

UP AROUND THE BEND... UP AROUND THE BEND
UP AROUND THE BEND.....UP AROUND THE BEND
UP AROUND THE BEND.....UP AROUND THE BEND
UP AROUND THE BEND... UP AROUND THE BEND

Issue 1, March 1991 50p (but this issue free)

from: Harry Bond, 6 Wolsey Avenue, Walthamstow, London E17 6RE. 081 521 4212

.....

This is the first issue of a fanzine intending to run postal Diplomacy and several other games, with the usual addenda of chat, letters and other stuff.

Well, theoretically that's all I need to say in this issue, but I feel it incumbent upon me to elucidate at greater length.

Firstly, then, the games. These are the games I intend to run:

DIPLOMACY: Needs no introduction. A set of house rules should be printed later on in the issue.

DIPLOMACY VARIANTS: Countless variations on the theme of Diplomacy have been devised; some of them are even playable. Though I've not found one that can match the regular game, which will be (I hope) the main focus of U-Bend, I am ready to run any variant if it's one I can face running; which means that the chance of talking me into it varies inversely in proportion to the variant's complexity. Anything more convoluted than a simple Mercator is likely to be looked on askance; and note also that I've never been able to use my brain well enough to comprehend Downfall. It will probably be a cold day in hell before I even get enough subbers to contemplate Chaos II; and as for HyperEc, wash your mouth out...

Deluge, Time Lords, and Seismic (but not Geophysical, which is simply no good) are three I'd be not only ready but enthusiastic to run. Simple-change variants such as F(Rom) or Milan are other possibilities; Intimate Ia is the 2-player variant (I will not entertain running WWI, which is shamefully unbalanced despite the many attempts to remedy this). I bet I get people asking for Vain Rats/Arts/Star (why isn't there one called Vain Tsar, does anyone know?); and finally, I was rather disappointed that Vienna folded before filling the list for Five Italies, so I intend to print the rules for this soon (and will send the zine to those who were on the Vienna list, if I can find their addresses).

SOPWITH: Another very popular game in the Hobby; a simulation of WWI air warfare in which six players manoeuvre round the sky, trying to shoot everyone else down whilst remaining undamaged themselves. Postal rules printed later in the issue.

ASTEROID DOGFIGHT: A Sopwith variant set in space. Rules will either be in this issue or next, depending on limitations of space and time. Modifications include defence shields and variable speeds.

RAILWAY RIVALS: The third main Hobby game, which has the added attraction (well, I find it an attraction, anyway) of being developed inside the Hobby and manufactured and run on a distinctly semi-professional basis by the very wonderful David Watts. Postal rules are available from him, at 'Rostherne', 102 Priory Road, Milford Haven, Dyfed SA73 2ED for some trifling sum, and the Rostherne Games catalogue is full of other Jolly Good Games.

Games of RR run in this zine will have a few differences in rules to the David Watts ones -- specifically, the latest emendations reducing the minimum length of a legal run to three from six, and the specification that a run drawn to a town not connected is lost, won't be used; I think very little of these new rules, which seem to me to be a classic case of mending something while it's still working. I wonder why David came up with them.

As for maps -- almost anything considered. I'd like if possible to strike a balance between published maps and experimental ones (of which David farms out a large number to zines for playtesting purposes), so tell me your favourite, or the one that no other zine's running, and we shall see what we can do (as well as what we shall see).

BUS BOSS: I may consider running a game or two of this at some point, but I'd prefer to start with Railway Rivals; Bus Boss to my eyes is more or less the same in most respects, and the differences are not improvements, especially when played postally.

