

SPRING OFFENSIVE

ONLINE 73



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Editorial

Whatever happened to September? You will have noticed that it has been two months since the last issue of SpOff/OL – thank God I had Tom Tweedy to rely on to keep the games running efficiently. 1999 has certainly turned out to be an “annus horribalis” for me, the problems in September being mainly around the fact that I was up against a strict publishing deadline for a book (well, half a book) that I was writing – now published (check out the latest volume of Halsbury’s Laws of England on the “Post Office” if you’re motivated to do that sort of thing. My job has been going crazy, as we are preparing for legislation on the Post Office in the New Year as well. On top of that hassles at home added to my lack of time and, well, September just disappeared. Still, better late than never.

One of the few things that I did finally tackle over the past couple of months was my [“bronzed” CDs](#). A bronzed CD is one which had an defective lacquer used at the time of manufacture (usually 1988-93) with the result that it gradually reacts with the natural acidity in the paper of the CD booklet to make the CD unplayable. This is first noticeable as a bronzing discoloration around the edge of the CD and after a while the CD starts to deteriorate badly, eventually becoming unplayable. Thanks to the wonders of the WWW I discovered that most bronzed CDs. Were made in the UK by PDO Discs Ltd and if you write to them at Helpline, Freepost BK 1080, Blackburn, BB1 5BR enclosing the defective discs they will send replacements free of charge. The three affected CDs I had (Peter Hammill, The La’s and Japan) were replaced within a few days – so check your CD collection now.



Internet Diplomacy News

Reminder – The Diplomatic Pouch Moved Home. The Diplomatic Pouch can now be found at <http://www.diplom.org>. Thanks to David Kovar for the continued use of his resources. The igo.org domain has now become the diplom.org domain, so any judge addresses, web URLs, links to FTP sites, entries in your bookmark lists etc., that contained igo.org should be updated accordingly. The Dip Pouch is now undergoing a substantial refit and hopefully everyone will like the new streamlined style.

Postal Diplomacy News

Zines

Having mentioned the fold of SNOT last tie, the latest zine casualty is Springboard, the UK Dip hobby's novice zine, which has gone for quite a while without any novices. Danny Collman writes: "I have reached issue 124, just sent out, and have announced that I shall be folding on the issue of 125. I have not received any new applicants via the Box Flyer, in a year, and almost none in the year before that. Springboard is down to 5 games, and will run 4 of those 5 games for a further 5 seasons by flyer. The one game recently started will be played two more seasons and will then be farmed out. Offers are invited, but the players will vote on their choice of zine." It's always sad when a zine dies, especially after 125 issues. This confirms my thoughts that the UK PBM Diplomacy hobby is in terminal decline, with very few zines remaining.

Box Frenzy: A note from Paul Clayson – "Just a quick note to apologise for the non-appearance of BF65. Since moving into the new house, just about all of my spare time has been taken up with redecorating and getting organised in time for the wedding. I did manage to get a fair bit of the zine done early on, but as my PC has been buried behind a mountain of furniture & boxes for most of the last month or two, I've just not had a chance to get it finished. I've always been aiming to get something out before the big day, but now that it has almost arrived, I'm going to have to admit defeat for the moment. Once we're back from honeymoon and a little more organised, I will aim to get something out as soon as I can - hopefully by the middle of October."

The Hoosier Archives

Jamie McQuinn writes – "I have what I think is some terrific news for the Hobby. As many of you know I have been the custodian of the Hoosier Archives of Diplomacy Zines. This collection, created by Walt Buchanan, contains virtually every Diplomacy zine published in North America from the beginnings of the Hobby to 1978. When I accepted custody of the collection, it was with the understanding that I would preserve it and make it available to Hobbyists and researchers. My ultimate goal was to find a permanent home for it in an academic library/archive.

"I am please to announce that today I filled up my van with 33 cases and delivered the Hoosier Archives to the Popular Culture Library of Bowling Green State University here in Ohio. They already have a small collection of fanzines (SF, music, etc., even some Diplomacy World) and are delighted to add these to their collection.

"Alison Scott, the Head Librarian, will be inventorying these items over the next several months, and then will begin the process of cataloguing. The remainder of the Hoosier Archives collection (consisting of correspondence, Diplomacy World subscription records and camera ready copy) along with the more recent acquisition of the Hobby Award plaques will be part of an archival special collection.

"All of these items will be available at the Popular Culture Library for Hobbyists and/or researchers to access. I believe that this is the best solution for the archives. I always considered the archives to only be in my care temporarily. Now they have a permanent home. I have been in communication with Walt Buchanan

about this and he gives his blessings as well. And now they are out of my basement (just in time, since I may be moving again soon).

“This now brings up two more important issues. First, does she want more? You bet. When I took on the HA, I received queries from several people asking if I wanted more. I said no! No room! When I asked the Head Librarian she said, "yes, please!" So, those of you who have large zine collections and are loathe to toss them, here's your chance. As I said, they collect Diplomacy and just about any other type of fanzine. However, before you send her anything, please contact her directly and let her know what you have. Here is her contact information: [Alison M. Scott](#) Head Librarian Popular Culture Library Bowling Green State University Bowling Green, Ohio 43403.

“Keep in mind of course, that if you are going to donate your zines to the library, it is up to you to get them there. They do not have any funds available to purchase your zines or pay for shipping. Which brings us to the second point: No gift to a library is truly free. They will have many costs associated with the processing of the collection. Besides the staff time involved, they will need to purchase archival quality storage materials that will preserve the archives (folders, boxes, etc.). If you or other members of the Hobby would like to make donations to the library for the Hoosier Archives, they will be gratefully accepted. Make your checks payable to: "Popular Culture Library". Mail them directly to Alison Scott at the address above, with a notation that you wish this gift directed to the Hoosier Archives.

“As part of the collection, I also received two cases of back issues of Diplomacy World from the 1970's. These are multiple copies that were never sold when Walt was publishing DW. With Walt's permission I am going to sell these back issues as a fundraiser for the library. Watch for more information soon.”

The 27th UK Diplomacy Zine Poll (1999)

There's just about still time to vote - please send your votes for any UK Diplomacy zine to [Ryk Downes](#). You can vote for up to ten zines, just list them in order of preference. The Deadline is 8am on Friday 5th November. I'll publish the results next time.

Forthcoming Cons

MidCon 99

[John Harrington](#) plugs **MidCon**: “The con takes place over the week-end of November 5th - 7th, at the Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham, UK. Convention fee is £18 and if you stay at the hotel you can get rooms for £35 a night (single) or £27 per person for a twin. I would not go so far as to say the Royal Angus is a stylish hotel but is a good quality business hotel and those room rates are considerably cheaper than you'd pay if you were an ordinary non-convention-attending punter.

“I'll be running the General Knowledge quiz on Friday and hopefully recapturing the Pop Quiz title on Saturday (although our hopes rest very much on fellow Fiend Mike Woodhouse making an appearance). At all other times I'll either be gaming, drinking or eating curry (sleep is for wimps). On occasions I'll be doing 2 of those three simultaneously.

“At some point over the week-end I hope to be able to ensnare some people in to a play-test of some prototype Fiendish board games. Among them is a motor racing card game of my own design, called the Racing Line, and two games from Alan Parr (designer of Traffic Lights and Fireside Football) called Spell Merchants and Run For Gold.

“I can't stress enough how enjoyable MidCon is. Gamers may not take over the whole hotel but they pretty much take over the bar and surrounding areas and it is great to see so many games in progress. If you've never been to a games convention before then it can be pretty daunting turning up and trying to get "on the circuit", as it were. Although there are some formally organised events (such as the National Diplomacy Championship) in the main it is a case of getting into "pick-up" games, which of course is not so easy to do when you don't know anyone there. The trick is to have a word with one of the convention organisers and ask for a "buddy" to take you under their wing, after which one game leads to another - particularly if you are assertive enough to go up to the 3 blokes sitting around a table that has El Grande all set up ready to play and ask if they are looking for a fourth player.

“For more details have a butcher's at www.sfcp.co.uk/midcon.htm or call Carol on 01903 773170 (+44 1903 773170 outside the UK).”

French National Diplomacy Championship

This years **French National Diplomacy Championship (NDC)** will be held on Saturday/Sunday 27/28 November in Paris. This is Europe's largest NDC with well over 100 players.

The tournament will be held in the Town Hall of Boulogne-Billancourt as for the previous 3 years. Check out the web site at <http://www.ludotheque.com>

Any UK players who are interested in coming can contact [Emeric Miszti](#) if you want to come. There is a reasonably priced Campanile (about £30 per night last year - pretty good for Paris) and only about 3 minute walk from the Town Hall. Emeric will try and negotiate a group booking if enough people contact him expressing an interest in going.

Canadian Diplomacy Championship

The 7th Annual Canadian Diplomacy Championship takes place at the Sentry Box (1835 - 10th Avenue SW, Calgary, Alberta. (403) 245-2121) on Saturday, January 8th, 2000. Admission is 5\$, (3\$ for beginners).

Check out the official web site at <http://members.home.net/stratage/diplomacy> or email [Stratagem](#) at with "Diplomacy" in the subject line.

Con Review

The London Trophy 1999

It was very much a last minute decision to host this year's Trophy as I was up to my neck in it at Think, but when I decided to jump ship into the sea of unemployment and enjoy myself on a little trip to EDC in Finland, I thought well lack of time is not a problem anymore. Funnily enough, with sorting out the ManorCon finances, the rigmaroles of life on the dole (signing on etc) and thankfully more job interviews than i can handle, time is still of the essence. A week later and I've only got round to writing this report!

