hotel details are...

Marriott Cheshunt Hotel
Halfhide Lane
Turnford
Broxbourne,
Hertfordshire EN10 6NG
Phone: 01992 451245
Fax: 01992 440120

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Sponsorship!

This would be nice, of course, but efforts so far have proved fruitless. Tesco have their head office in Cheshunt and I have tried to get some money out of them – result = no response!! Does anyone know how to get to the right people in this organization?

Prizes!

There will be prizes for the top 7 in the Diplomacy and a trophy for the 18xx winner. Certificates will be awarded for Best Countries. If any more tournaments are arranged, there will be a trophy for it. If anyone can supply some game prizes...?

Games Stand!

Dave Lunn from Gamesweb will be present at MasterCon. He will be offering a discount of 10% on all purchases throughout the weekend. <http://www.games-web.co.uk/>

This Progress report has been produced by Shaun Derrick, 313 Woodway Lane, Walsgrave, Coventry CV2 2AP Email: shaun.derrick@tmguk.com or sderrick@tiscali.co.uk



REGISTRATION FORM

NAME (and nationality):

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE:

TELEPHONE:

EMAIL:

The fee for the convention is £12.00 for the whole weekend if paid by Friday 24 February 2006 (No fee for non-UK residents who can also register by email on <http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/edc2006/>). Any payments after that date will have to be on the door will be £15.00. Do not to send registration fee cheques after 24 February, as they may not be received in time.

Please make cheques payable to TOBY HARRIS and send them along with this registration form to Toby at - 10 Charlotte Bronte Drive, DROITWICH, Worcestershire WR9 7HU

Forthcoming Conventions

PsychoCon 2005 21-23 October 2005 The Crown Hotel Harrogate www.psychozine.co.uk	MidCon 11-13 November 2005 Birmingham www.midcon.org.uk	OxCon 21-22 January 2006 Oxford diplo@herald.ox.ac.uk
MASTERCON XIII Hosting EuroDipCon XIV 3-5 March 2006 Lee Valley Youth Hostel, Windmill Lane, Cheshunt, Herts		

The Queen's Lane Advertiser (incorporating Convention News)

Editor : Jeremy Tullett
Coordinator : David Norman
Printer : Nick Kinzett

Please contact the coordinator if:

- You run a convention and would like to be a part of the 'zine.
- You run a convention and would like to be included in the upcoming conventions list.
- You would like to offer to help out in some way.
- You are not on the mailing list for this 'zine, but would like to be.

The coordinator can be contacted at david@ellought.demon.co.uk

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Jeremy Tullett,
7 Midland Place,
Derby
DE1 2RR

Telephone: 0870 190 1977 (Office) 01332-385322 (Home)
Email: jeremy.d.tullett@btinternet.com

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