ATLANTIC AIRLINES: Now, the differences between this one and RR are improvements, at least arguably, which makes it a little surprising that this game has been quietly shunted to one corner of the Rostherne emporium and has never made it to the top of the shortlist for commercial manufacture. The scenario is simply Railway Rivals with planes; however, unlike RR or Bus Boss, you don't get to run your vehicles free -- you have to buy them. Several different planes are available, of varying passenger capacity, range, and cost to run. The only snag is that when played postally, conditional orders are required -- but looking at some of the games people play which require far more complex orders and still seem to give vast pleasure to the participants, maybe it's not such a downfall after all. It can accommodate up to eight itf, but postally, I think a maximum of five is to be recommended. Rules available from DGW at the address on page 1; you'll have to make up your own map, I'm afraid, but hell -- a few pence for the rules and hexsheet and an hour or two's work on the latter is hardly a great price to pay for any game, let alone such a good one. So, y'all write off for it this instant. Okay? Okay.

OTHER GAMES: If there's a game you fancy playing postally you can always write and ask me nicely (I won't bite your head off). I must emphasise, however, that I am after all the final arbiter of what gets played in U-Bend, and I can't see there being any massive campaign games, or soccer/sport kind of stuff.

So much for games.

What else will this sparkling new zine contain, then? Could be anything, boss. One thing I can absolutely guarantee it will contain, though, is me. Or even, Me.

You see, Me is the subject I can be dead sure of actually knowing something about. I'm not that well-informed, generally; indeed, like most students, I'm surprisingly ignorant about Real World type of subjects (though I am at least more honest about this than most). When talking about Me I can be confident in the knowledge that nobody is ever going to be able to write in and contradict me from their wider knowledge of the matter in question.

Besides, I subscribe to the Cult Of The Personality. Well, I have to; I'm a zine editor now, ain't I?

However, just because I'm ill-informed on a subject doesn't mean I'm not going to sound off about it as and when the whim takes me, and I hope none of you for a moment suspected otherwise. No, I intend to be thoroughly opinionated and outspoken at every opportunity -- this is, it has been proved, a highly successful formula for zines.

EGOLAND

After saying all that about the Cult Of The Personality, I reckon I really ought to indulge myself somewhat... Anyway, this next bit is all about the rather wonderful, talented, sensitive and artistic scumbag who goes about under the name of H.R.Bond.

Six foot two, eyes of blue, I did for Bowen and I'll do for you... hmm, maybe not. Born on a mountain top in Tennessee, won his first game when he was only three ... ye-e-es, well, um.

Okay, then, I'll give it to you straight. I am twenty-one years of age, having been born in late 1969, and currently study the Classics at University College, London. I came into the hobby sideways, through two directions at once; I met Dave Rowley, editor of Mica, through his involvement in science-fiction fandom and fanzines, though I'd been playing professional PBM games since sixth form at school (where I also played, and won, my first game of Diplomacy. As Italy. No, I can't see it happening again either).

My involvement, though, didn't really start in a big way until I subscribed to Y Ddraig Goch and found out (a) how superb postal diplomacy can be, and (b) that writing silly letters and getting them printed also has its attractions. Launching off from YDdG, I subbed to umpteen zines, playing games in most of them and writing silly letters to all of them. From there, I suppose, starting a zine was the next logical step; now all those poor editors can get their own back by writing silly letters to me.

As a matter of fact, this isn't my first venture into the world of editing; I've published several science-fiction fanzines, notably four issues of Nowhere Fast and one of The Co-Operative Cauliflower, none of which were particularly good in their field, but I enjoyed them, and some of their recipients did too, which can't be had. It's interesting to compare SF zines with gameszines, as Mark Nelson is wont to do now and again; since the former variety carry no games, they have no particular reason to come out with great frequency or regularity, and indeed it's a rare zine that can make four issues a year in the sf field. (I hasten to add that I hope to manage a five-weekly schedule with rather fewer interruptions than some). The flip-side of this is that sf zines have more time to polish themselves and generally improve the writing, layout and appearance of the product... well, such is the theory; in actual fact, sf editors tend to spend their extra time in boozing and other such pleasures of the flesh, so sf zines aren't all that far superior to gameszines there.

They do, though, have a lot more original artwork. Since I've joined the Hobby, one of the main things that's enabled me to keep the two pursuits separate in my head is that gameszines have an entirely different attitude to art. Gameszines use trouvages; cartoons from the newspapers, bits of computer clip art, that sort of thing. Or quite frequently they don't use art at all.