As it was a last minute job, I was not initially expecting a huge turnout for this year's event. Last year the Trophy had struggled to reach 3 boards and so I felt realistically that 4 boards or at the most 5 boards was the best that could be achieved and that was with a lot of work. With this in mind, the venue seemed more than adequate as the upstairs at the Plough was just big enough to take 4 boards and maybe squeeze in 5 at a push and then there was always the downstairs in an emergency. The main reasons for the choice of the Plough though were it's ideal central London location and in particular the fact it was just 50 yards away from Playin Games, who were donating some games as prizes. So, I was hoping they would pick up some business from the event as well. I know we cleaned out their entire stock of 'Lost Cities' at the very least!

Anyhow, with the Trophies were booked, venue sorted and the initial publicity done, I went away to EDC content. Returning to find that Toby had gone into manic mode an a huge publicity drive that was striving to make the Trophy this years biggest UK event! I didn't take long for me and others (Emeric and Stephen Agar) to get caught up in this enthusiasm and start pushing to see just how effective this proactive publicity approach could be. As the predictions of 10 boards plus became even wilder, I was beginning to worry about how seriously overcrowded the pub would be.

Fortune came to my rescue as not everybody who said they were committed turned up for one reason or another and although Toby (and to a lesser extent myself) was disappointed we did not at least make 7 boards, I was relieved as in the end 6 boards was probably the maximum the pub could have handled. I was also more than pleased that everyone who did turn up actually got a game of dip and i didn't (thanks to the timely late arrival of Guillaume Gossellin) have to play myself to fill up the final board, which is always a nightmare for (Sweden just scored - YES!!) the tournament director. Firstly as it then becomes difficult to keep control of and monitor the other boards and secondly you can't effectively concentrate on the game you are playing in, which is not fair for any of the players on that board or in the tournament. Also you are

conscious that you don't want to play so well that you actually win, which is certainly an unsatisfactory position!

Given the fact we had started a bit late, especially the six board, I reduced the planned number of game years from 1909 to 1908 as I was bearing in mind that my scoring system included penalty points for games that finished after 6 o'clock. This made was going to be difficult for the 6th board, but left the other boards with an excessive amount of leeway to finish by six. I did not want to have to be going around enforcing deadlines and I hoped the penalty deterrent would ensure the players themselves would keep themselves on track. How wrong I was!

Board 1 was undoubtedly the Board of Death, with the likes of Cyrille Sevin, Mark Wightman, Toby Harris, Chetan Radia and Steve Cox. I missed the start of this game as they pushed ahead with their opening moves, whilst I was sorting out the remaining boards upstairs. I was indeed a board of death though as Chetan and Cyrille found out sooner than they liked. Mark Wightman (Italy) had the Easter powers in check, whilst Geoff Bache (France) seemed to mop up the West with ease and establish an almost untouchable winning position. Could he hold it together till the end and would it be enough were the only questions remaining.

Board 2, I initially termed the 'easy' board and Dave Horton drew it! He even got his favoured country France. But easy it was not to be as there were some more than competent players on this board in Mick Dunnett, Yann Clouet and Steve Agar and Dave got far from an easy ride, being attacked with a fervour by Des Langford (England) and Steve Agar (Italy) who was quickly into Marseilles and the MAO! Mick Dunnett (G) was also profiting from the demise of France, whilst in the East Yann Clouet (Austria) was controlling the game. Stephen and Mick however joined forces to push Yann back in the final year to increase their crucial supply centre counts. I'm not sure why this game suddenly veered off the rails time-wise toward the end, but it was significantly over for me to have to apply the -2 point penalty to the whole table. Which in my final calculations, turned out to be quite crucial.

Board 3 from my observations was quite a balanced game with Emeric (F) in control, but boxed in the Western half of the board and Sid Sedjai a omnipotent threat as Turkey in the East, who with his Russian puppet, Tom went on to win the game.

Board 4 was an interesting affair with an initial juggernaut operating the Con/Sev switch, but Greedy Greco (R), just could not resist the temptation of stabbing his trusting Turkish ally Mark Stretch. Whilst matters were resolving in the East, the West started to play merry go rounds as well, with first Chris Stocking (E) taking advantage and then Simon Hornby (F), to be finally outwitted by Tangi Le Dantec (G). The game remained very close with none of the remaining 3 eastern powers getting any clear advantage. Guy Thomas' Austria had potential but was sandwiched in a Bandy Bap between Andrew Greco's Russia and Vincent Boutan's Italy, both of whom took chunks out of Guy in the end. The game was also well behind schedule and was definitely on course for penalty points, when the draw was proposed and somewhat surprisingly to me was actually accepted. I guess it was just all too close to call and people were happy with their final positions and did not want to risk the penalty.

Board 5 was the game I'd have liked to have watched more fully as the play here seemed particularly good. Shaun Derrick (R) and Emmanuel Lorge (F) seemed initially to be in control with Doug Massie (I) also prospering well, but the game gradually turned as the wicked witches Ian Andrews (E) and Emily Bache (T) put the screws on Russia, whilst France slowly increased his dominance by picking off a weakening Italy. It was all a question of whether Emmanuel had timed his push for glory in time. Had he left it too late to catch Geoff Bache and the expanding threat of the 'Dark Destroyer' on Board 6.

Board 6 was hampered by a late start and at one point it looked like I was going to have to play Germany, until Guillaume turned up in the nick of time to rescue me. Tony Wheatleys slightly maverick and slightly inebriated play as Austria, handed the confident Simon Bouton who was already on a high from his EDC victory an easy start, despite the initial RAI triple alliance against him. Both Russia and Italy were a bit rusty, along with Geoff (E) whose one bad build disorder definitely cost him. So as Turkey manipulated and dominated the East. Richard Turner (F) and Guillaume (G) carved up England. The game really turned by Guillaume's decision to stab France and go for a high scoring second place, letting Turkey out of the bag. The risk in this strategy was the potential for a Turkish outright victory, but surely not.....?

The Results

| Pos. | | Pts. | | Pos. | | Pts. | |
|------|---------------------|------|-----------------------------------|------|--------------------|------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | Simon Bouton | 54 | Best Turkey: 18 centres outright. | 20= | Simon Hornby | 16 | France 4 centres |
| 2 | Geoff Bache | 51 | Best France: 15 centres | 20= | Guy Thomas | 16 | Austria 4 centres |
| 3 | Emmanuel Lorge (F) | 50 | France 14 centres | 22= | Doug Massie | 14 | Italy 2 centres |
| 4 | Sid Sedjai (F) | 49 | Turkey 13 centres | 22= | Shaun Derrick | 14 | Russia 2 centres |
| 5 | Stephen Agar | 48 | Best Italy 14 centres (-2 pen) | 22= | Tom Sebeyran (F) | 14 | Russia 2 centres |
| 6 | Tangi Le Dantec (F) | 45 | Best Germany 9 centres | 25= | Des Langford | 11 | England 1 centre (-2 pen) |
| 7= | Mick Dunnett | 41 | Germany 13 centres (-2 pen) | 25= | Guillarme Gosselin | 11 | Germany 11 centres |
| 7= | Mark Wightman | 41 | Italy 11 centres | 27 | Chris Stocking | 8 | England 2 centres |
| 9 | Emeric Miszti | 39 | France 9 centres | 28 | Richard Turner | 4 | France 4 centres |
| 10 | Andrew Greco | 38 | Best Russia 8 centres | 29 | Robert Welsh | 1 | Russia 1 centre |
| 11= | Emily Bache | 32 | Turkey 8 centres | 30= | Mark Stretch | 0 | Turkey: eliminated |
| 11= | Ian Andrews | 32 | Best England 8 centres | 30= | Tony Wheatley | 0 | Austria: eliminated |
| 13= | Jeremy Tullett | 31 | Germany 7 centres | 30= | Geoff Tolley | 0 | England : eliminated |
| 13= | Vincent Boutan (F) | 31 | Italy 7 centres | 30= | Richard Ramsden | 0 | Italy: eliminated |
| 15 | Toby Harris | 30 | Russia 6 centres | 30= | Dave Norman | 0 | Austria: eliminated |
| 16 | Yann Clouet (F) | 26 | Best Austria 4 centres (-2 pen) | 30= | Stan Kellett | 0 | Germany: eliminated |
| 17 | Gary Duke | 21 | England 3 centres | 30= | Peter Hawkins | 0 | Austria: eliminated |
| 18 | Steve Cox | 20 | Turkey 2 centres | 30= | Adam Harris | 0 | Italy: eliminated |
| 19 | Paul Dowden | 18 | Turkey 2 centres (-2 pen) | 30= | John Wilman | 0 | England: eliminated |
| | | | | 30= | Chetan Radia | 0 | Austria: eliminated |
| | | | | 30= | Cyrille Sevin | 0 | Germany: eliminated |
| | | | | 41= | Paul Brett | -2 | Russia: eliminated (-2 pen) |
| | | | | 41= | Dave Horton | -2 | France: eliminated (-2 pen) |

Congratulations to Simon Bouton on yet another superb victory and also to Geoff Bache and Emmanuel Lorge on their second and third places. If it wasn't for the penalties applied at the end, Stephen Agar would have just pipped Emmanuel for third place as they would have had equal points and would also have tied as a dead heat on supply centre count back. Had that been the case it would have gone down to country allocation, which according to my undisclosed list would have placed Stephen above Emmanuel who had the more favourable country draw. Still, Stephen picked up the best trophy for Italy and Emmanuel a box of Lost Cities for 3rd place, so I guess in the end it worked out nicely in that they both took something home. Mark Stretch meanwhile had rushed off home to prevent himself being awarded with the Golden Bone award for most outstanding poodle who obtained one more vote for this prestigious award than Tom Sebeyran!

Best Diplomat was won by Simon Bouton with 17 votes to Emmanuel Lorge who was voted second with 15. Emmanuel did however obtain a maximum of 18 votes for Best Strategist ahead of Simon Bouton on 16 and Sid Sedjai on 15. Quite an impressive vote their for Emmanuel from his peers.

My only small mistake on the day with the results was awarding Best Austria to Guy Thomas when it was in fact won by Yann Clouet! Well fortunately Guy was not there to collect the trophy so Yann the next time I see you remind me to give you your just rewards.

Overall, the Trophy this year was a big success, especially with the big attendance from France and I promise for next year to make the registration fee free for foreign attendees, so I hope very much you'll all come back again for another tilt at the Trophy. As for myself, I luckily had not too much to do apart from trying to placate the pub, who seemed to get a bit stressed out, especially at lunchtime, which was mildly chaotic! So I had time for a chat with Alex Bardy and Siraj from Playing Games, where we learnt some inside truths about a few things of which I had better stay quiet. Although I was too stressed out to even play any other games as well I still had a great time overseeing the action. Maybe though I was a bit too lenient on the game deadlines.

The plan next year is to go for a two day weekend convention and we are looking for both a new venue and accommodation for this purpose. I will inevitably do my best to keep you all informed of events and look forward to seeing you all again next year.

Vick Hall (Tournament Director)

Pieces Of Eight, Issue A

From Chris Dickson

As the UK Hobby Development Fund rises from the ashes, so does the Hobby Development Fund zine, Pieces of Eight. We have declared the numbering system to have exhausted real numbers and transcended into a weird variant of hexadecimal. Be warned, Greek letters are just twenty-six issues, or one more incarnation, away.



Nick Parish leaves to study a masters degree in Comparative Politics (minoring in Croquet and large-breasted women) in Canada late in August, so your caring, sharing HDF cheque book custodian is Chris M. Dickson. Donations can be sent to me at 42 Arlington Road, Middlesborough TS5 7RE. The other signatories (Stephen Agar, John Colledge and Nick Parish) are all happy to accept your money as well. Queries are also very welcome by e-mail; you can reach three of us at chris@dickson.demon.co.uk, stephen@diplomacy.co.uk and dunorroch@pop.dial.pipex.com respectively. You can also pay directly into our bank account, at the risk of us not knowing it was you who made the donation; reach us at "Hobby Development Fund", account number 21858890, at branch sort code 40-05-30 (HSBC, PO Box 648, 27-32 Poultry & Princes Street, LONDON EC2P 2BX).

The last incarnation of the Hobby Development Fund died due to under-use and it would be a terrible shame for this one to do likewise - so do feel free to approach us for funding for your hobby-beneficial project. The worst that can happen is that we say no. As for donations, requests for grants should be dispatched to any or all of us. Don't feel scared; there's no loss of pride involved at all, we don't seek to shame (though we will report every approach we have had for funds in future issues) and we won't means-test you. Hobby Development Fund cheques must be signed by any two signatories. There's no need to fear embezzlement for no signatory is allowed to sign any cheque made payable to themselves.

Protocol dictates that we disclose the names of donators, but not the size of their donations, for we don't want to get into a war to determine who's the most well-endowed, or rather the most well-endowing. In no order other than that of the alphabet, this half-year's Good Samaritans are Stephen Agar, Colin Bruce, John Harrington, Nick Parish and Paul Scott. Many thanks to all of you, not just from us but from future recipients of HDF funding. Without further ado, here are the accounts as of August 1999.

UK HOBBY DEVELOPMENT FUND ACCOUNTS AUGUST 1999

| | |
|-----------------|----------|
| Opening Balance | £ 0.00 |
| Income | |
| Donations | £ 155.00 |
| Interest | £ 0.02 |
| Expenditure | |
| | £0.00 |
| Balance | £ 155.02 |

(signed) NICK PARISH

A piece of accountancy which taxed the finest minds of the country it may have been, but mighty oaks (and healthy hobbies) from tiny acorns grow. Further donations and requests are all extremely welcome, and we shall report upon them in another six months. Have fun until then.

PIECES OF EIGHT issue A was a production of the Hobby Development Fund signatories, and is intended to be freely distributed throughout the hobby; editors are extremely welcome to print this in their zines and we do not aim to exclude anyone at all from our readership on the basis of communication media access or otherwise. Printed copies freely available on request within reason; apply to any signatory.



Brian Frew

Thank you for the copy of the zine, which I think is excellent - I'm sure that it will thrive. The acquisition of Tom Tweedy to GM the games looks like a sound move. I remember him from the days of **Veni, Vidi, Vici** when we used to trade.

I am in the process of putting together a website myself which will offer some dip.

SA Brian's web page is now up at <http://www.fortunecity.co.uk/underworld/puzzle/52>.

I am in the process of putting together a website myself which will offer some dip. One thing which I am thinking of offering is a Gunboat variant whereby each of seven players take each of the seven countries in seven different gunboat games against each other. I have a scoring system worked out based on something John Wilman used years ago. Is there already such a variant in existence? It seems such an obvious idea that I wouldn't be surprised. If not I hereby patent it and christen it "Dreadnaught" (super Gunboat).

SA Yes, it has been done quite a bit in the US, I think it was called 7x7 Gunboat or something like that. I remember Melinda Holley wrote an article on it in an old **Diplomacy World**.

Nick Parrish

Hi there. I'm back on the web after a 4-year absence. As you may know, I have flown the country for a short time to do a Masters in Political Science at McGill University in Montreal. Quite daunting landing in a strange country and knowing absolutely no one, but at least I can email friends back home. And I have found your exciting webpage. Hope you are recovered from your car crash which sounds absolutely terrible.

I must totally disagree with you about ManorCon. The whole idea about ManorCon is that it's unlike other cons which are stuck in a hotel - it offers something different. I agree that in price terms it's now not much different to other cons - but it does offer advantages that hotel cons don't have. You claim that every MasterCon has been at a better venue than ManorCon - this is clearly nonsense. The one in Coventry - maybe. But Cirencester - nice venue but extremely difficult to get to, and far fewer things to do in the city than in Brum. And the Bedford one had playing venues that were far too small. I didn't go to this year's in Warwick, so can't state, but which hotel has a con been held at that would have room for 200+ people (don't know how many people were at ManorCon this year - it was 220 last year and I heard it was a bit up on that this time)? Certainly not MidCon, which is full to bursting as it is - not BayCon (similar). The truth is that to be able to accommodate (say) 250 people you need a very big room - and a hotel which has that kind of facility is likely to be expensive. As you will no doubt remember, SFCP found out first hand how hard it is to find a good venue for MidCon when they tried it in 1997 - so your blanket assertion that there would be no problem finding a better venue is simply wrong. Actually, I very much like the current venue - good location, easy access to curry, croquet available - what more could anyone want at a con??? (Yes, I know - edible food.)

SA I find the ManorCon experience in terms of the standard of accommodation extremely depressing. If crap rooms and food is intended to differentiate ManorCon from other Cons then yes, it is a successful strategy. I think ManorCon numbers were down this year - anyone from the Committee care to comment?

Anyway, I must dash. While I liked your Internet zine, it only reinforces my view that postal zines are best. Loads of interesting stuff, but who's got time to read it on screen. Even a lazy born-again student like me doesn't - and printing it out is more hassle than it's worth in a university computer room.

SA Ah, but it's free and less work for the editor. Beats licking 200 stamps every time.

One last question. How do I find out about WorldDipCon, which I have a vague feeling is being held in Baltimore in 2000? Not even the last two Funguses had a mention.

SA Pass. I'll find out.

Nick Collins

I had a look at your July issue of SpOff at your web site & liked it very much. I've been playing in the PBM hobby for probably about 15 years now, having been introduced to the hobby by my father when I was in my teens. I tend to only have time to play 1 or 2 games at a time, and am usually only subscribing to 1 or 2 zines at a time as well, so would have to fit firmly into the hobby 'marginal' category. I agree with your comments to the effect that the future of the hobby has to be electronic, and have increasingly noted in the postal hobby that people just don't bother to write as much as they used to. I get increasingly frustrated with sending letters to other players who just don't bother to write at all. Will it be better in the e-hobby? Well, I think it probably will be, as the whole e-culture is centred on communication, and has attracted the communicative. I will look forward to finding out if this is the case.

SA I don't think email players are necessarily any better. My impression is you're more likely to hear from other players, but letters are shorter. Despite the ease of email a frightening number of people still rarely communicate, though I don't know how often people check their email. I do it at least once a day, but some people seem to go days, if not weeks.

Dave Horton

Just to say well done on topping the table when we met at the London Trophy; I heard about it afterward. Mick Dunnett I thought had excellent strategy and might have got it, but I put you down as Best Diplomat and from what I heard that swung it, with Yann being less annoyed with you than with Mick. Enjoyed playing with you - I only wish it had not been so brief!

As to being targeted, it bothers me much less than Toby I think. I accept it is part of the territory and indeed players would be foolish to not be wary of any strong player. However, it does depress me if someone makes it "personal" i.e. they refuse to relent come what may. Des yesterday would not countenance any suggestions that I made at all, and only considered me no more threat (!!) to him once I had no home centres left (he then offered to work with me!) You took advantage and quite rightly so, it was excellent play, but I suppose what did bother me was that Des needed no convincing. His introductory "Oh, so you're the renowned Dave Horton" should have warned me, and I should have told him I was opening to ENG and done so, but I've never done that as France and think it's a negative move. Usually I could expect that having kept F MAO in place and built A Bre a "reasonable" England would have then negotiated and we could have linked up, but as it was A Bre was a "mistake" in that he just kept on coming. Ah well, I have had a pretty good year so shouldn't complain. I hope I didn't come across as a bad sport, but I probably did.

SA People like yourself, Toby and Jim Mills are always fair game – though in my odd FtF encounter with Toby I have usually managed to work with him (I remember once when I was France I actually convoyed Toby who was Italy into Marseilles in an Autumn season – it all worked out OK in the end!). I admit I was trying to wind Des up about you as much as possible and may have contributed to his stubbornness, but hey, do you blame me? Any time you feel like signing your last few units over to me again, feel free.

John Colledge

Hi Stephen! I have just been reading **BUM** during my lunch break and I see you had a narrow escape in a car accident. I hope you are OK and there are no lasting effects? How are the neck and shoulder? These things don't half scare the living daylights out of you. Some years ago I found myself balancing on a stone dyke with an eighty to one hundred foot drop just a few yards in front of me. I had skidded on ice and fortunately I was in my mum's car, which was a fairly hefty Vauxhall of some sort, so i wasn't going very quickly. It does tend to focus the mind wonderfully, doesn't it? Did you manage to get hold of the person who caused the accident? Presumably at that speed, their car would have some damage done to it as well? Presumably they did stop? I guess at that stage you would just be glad you were still alive and not be too bothered about wringing someone's neck? You have not had your problems to look for recently, as the saying goes.

SA The police got him, but he claimed he had to pull out suddenly as he was being cut up by a lorry (which no one else saw). As I wasn't badly injured the police aren't going to take any action. I'd rather for get about the whole thing – though I would like £50 to compensate for the lost CDs and the taxi back from the hospital (and no doubt the Post Office would like the couple of grand back they paid me while I was off sick!). The only lasting problem seems to be a pain in my ankle (which I twisted in my hurry to get out of the smoking car).

The Peacekeeper (or beyond the Anschluss)

by Guy Fraser-Sampson

1. The Anschluss – basic concept

For those who are not familiar with the concept of the Anschluss, as described and developed by Richard Sharp, it is an opening system for Germany, and in particular concerning the use of A(Mun), which recognises that Germany's long-term fortunes in the game are inextricably linked with Austrian survival. As Richard says in his book, it makes sense for the two countries almost to be played as one wherever possible (and for as long as possible).

The Anschluss runs thus. Germany tells Italy from the off that German and Austrian interests are to be seen as one and the same, and that Germany will respond promptly and violently to any attack on Austria by Italy. To lend substance to this threat, Germany makes it clear that (in the original version) A(Mun) will stand or (in the more aggressive option which I prefer to play as Germany) move to Tyr, to be ready to deal with any incursion into Austrian territory. At the same time, Germany tells Russia that a move to Galicia will result in him being stood out of Sweden in the Autumn.

There are various possible outcomes which fall into two broad categories, which might be labelled (not very surprisingly) "Italy Accepts" and "Italy Refuses".

2. Italy Accepts

A good Italian player will almost always accept the inevitable, no matter how much it goes against the grain. With a German army sitting in Tyrolia an attack on Italy makes little sense, particularly if a cautious Austria plays the Houseboat (F(Tri) stands) or covers Tri from Vie. Either way, if the Austrian attack proper is played, with A(Rom) going to Ven, there is every possibility of both Italian armies still being stuck embarrassingly in their starting positions and Italy having revealed his hostile intentions with nothing to show for it. (For the contrary argument, see below).

Italy is left with three choices, only two of which are logical possibilities: (1) grab Tunis and sit on the sidelines until things become clearer, (2) attack France or (3) attack Turkey.

The reason that I believe option (1) to be illogical (at least, if prolonged beyond 1901) is that Italy, of all the countries on the board, can least afford to fall behind in its development. Sooner or later (and usually sooner), either Turkey will build a fleet in Smyrna or France will build a fleet in Marseilles. This gives rise to a situation where, at best, Italy can only hope to cling to its four core centres or, at worst, is slowly dismembered. Those who believe Italy should start with two fleets have my sympathies.

Option (2), the French attack, is obviously what, as Germany, you will be hoping for and trying to bend Italy towards. My guess is that it is very rare for Italy to attempt a genuine attack on France as early as 1901. A(Ven)-Pie is probably usually agreed in advance with France and is simply a prelude for a stab into Tyrolia in the Autumn. This will definitely be true if Italy plays the fleet to IOS, since it is impossible for it then to be in a position to menace France in 1902. However, in the more aggressive Anschluss, the presence of a German army in Tyrolia already makes such a stab much less attractive. Even if support is forthcoming from Venice, the German army will simply be pushed back into Munich and the Italian armies will not have done any real damage.

Suppose, however, that the move to Pie *is* intended as a serious attack? It can actually do more strategic damage to France than might at first be recognised. France will almost certainly move Mar-Spa in the Spring. Unless the A(Par) has moved to either Gas or Bur, he must order Spa-Mar, hoping for a stand-off. But suppose Pie simply stands? Then Spa-Mar succeeds, France is denied a build in Spain *and* Mar is unavailable for a build!

Even if there is another French unit available for a self-standoff there are still possibilities open to Italy. All he has to do is to choose one of the units to support (obviously the one in Spain) and a similar situation results. If France cannot build in Mar and Italy has convoyed the other army to Tun, then France has the nightmare situation in 1902 where Italy can bring four units to bear against him. Now it is all too possible for

Italy to gain Mar, Spa and maybe Por (if England is occupied in the north with Russia) and with it entry to MAO and beyond. Indeed, this is probably Italy's most realistic chance of winning.

Option (3), the attack on Turkey requires some sort of Lepanto opening convoying an army to Smyrna in Autumn 1902. Its obvious weakness is the length of time which it takes to develop. No realistic gains can be made until 1903 and Turkey has plenty of time to take moves to forestall it. If, however, Turkey is heavily involved fighting Russia, and has been kept out of Greece by Austria, then the Lepanto becomes a viable option because Turkey might not have any units to spare to guard against it, even though he come see it coming with awful clarity.

3. Italy Refuses

At least there is no doubt about Italy's intentions here. He would only object to a German army in Tyrolia if he had plans to move there (and beyond) himself. This would be a bold move, since it would involve war with Germany as well as with Austria. But is it really such a bad idea?

First, Italy will presumably have secured a promise from Russia to open to Galicia and a promise from France to open to Burgundy. The former lays Vienna and Budapest open to attack, while the latter means that the German army in Tyrolia has to dash home to defend Munich in the autumn, thus playing no further part in the Austrian theatre.

The Burgundy opening is frankly a lot more likely than the Galicia opening. After all, Burgundy *is* French territory and France can represent it as a simple desire to cover his bases. Yet it is a threat which Germany can hardly ignore. For the Galicia opening to occur, Russia must have given up any hope of taking Sweden in 1901, or maybe ever. This seems too high a price to pay. The chances are that Russia will promise to open to Galicia but move to Ukraine instead, sending expressions of outrage and support to Austria the while.

Yet even in the nightmare scenario that France does not go to Burgundy, Russia does not go to Galicia, and the German army remains in Austria throughout, all is not necessarily lost. If the Austrian fleet has vacated Trieste, then A(Ven)-Tri, A(Rom)-Ven will work unless Austria has covered Trieste from Vienna. Even if Austria and Germany can between them have enough units adjacent to Trieste to dislodge the Italian unit in the Autumn, he can still try to outguess his Austrian opponent by making a move for Serbia or Budapest, and the fact that the Austrian fleet will be otherwise engaged may just give him a chance to slip into Greece.

Obviously if both Trieste and Tyrolia are covered in the Spring then it's egg on face time, but that is exactly the risk that Italy takes in refusing the Anschluss. Even now, if the German army vacates Tyr in the Autumn, Ven-Tyr and Rom-Ven is a possibility, setting up a further attack in 1902.



4. Enter the Peacekeeper

Players will be quick to point out that the above discussion is somewhat academic. The possibilities for deception and mistrust are too great. Suppose Italy goes to Pie in the Spring, but somehow ends up in Tyrolia in the Autumn anyway? Suppose they agree that F(Tri) goes to Alb and A(Ven) goes to Pie but then one or both of them reneges on the deal?

Having thought though this dilemma I believe that I have come up with a way of resolving this familiar impasse, subject to two caveats: (1) there is still the potential for betrayal, but less because it will be more public and blatant and (2) it will not work with all GMs because it will depend which house rules apply to the particular game.

The Peacekeeper takes the form of a tripartite arrangement between Germany, Italy and Austria along the following lines.

Italy places A(Ven) under German proxy control for the whole of 1901. Austria places F(Tri) under German proxy control for the whole of 1901. Germany moves A(Mun) to Tyrolia in Spring 1901 and promises to attack either country if they renege on the deal by revoking the proxy consent before the end of 1901.

Germany agrees in advance to move F(Tri) to Albania and use it to keep Turkey out of Greece in the Autumn. Similarly, to move A(Ven) to Pie and use it to try to out-guess France in the Autumn as outlined above.

Italy agrees to move the fleet to TYN and convoy A(Rom) to Tunis in the Autumn. Austria would play A(Bud) to Serbia, with A(Vie) going to Budapest – remember, Germany has told Russia that if he goes to Galicia, he won't get Sweden. In this way Austria achieves the best possible position in the south east, Italy gets a fighting chance of an effective French attack in 1902 (you build F(Rom), of course) and Germany secures his southern flank and the probable long-term survival of his Austrian ally. His A(Tyr) returns to Munich for use in Burgundy or the Ruhr.

Does it work? Um, pass. I've just tried it as Germany in *Potemkin* (GM Tom Tweedy) and found to my surprise that it was bitterly opposed by **Austria**, even after it had already been rejected out of hand by Italy! Either my reading of Austro-German strategy is completely crazy, or I'm playing with the wrong people (in every game I've played as Austria, I've spent the whole initial negotiating period begging desperately for Germany to play the Tyrolia variant of the Anschluss). But somewhere, some day, three imaginative players will come together and try it. When you do, please let me know what happens (and make sure I'm not playing France at the time).

Variants - Default by Design?

By Richard Egan

I've always been wary of writing an article on "how to design a variant". Most of all, I doubt my own credentials, but I also know only too well how the motives and goals of one variant designer can be very different from those of another. The standard game itself represents a compromise between historical accuracy (where is Montenegro?) and simplicity (a special rule for the Kiel canal), which it is hard to imagine another designer settling on independently. The readiness of variant designers to "improve" on the basic game, with the likes of Milan Diplomacy and Abstraction, confirm this.

Given that "Calhamer's compromise" is the foundation of every single variant designed, it strikes me as most unlikely that any two writers will concur on how to go about producing any agreed scenario. Thus we have several versions of a worldwide variant (Mercator, World Domination, World Diplomacy), two or three Tolkien-based designs (Middle Earth, Downfall, Third Age) and so on. Most of those I've already named have at least two or three marks, representing different interpretations of the original design.

Recently, Lee A. Kendter Jr., in his zine **Get Them Dots Now** published a couple of articles on "What Makes A Good Variant" and "What Is Chrome". It speaks volumes that I found myself disagreeing with much of what even such an eminent authority on variants had to say: for example, his suggestion that a designer should avoid names like "Gulf of Siam", preferring instead "Siam Gulf", not only differs from the example of the standard game, which I like to take as a reference point in all my own variants, but can also compromise the atmosphere of a game. If the Gulf of Lyons is called the Gulf of Lyons, I feel it should be so called on a DIPLOMACY map - I've never seen or heard it referred to as the "Lyons Gulf".

Others obviously feel differently, but I confess my regard for a variant has occasionally been undermined by what I regard as contrived names - and I know I wasn't the only one to laugh at a province called "Iguana Town" on a medieval English variant called "The Men Who Would Be King" (or some such). My own habit is to spend some time with a couple of large atlases looking for alternative names for a difficult province, rather than invent one.

Whilst this might hardly seem an overly important point, it nevertheless demonstrates is that there is not necessarily a lot of consensus on what makes a good design: if even the names of the provinces can be a subject for disagreement, what hope is there for the rules themselves?

I, for example, prefer to "design by default" : I try to avoid repeating the rules of the standard game where they are unchanged by the variant. Where I leave something unsaid, I expect the players or GM to refer back to that enduring phrase featured at the start of nearly every variant, along the lines of "the rules of the basic game apply except where noted below".

Recently, I received an enquiry from a GM running one of my variants. It is a design that uses units other than Armies and Fleets, and also includes a rule which allows players to choose, in the first turn, whether to start "with an Army or a Fleet" in each of their home supply centres. I was surprised when the GM asked if this meant players could also choose to start with one of the other types of unit; to me, the answer was clearly "no", and yet he felt that, since the rules did not specifically say to the contrary, it should be allowed.

My philosophy has usually been to keep rules to what I regard as a 'manageable minimum': not only do I expect points to be lost in a mass of conditions and repetitions, but also there is a danger of boring the reader out of his interest in the game. Keeping them as simple as can be consistent with eliminating loopholes and ambiguities is one of my priorities. But if the example above is anything to go by, this is not everyone's idea of what makes a good set of rules.

And even then, I've broken my own guidelines: I am currently running a variant called "Africa", again one of my own designs, but which is so complex that, even as a five-player game, it takes about as long to adjudicate as two or three standard DIPLOMACY games. Some people would say that such a design was unwieldy, but such people would clearly not buy AVALON HILL games - there are no hard and fast rules on either complexity or chrome, and I receive more requests to open a waiting list for another "Africa" game than anything else. With complexity and chrome, it seems, it's yet another case of different strokes for different blokes.

Having thus established that it's never more than one man's preference that decides what is a good variant, it's time I made some attempt to fulfill my original brief (issued by Rich Jackson, who will by now be wondering when I'm going to get around to the set of guidelines he requested on "designing a variant"). For there are common points worth bearing in mind when putting a design together, and I shall endeavour to highlight some of them below:

1. OBJECTIVE

Before you start, give some thought to whether or not your idea is likely to make a good variant, how many players you expect it to support, and what sort of variant you want it to be. How important is accuracy? Do you want a complex variant or a simple one?

2. CONSISTENCY

Strive for consistency when preparing the rules: avoid getting bogged down in chrome in one area whilst leaving another under-developed. If you achieve historical or literary accuracy with one part, but ignore it elsewhere, players will soon question why. Better to be simple or complex throughout (example writing Saruman's Crows into a Tolkien variant whilst leaving out the Ring).

3. PLAIN ENGLISH

When you come to writing the rules, try to write them as simply and plainly as possible. Rules are "technical writing", and should be presented with a minimum of effect.

4. AMBIGUITIES

This is what it's all about. Quite distinct from the matter of rules written in a confusing fashion (see above) is the matter of rules that conflict with each other or are open to different interpretations. Above all, avoid these. All rules should be thoroughly checked for this before publication. Approach them with the attitude of a player looking for loopholes he can exploit.

5. PROVINCE NAMES

If the variant needs a map (and most do), take trouble over the likely three-letter abbreviations of the names you give the provinces. Ideally they should all be different, though some prominent designs instead feature a list of abbreviations which all players are expected to use. Alternatively, label the map with the abbreviations and publish a list of the full names elsewhere - this is by far the simplest way to avoid any confusion. However, you must still take care to check you haven't duplicated any abbreviations.

6. BORDERS

If the variant needs a map, take care that borders are drawn so as to leave no doubt about which provinces neighbour each other. For example, borders should never form an "X", which makes it ambiguous whether or not all four provinces adjoin each other - UNLESS the rules provide for this.

7. STRUCTURE

Try to present the rules in an orderly fashion, split into sections if possible or necessary, to facilitate understanding and quick reference. Ideally, every point should be given a distinct number or code, or named, so that if a query is raised, a player or GM can point to "Rule XII.a" or "The Moses Crossing Rule".

8. NAMES

Any designer worth his salt should take the trouble to check that he isn't naming the variant after one already in existence. For preference, ask the UKVB Custodian - or better still, send a draft copy of the rules. The UKVB can, on request, proof-read rules to check for ambiguities and loopholes for you (see above).

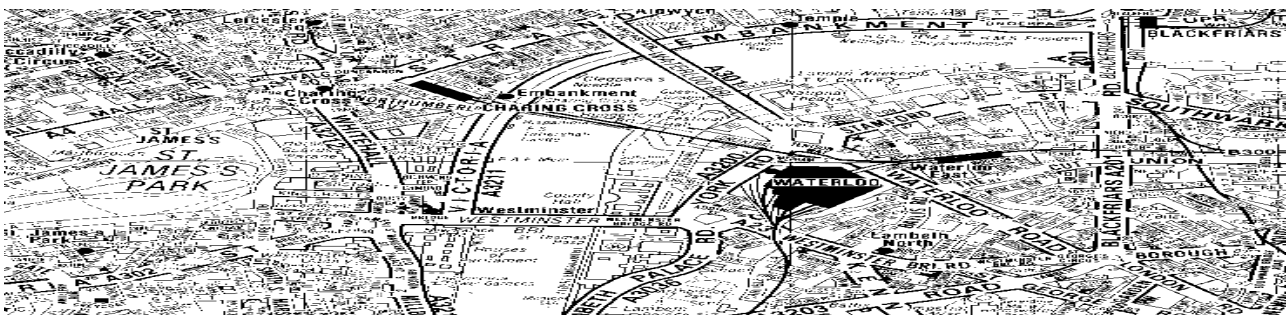
9. INFORMATION

Always include the designer's name and a date when the variant was published or written: the latter is most important in the event of confusion over which mark number came first (especially given the thoroughly infuriating and deplorable habit of the NAVB in issuing ARDA numbers without reference to chronology).

10. VARIANTBANK IT!

Once finished, ensure that you send a copy to your friendly UKVB Custodian.

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London Nights

by Andy Mansfield

Imagine. It's a hot August night, the temperature is still rising even as night draws in. Temperatures are running as high as the mercury. South of the river is quiet, all the good citizens are asleep at home behind the chintz curtains. However, north of the river the atmosphere is tense. Seven groups of people are hot, angry and organised. Flash points all along the river Thames are patrolled by the Special Patrol Group primarily to stop the trouble spreading over the six main bridges. As the sun sets the battle begins.

0. All usual regular Diplomacy rules apply, save where amended below.
1. There are seven players who each control a faction:

A. Theatre-Goers. Due to the cancellation of all performances by wild cat electrical strikes, disgruntled customers are now out for revenge. They have supply centres in Covent Garden, Leicester Square, Shaftsbury Avenue and Russell Square and start the game with a unit in each of them. Due to their ability to blend in with the background, the Theatre-goers orders are only reported when they are in conflict with the other players or their supply centres. All retreats and adjustments are reported in full.

B. Shoppers. Cut off from returning home by transport strikes a huge band of shoppers have joined together for retribution. They have supply centres in Knightsbridge, Tottenham Court Road and Oxford Circus and start the game with a unit in each save that the unit in Knightsbridge is a 2A. A 2A can always be built in Knightsbridge if a player uses two builds to do so.

C. East Enders. Disgruntled at the goings on in the night, the residents of the East End are out in force. Their supply centres are Shoreditch, Bethnal Green and Spitalfields, though they start the game with only a 3A in Shoreditch. This 3A cannot be rebuilt.

D. Nurses. Angry because of harsh working conditions and low pay the Nurses are on strike and have taken to the streets. They have supply centres in Gray's Inn Road, Kings Cross Road and Clerkenwell and start the game with a unit in each. Every season the Nurses can elect one of their units to be a 2A and other player's orders cannot be made conditional on their choice.

E. The Royals. Threatening to abdicate or even get a divorce unless they are left in peace, the Royals seek revenge on the tabloid readers. Leaving behind the most fortified area in London they raid and pillage. The area of The Mall and the Palace Gardens are fortified and have an inherent defensive value of one unit. Their supply centres are The Mall, the Palace Gardens and Trafalgar Square and they start the game with one unit in each.

F. Taxi Drivers. Furious over loss of business due to the recession, the taxi drivers are out to clean up the streets. Their supply centres are in Barbican, Charterhouse and Goswell Road and they start the game with a unit in each. One unit each move can make a double move as follows: the first move is made before all other movement is adjudicated and thus will always succeed provided the destination space is vacant; the second move is simultaneous with usual movement and is part of usual combat etc. The Taxi Drivers must always try and make use of their double move option.

G. City Boys. The City Boys are the unemployed Stock Exchange workers left out in the cold due to the crash. They are very violent and know where 50% of all hidden supply centres are (see below). They begin with units on their supply centres in Old Street, Finsbury Circus and Threadneedle Street.

2. **Multiple Armies.** Multiple armies (2A or 3A) move and support with all their value, but a single attack on a multiple army will cut all support. Multiple armies can never be split.

3. **The Police.** Each space adjoining the north bank of the Thames is defended by a Police unit (St. James Park; Whitehall; Victoria Embankment; Strand; Queen Victoria St.; Blackfriars; Canon Street; Cornhill; Traitor's gate and The Tower). A Police unit cannot move more than 2 spaces away from the river. The GM will write the orders for the Police with the rationale of protecting south London before seeing any of the player's orders. No diploming is possible with the Police, although the Police may support the other layers if they choose to do so.

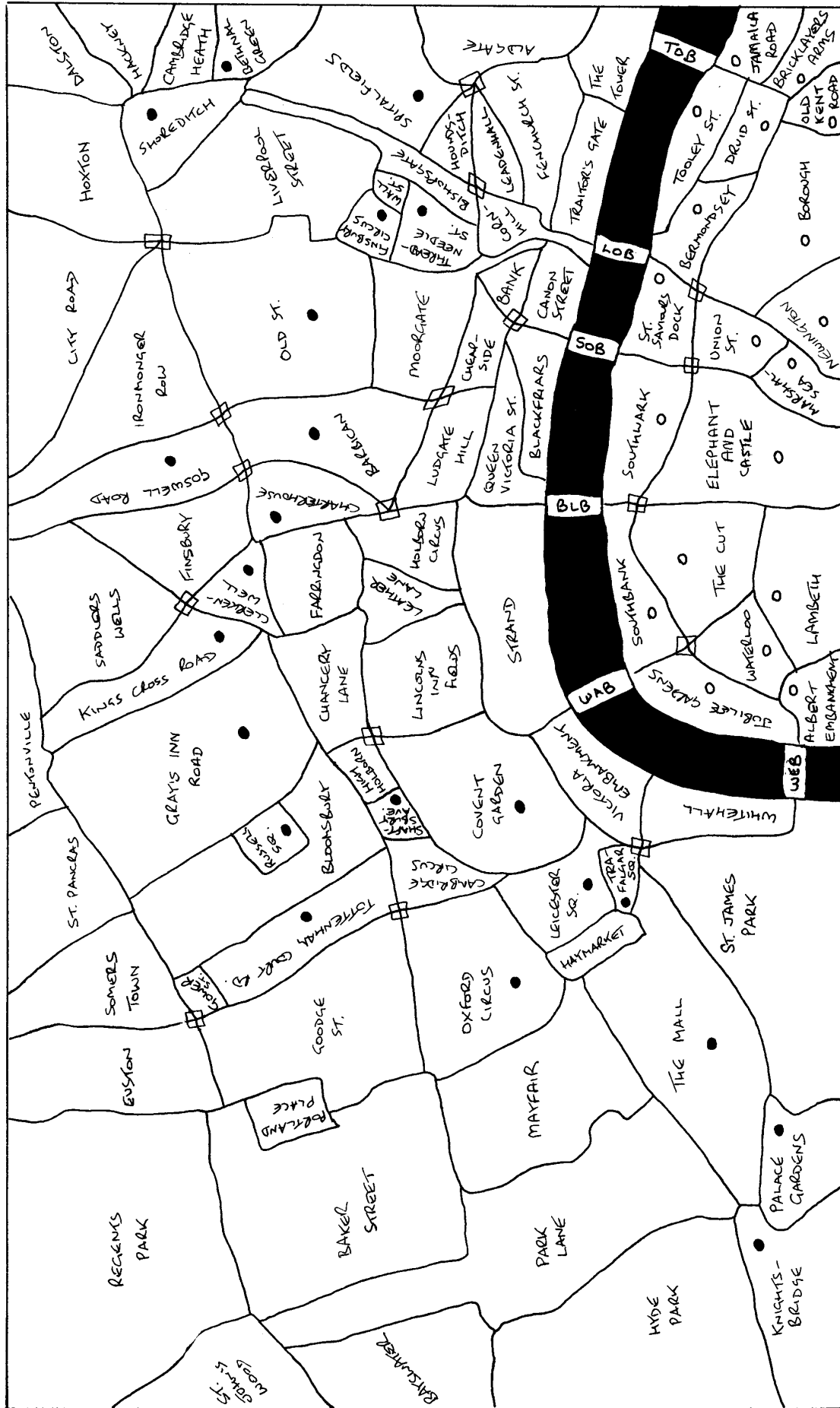
4. **The Bridges.** There are six bridges across the Thames: WEB = Westminster Bridge; WAB = Waterloo Bridge; BLB = Blackfriars Bridge; SOB = Southwark Bridge; LOB = London Bridge; and TOB = Tower Bridge. Movement on to bridges always succeeds and any number of units can co-exist on a bridge. No fighting takes place on a bridge. However, the normal movement rules apply to all spaces adjoining bridges.

5. **Supply Centres.** There are 22 home supply centres, 19 neutral supply centres south of the river and 10 hidden supply centres north of the Thames. The hidden supply centres are distributed by the GM at the beginning of the game randomly and the GM then informs the City Boys player where five of them are (chosen at random). If a hidden supply centre is discovered, its existence is revealed in the game report. Ownership of a supply centre only changes on the hour.

6. **Timing and Builds.** Each round (Diplomacy season) is 30 game minutes in duration, starting at 19:30, August 3rd. Adjustments take place on the hour. The game ends at dawn which is 06:00 August 4th. Builds may be made in any supply centre owned by the player concerned which is north of the river.

7. **Victory Criteria.** The winner is the player who scores the most at the end of the game according to the following formulae:

[northern s.c.'s held] x [southern s.c.'s held]



LONDON NIGHTS

By Andy Mansfield

GAMES BIT

LUTON AIRPORT [Tom Tweedy] – Good to see Steve's SPOFF back – now perhaps he can carry more chat and letters and save me doing all this hard work of a couple of paragraphs.

If you've been on dip2000 lately, you'll have seen we've taken on two new GMs, Richard Hucknall and Steve Turner, anticipating the rush. ☺ Hopefully Steve A will talk more on this in SPOFF Online. He has more ideas than I do. Well I'm not going to prattle on here any more – I'm tired.

As usual, to double-check on fakes all your games and maps are up on the WebPages at <http://www.lancedal.demon.co.uk/dip2000>. On with the games...

EUGEN 98BH (Spring 1910)
GM Tom Tweedy

Austria and England are still wriggling - just.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Berry Renkin) A(Tri) Stands (DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRP);
A(Vie) Stands

ENGLAND (Geoff Norwood) A(Edi) Stands
(DISLODGED TO Lpl); F(Pic) – Bre

FRANCE (Anarchy) F(MAO) Stands; F(WMS)
Stands

GERMANY (Tony Reeves) A(Ven) - Apu; A(Tyr) - Pie; A(Mun) - Tyr; A(Por) - Spa; F(Den) - Swe; A(Hol) - Bel; F(Kie) - BAL; F(Nwy) s A(Mos) - StP; A(Mos) - StP; A(Ber) - Pru; A(Sil) s A(War); A(War) Stands; F(NTH) s F(NWG) - Edi; F(NWG) - Edi; A(Lon) – Yor

TURKEY (Nick Marshall) A(Fin) - StP (FAILED); A(Ukr) - War (FAILED); A(Gal) s A(Ukr) - War; A(Sev) - Mos; A(Ser) - Tri; A(Bud) s A(Ser) - Tri; A(Alb) s A(Ser) - Tri; F(ADS) - Ven; F(BLA) - Con; F(AEG) - ION; F(ION) - TYS; F(TYS) - GoL; F(Rom) Stands

ENDGAME PROPOSAL: Equal draw for all survivors - was defeated.

Don't forget to head your orders with season, country and the game name.

Deadline Friday 19th November 1999

GUSTAVUS (Autumn1908)
GM Tom Tweedy
No builds at all !

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (John Wilman - NMR!)
A(Gal) Stands (DISLODGED - DISBANDED BY GM); A(Ser) Stands; A(Tyr) Stands; A(Vie) Stands; F(Gre) Stands

FRANCE (Paul Prebble) A(Bel) - Hol; F(HEL) s

A(Bel) - Hol; A(Bur) - Ruh; A(Pic) s A(Edi) - Bel; A(Edi) - Bel; F(NTH) c A(Edi) - Bel; F(ENG) s F(NTH); F(NWG) - BAR; A(Mar) Stands

GERMANY (Dylan O'Donnell) A(Kie) s
AUSTRIAN A(Tyr) - Mun (MISORDER); F(Ber) s A(Kie)

ITALY (Brandon Clarke) A(Ven) - Tyr (FAILED); A(Alb) s AUSTRIAN A(Ser); F(ION) s
AUSTRIAN F(Gre); F(AEG) s TURKISH F(Smy)

RUSSIA (Richard Hucknall) A(Nwy) Stands; A(StP) s A(Nwy); F(SKA) - NTH (FAILED); F(Den) s F(SKA) - NTH; A(Mun) - Kie (FAILED); A(Hol) s A(Mun) - Kie (CUT, DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRP); A(Ukr) - Gal; A(War) s A(Ukr) - Gal; A(Rum) s A(Ukr) - Gal; F(Bul) ec s A(Rum); F(BLA) s F(Bul) ec; A(Ank) - Smy (FAILED); A(Con) s A(Ank) – Smy

TURKEY (Anarchy) F(Smy) Stands

Autumn 1908 Adjustments:

A: Ser, Vie, Gre, Bud, Tri = 5; No change. 1 short.
F: Hol, Bel, Mar, Bre, Edi, Lon, Lpl, Por, Spa = 9; No change.

G: +Kie, Ber, Par = 3; Gains 1. 1 short.

I: Ven, Nap, Rom, Tun = 4; No change.

R: Nwy, StP, Den, Mun, War, Rum, Bul, Ank, Con, Mos, Sev, Swe, -Kie = 12; Loses 1.

T: Smy = 1; No change.

ENDGAME PROPOSAL: 1st France - votes for next time please. NMR's and abstentions count as YES

Press:

France(Government) I wouldn't have voted for me either!

Don't forget to head your orders with season, country and the game name.

Deadline Friday 19th November 1999

KUTUSOV (Autumn 1905)

GM Tom Tweedy

**Germany doesn't like Frech soldiers in Burgundy
- and says so!**

France is in big trouble.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Andy Bassett) A(Gre) s
A(Ser) (MISORDER, DISLODGED -
DISBANDED NRO); A(Ser) – Bud

ENGLAND (Anarchy) F(HEL) Stands; F(NTH)
Stands; F(NWG) Stands

FRANCE (Geoff Norwood) A(Mar) - Spa; A(Bur) -
Mar (FAILED, DISLODGED - DISBANDED
NRO); F(Bre) - MAO; A(Pic) - Bur (FAILED)

GERMANY (Paul Gorsuch) A(Kie) - Mun; A(Bel) s
A(Ruh) - Bur; A(Ruh) - Bur; A(Hol) s A(Bel);
A(Den) Stands

ITALY (Gary Pennington) F(WMS) - GoL; F(Tun) -
WMS; F(ION) s TURKISH A(Bul) - Gre; A(Alb) -
Ser; A(Tri) - Vie; A(Pie) - Mar (FAILED)

RUSSIA (Steve Wells) F(Swe) - Nwy (FAILED);
A(Mos) - War (FAILED); A(Sev) - Rum (FAILED,
DISLODGED TO Ukr); A(StP) - Lvn; A(Nwy) -
Swe (FAILED)

TURKEY (Steve Ade) A(Gal) - War (FAILED);
F(BLA) s A(Arm) - Sev; A(Rum) s ITALIAN
A(Alb) - Ser (CUT); A(Arm) - Sev; F(AEG) s
A(Bul) - Gre; A(Bul) – Gre

Autumn 1905 Adjustments:

A: Bud, -Ser = 1; Loses 1.

E: Edi, Lon, Lpl = 3; No change.

F: Spa, Mar, Par, Por, Bre = 5; No change. Builds
F(Mar), F(Bre).

G: Mun, Bel, Hol, Den, Kie, Ber = 6; No change.
Builds F(Kie).

I: +Ser, Vie, Tri, Tun, Nap, Rom, Ven = 7; Gains 1.
Builds F(Nap).

R: Swe, Mos, Nwy, StP, War = 5; No change.

T: Rum, Sev, Gre, Bul, Con, Smy, Ank = 7; No
change. Builds A(Con).

Please note that Steve Ade has changed his mail
address to - steveade@hollowlane.co.uk

AUSTRIA-All: I will be away from 17-10-99 until
02-11-99.

**Don't forget to head your orders with season,
country and the game name.**

Deadline Friday 19th November 1999

LAWRENCE (Autumn 1905)

GM Tom Tweedy

**Russia and France clash again - will the rest get
sucked up in the storm?**

ENGLAND (Aaron Bassett) A(Den) - Kie; F(BAL)
s A(Den) - Kie; F(HEL) - Hol (FAILED); F(NTH) s
F(HEL) - Hol; F(NWG) - BAR; F(Nwy) s F(NWG)
– BAR

FRANCE (Richard Hucknall) F(TYS) s F(WMS) -
Tun; F(WMS) - Tun; A(Rom) s TURKISH F(ION) -
Nap; A(Ven) - Tri (FAILED); A(Pic) - Bel; A(Bur)
s A(Pic) – Bel

GERMANY (Mark Howard) F(Bel) - Hol (FAILED,
DISLODGED TO ENG); A(Ruh) s F(Bel) - Hol;
A(Tyr) s FRENCH A(Ven) - Tri; A(Sil) - Ber
(FAILED)

ITALY (Anarchy) F(Nap) Stands (DISLODGED -
DISBANDED BY GM); F(Tun) Stands
(DISLODGED - DISBANDED BY GM)

RUSSIA (Paul Simpkins) A(Bul) s F(BLA) - Con;
F(BLA) - Con (FAILED); F(Gre) Stands; A(Alb) -
Tri (FAILED); A(Mos) - StP (FAILED); F(StP) nc -
BAR (FAILED); A(Vie) s A(Alb) - Tri; A(Pru) -
Ber (FAILED); A(Rum) – Gal

TURKEY (Jerry Pico) A(Ank) s A(Con); A(Con)
Stands; F(ION) – Nap

Autumn 1905 Adjustments:

E: +Kie, Nwy, Lon, Den, Edi, Lpl, Swe = 7; Gains
1. Builds A(Lon).

F: +Tun, Rom, +Ven, +Bel, Mar, Bre, Par, Por, Spa
= 9; Gains 3. Builds A(Mar), F(Bre), A(Par).

G: Mun, Hol, Ber -Bel, -Kie = 3; Loses 2. Removes
A(Ruh).

I: -Ven, -Nap, -Tun = 0; Loses 3.

R: +Bul, +Gre, Mos, StP, Vie, War, Bud, Ser, Sev,
Tri, Rum = 11; Gains 2. Builds A(Sev), A(War).

T: Ank, Con, +Nap, Smy -Gre, -Bul = 4; Loses 1.
Builds F(Smy).

**Don't forget to head your orders with season,
country and the game name.**

Deadline Friday 19th November 1999

NELSON (Standby Game) - Autumn 1902

GM Tom Tweedy

**Germany in War, Russia in Ank - so much
glorious blood!**

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Mike Shaw) A(Rum) s
A(Ser) - Bul; A(Gal) s A(Rum); A(Bud) s A(Rum);
A(Ser) - Bul; F(AEG) - Con (FAILED)

ENGLAND (Mark Turner) F(Cly) - Lpl; F(NTH) - ENG (FAILED); F(NWG) - Nwy (FAILED); A(Bel) Stands (DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRO)

FRANCE (Andrew Reynolds) A(Bur) - Bel; A(Pic) s A(Bur) - Bel; A(Gas) - Bre (FAILED); A(Par) - Bre (FAILED); F(GoL) - Spa sc; F(MAO) - ENG (FAILED)

GERMANY (Eric Carter) A(Ruh) - Mun; A(Sil) - War; A(Den) s F(SKA) - Swe; F(SKA) - Swe; A(Hol) Stands (UNORDERED)

ITALY (Andrew Lane) A(Apu) - Tun; F(ION) c A(Apu) - Tun; A(Gre) s AUSTRIAN A(Ser) - Bul

RUSSIA (Cristopher Iles) A(Mos) s A(Ukr) - Sev; F(BLA) - Ank; A(StP) s A(Nwy); A(Nwy) Stands; F(Swe) - SKA (FAILED, DISLODGED TO BAL); A(Ukr) - Sev

TURKEY (Thomas Parker - NMR!) A(Bul) Stands (DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRP); A(Con) Stands; F(Sev) Stands (DISLODGED - DISBANDED BY GM)

Autumn 1902 Adjustments:

A: +Rum, Bud, +Bul, Ser, Tri, Vie, -Gre = 6; Gains 1. Builds A(Vie).

E: Lpl, Edi, Lon, -Nwy = 3; Loses 1.

F: Bel, Par, Spa, Bre, Mar, Por = 6; No change.

G: Mun, +War, Den, +Swe, Hol, Ber, Kie = 7; Gains 2. 2 short, no builds ordered.

I: +Tun, +Gre, Nap, Rom, Ven = 5; Gains 2. Builds F(Nap), A(Rom).

R: Mos, +Ank, StP, +Nwy, Sev, -Rum, -Swe, -War = 5; Loses 1.

T: Con, Smy -Bul, -Ank = 2; Loses 2. One short, no builds ordered.

Don't forget to head your orders with season, country and the game name.

Deadline - Friday 19th November 1999

ORLOV (No Standby Game) - Spring 1903
GM Tom Tweedy

GERMAN A(Vie) S A(Mun) - Tri !? Will the REAL Mr Hyde step forward.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Anarchy) F(Tri) Stands (DISLODGED - DISBANDED NRP)

ENGLAND (David Pearton) A(Lon) Stands; A(Hol) - Kie (FAILED); F(ENG) - NTH; F(NTH) - NWG

FRANCE (Craig Shadbolt) F(MAO) - ENG; F(Mar) - GoL; A(Pic) - Bre; A(Bur) - Mun (FAILED);

A(Bel) Stands; A(Ruh) s ENGLISH A(Hol) - Kie

GERMANY (Malcolm Hyde) A(Mun) - Tri (MISORDER); A(Vie) S A(Mun) - Tri (NO SUCH UNIT); A(Ber) - Mun (FAILED); A(Kie) s A(Ber) - Mun (CUT); F(Den) s A(Kie)

ITALY (Sam Cook) A(Ven) - Tri (FAILED); A(Tyr) s A(Ven) - Tri; F(Nap) Stands (UNORDERED); F(Tun) Stands (UNORDERED)

RUSSIA (Neill Richardson) F(BLA) - Sev; F(StP) nc - BAR; A(Vie) s TURKISH A(Ser) - Tri; A(Bud) s TURKISH A(Ser) - Tri; A(Sil) s A(War) - Pru; A(War) - Pru; A(Mos) - StP; F(Swe) - BAL; A(Nwy) - Swe

TURKEY (Andrew Lane) A(Ser) - Tri; A(Gre) - Alb; F(ION) - ADS; F(AEG) - Gre; F(Con) - AEG; F(Ank) - Con

Press

Moscow - World - two good books recently read - Regeneration - Pat Barker, Stalingrad - Anthony Beevor.

[Please note that Sam Cook has changed his email address.](#)

Don't forget to head your orders with season, country and the game name.

Deadline Friday 19th November 1999

POTEMKIN (No Standby) - Spring 1902
GM Tom Tweedy

Russia duped - could he be in trouble?

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Edward Board - NMR!) A(Bud) Stands; A(Ser) Stands; A(Vie) Stands; F(Gre) Stands (DISLODGED - DISBANDED BY GM); F(Tri) Stands

ENGLAND (Richard Hucknall) F(Nwy) - StP nc; A(Bel) - Bur (FAILED); A(Edi) - Bel (FAILED); F(NTH) c A(Edi) - Bel; F(Lon) - ENG

FRANCE (Andrew Bassett) F(Bre) - MAO; F(Por) - Spa sc (FAILED); A(Mar) - Bur (FAILED); A(Par) s A(Mar) - Bur; A(Spa) - Mar (FAILED)

GERMANY (Guy Fraser-Samson) F(Ber) - BAL; F(Den) s F(Ber) - BAL; A(Hol) Stands; A(Kie) - Ber; A(Mun) s ENGLISH A(Bel) - Bur

ITALY (Greg Harte) F(Tun) - TYS; F(Ven) - ADS; A(Apu) - Ven; A(Tyr) - Boh

RUSSIA (Steve Turner) F(GoB) s ENGLISH F(Nwy) - Swe (MISORDER); A(Rum) - Ser (FAILED); F(BLA) s TURKISH A(Con) - Bul;

A(War) - Sil; A(Ukr) – Gal

TURKEY (Paul Almond) F(Smy) - EMS; F(AEG) s A(Bul) - Gre; A(Bul) - Gre; A(Con) – Bul

PRESS

England to France - In view of the current unofficial trade war, I felt it necessary to ensure that your units were not in control of ENC this season. How do you like your sewage - medium raw ? ((Ouch!))

Bern: Why did the Sultan (on another short visit to check on his Swiss bank account) feel as if he was being drawn into some sort of bear pit?hopefully it was only the memory of the "Bern bear" that was tugging at his brain.....

Con-Rom: Busy though we both are, any chance of a bit of correspondence in the autumn?.. One way or another I have the feeling that it will be "good to talk..."

German intelligence reports suggest that the inhabitants of Vienna and Budapest are currently divided over whether to learn Italian or Russian.

StP-Ber: You really should have let me have Sweden.

StP-Vie: Sorry, Edward, it is nothing personal. Blame Guy.

Star Tseve - GM: I am working on a fix for my keyboard problem. Hopefully okay now. ((It must be - I've had more email from you in the past couple of days, than I've had in all the time I've been on the email system! All welcome, though, Steve - I hasten to add!))

Don't forget to head your orders with season, country and the game name.

DEADLINE: Friday 19th November 1999

QUILLER (Standby Game) - Spring 1902
GM Tom Tweedy

England holidays in the south in S02 ?!

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Jim Davies) A(Ser) s F(Alb) - Gre; F(Alb) - Gre; F(Tri)-Bud (NO SUCH UNIT); A(Tri) Stands (UNORDERED)

ENGLAND (Anselm Kersten) A(Lpl) - Yor; F(MAO) - Naf; A(Nwy) - StP (FAILED); F(NTH) - Nwy (FAILED)

FRANCE (Eric van den Bedum) A(Bel) - Hol (FAILED); A(Par) - Bur; A(Spa) - Gas; F(Bre) - MAO; F(Mar) - Spa sc

GERMANY (Douglas Massie) F(Den) - Swe (FAILED); A(Kie) - Hol; A(Ruh) s A(Kie) – Hol

ITALY (Chris Martin) F(Tun) s F(Nap) - ION;

F(Nap) - ION; A(Vie) s A(Ven) - Tyr; A(Ven) - Tyr; A(Rom) – Ven

RUSSIA (Craig Shadbolt) F(StP) nc - Nwy (FAILED); F(Swe) s F(StP) nc - Nwy (CUT); A(War) - Sil; A(Gal) - Bud; A(Rum) s A(Gal) - Bud; F(Sev) s A(Rum)

TURKEY (Alex Beaumont-Jones) F(Smy) - AEG; A(Bul) s F(BLA) (MISORDER); F(BLA) c A(Con) - Arm; A(Con) – Arm

Please note that Alex Beaumont-Jones has changed his email address

Don't forget to head your orders with season, country and the game name.

DEADLINE Friday 19th November 1999

ROMMEL - Autumn 1901

GM Tom Tweedy

Ouch - another bad NMR

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Paul Dowden) A(Ser) s RUSSIAN F(Rum); F(Tri) - Ven (FAILED); A(Vie) - Gal (FAILED)

ENGLAND (Steve Turner) F(NWG) - Nwy; A(Yor) - Den (FAILED); F(NTH) c A(Yor) – Den

FRANCE (Peter Swallow - NMR!) A(Bur) Stands; A(Mar) Stands; F(MAO) Stands

GERMANY (Aaron Bassett) F(Hol) Stands; A(Kie) - Den (FAILED); A(Mun) Stands

ITALY (Sam Cook) F(ION) - Gre; A(Rom) Stands; A(Ven) Stands

RUSSIA (Anthony Lindfield) F(GoB) - Swe; A(Mos) - Sev; A(War) - Gal (FAILED); F(Rum) Stands (UNORDERED)

TURKEY (Richard Hucknall) A(Bul) - Rum (FAILED); F(BLA) s A(Bul) - Rum; A(Con) - Bul (FAILED)

Autumn 1901 Adjustments:

A: +Ser, Tri, Vie, Bud = 4; Gains 1. Builds A(Bud).

E: +Nwy, Edi, Lon, Lpl = 4; Gains 1. Builds F(Edi).

F: Mar, Bre, Par = 3; No change.

G: +Hol, Kie, Mun, Ber = 4; Gains 1. Builds A(Ber).

I: +Gre, Rom, Ven, Nap = 4; Gains 1. Builds F(Nap).

R: +Swe, Sev, War, +Rum, Mos, StP = 6; Gains 2.

Builds A(Mos), (No build ordered - NO COAST SPECIFIED FOR BUILD F[StP]).

T: +Bul, Con, Ank, Smy = 4; Gains 1. Builds

F(Smy).

Press:

Steed: Yaaaaaaaaawwwwwwwwnnnnn!!! **Anon:**
Anyone for a game of Gunboat?

Please note that Sam Cook has changed his email address

Please note that Peter Swallow has also changed his email address

LUTON AIRPORT - All: Don't forget to head your orders with season, country and the game name.

DEADLINE Friday 19th November 1999

STONEWALL - Spring 1901
GM Richard Hucknall
England sails into ENC

AUSTRIA (Nick Collins) A(Bud)-Ser; A(Vie)-Gal (FAILED); F(Tri)-Ven (FAILED)

ENGLAND (RAV),,,,,,,err what`s your full name please Rav F(Lon)-ENC; F(Edi)-NTH; A(Lpl)-Wal

FRANCE (Steve Turner) F(Bre)-MAO; A(Par)-Gas; A(Mar)-Spa

GERMANY (Peter Shuttleworth) F(Kie)-Den; A(Ber)-Kie; A(Mun) Stands

ITALY (Jerry Pico) F(Nap)-ION;A(Rom)-Apu,A(Ven) stands

RUSSIA (Paul Harrison) F(Stpsc)-GOB; F(Sev)-BLA (FAILED); A(War)-Gal (FAILED); A(Mos)-Ukr

TURKEY (Donald Forrester) A(Con)-Bul; F(Ank)-BLA (FAILED); A(Smy)-Con

PRESS

Paris-All

Wonderful, marvellous. Now this is what I call a game of Diplomacy. Thanks everyone.

Steve-GM

Now lets see if I got this straight. If I help you to win in Potemkin you will tell me everybody`s moves in Stonewall? Welcome to the best game on Diplomacy 2000.

EYRIE ((Now that`s me - your beloved GM)) - Steve

Although I`ll do almost anything to win a game of Diplomacy, your fellow players can rest assured that I intend to win Potemkin whilst GMing Stonewall honestly. If this is a better game than Potemkin then it must be a bloody good one.

EYRIE

Just to confirm that this is the GM`s reserved dateline. It dates back to when I published `Fall of Eagles` - eagle`s nest = eyrie, looking down on all the action, view from the eyrie etc, geddit ? Also anything with double brackets ((.....)) is from me.

DEADLINE FOR AUTUMN 1901 = MIDNIGHT (GMT) FRIDAY NOVEMBER 19TH 1999

Don`t forget to head your orders with game name, country, and season. It make life a lot simpler for me. When sending your A01 orders, don`t forget to include retreats where necessary, and your winter builds or disbands. Retreats can be conditional on A01 moves if you wish, and builds/disbands can be conditional on both moves and retreats.

In a dire (and I mean really dire) emergency, like your PC crashing, you can fax orders to me (via Tom Tweedy) on +44 (0)1494 581276

SpOff/OL Waiting Lists

If you want to play Regular Diplomacy contact [Tom Tweedy](mailto:TomTweedy@lancedal.demon.co.uk) and in particular check out his Diplomacy games web page <http://www.lancedal.demon.co.uk/dip2000>.

STANDARD DIP WAITING LIST - GM Steve Turner

Mike Harvey - mharvey@micro-plus-web.net

Mark Angus - mark.angus@btinternet.com

Stephen Macaulay -

MacBec@macaulays.fsnet.co.uk

Donald Forrester - donforr@globalnet.co.uk

STANDBY

Jerry Pico - picoman@mindspring.com

If you want to play anything else, contact Stephen Agar (Stephen@spoff.demon.co.uk).

1492 (rules in issue 72) Douglas Massie, Peter Berlin, Nick Collins, Brad Martin – GAMESTART!

This could be real fun - but as it`s difficult to GM there will be one game only.