I'm not saying that this is wrong (and you'll notice a distinct lack of art in this zine at the moment, though this will quite likely change in future); indeed, the last few issues of YDdG have carried covers consisting of illos from some BoyS Own Paper sort of source, with added captions underneath by Bowen that add (ahem) a whole new dimension; great stuff. Now you'd not see that in a skiffy zine.

It's rare, though, I reiterate, for zines in our hobby to carry much art. It can't be that there are no artists in the hobby -- hell, it isn't; Allan Gordon, Tim Gumble, Steve Thomas are all good cartoonists, and William Whyte and Pete Strover have both shown themselves to be very capable with the pen (or in William's case, the pin; now, drawing direct on stencil is a lost art if ever there was one).

So why don't people use them more?

Cartoons or small pieces not being used I can understand, as that means actually remembering to leave a gap on the page and go to all the trouble of pasting the art in afterwards (heavy sarcasm); but all you have to do with a cover is put it on the front and copy it (or rather, the other way round).

Certainly, if anyone is good enough to supply me with covers, they will not only be rewarded with free issues and/or pints but with Great Public Approbation. Sadly, I have little or no artistic talent myself; though that didn't stop me from doing two covers for my sf zines, and one for Mica (which Dave lost, rot his soul). Maybe, just maybe...

Anyway, like I said, I've edited things before.

What do I want from Up Around The Bend, then? Dunno, really, squire. I want it to be a good games zine, but there's a lot of ways to achieve that one (some people, I do hear, even think Froggy is still a good games zine, which ~~is~~ either doublethink or means their standards of a good games zine are totally opposed to mine). There are an awful lot of zines around today I would give my back teeth to be able to do as well as; I admire Y Ddraig Goch for its outspokenness and sheer energy, and Electric Monk for its appearance and suaveness, and Dolchstoss for its renowned GMing quality, and Arfle Barfle Gloop for its ~~fluffiness~~ good nature, and 10 Lime Avenue for its zany humour, and, and, andandand. But I will never be able to put a zine together that looks like Leccy Monk (not while I'm using this typewriter, anyway) and will never be able to GM as well as Richard Sharp (not until after I've published nearly 150 issues, anyway) and will never have the force of personality of Iain Bowen (not unless I get a complete head transplant, anyway), so I'm afraid you get me as I am; take me or leave me, but don't expect to change me. I wonder if there are any other personal qualities or characteristics in which nobody's already conerred the market in the editing field?

The zine, incidentally, is going to be photocopied for the foreseeable future. This is because I have a cheap source available. If this source does dry up (which is always possible) I can just switch to mimeo, since I have a Gestetner 400 which actually behaves rather well (I know it's a hobby tradition to malign one's mimeograph, but I believe that sort of thing is merely inviting trouble), bought cheap from a local youth club which switched to photocopying. Several accessories were thrown in free, including even a proper stylus and shading-plate so you don't have to scratch on stencils with a pin (which tears them if you aren't very very careful, and tears them half the time even if you are). But for now, as I say, it's copying.

And why did I choose now to launch a zine, then?

Because my finals are coming up.

('What?' they say. 'He must be mental! Fancy launching a zine when he's just about to spend all his time feverishly swotting away').

No, seriously, reason is that (since it'll most likely take a couple of issues to get any games under way) if I start now, and my finals do cause me to be a week or two late -- then it won't matter, 'cos there aren't any games to be held up. What logic, eh? I'm not stupid, you know. Well, not that stupid.

Having said that, mind you, it's conceivable that our OGRe, the great and good Mr Sullivan, will trust me with something from his box of goodies -- there are an awful lot of games from WIDtT?! that are going to have to go somewhere. Well, we shall have to wait and see.

Doing U-Bend shouldn't interfere too much with my other hobby activities; or rather, they can be rescheduled round my doing the zine. I'm in four games of Diplomacy, which isn't too many; I'm in a lot more of Railway Rivals and Sopwith, but those (being largely non-negotiating sort of games) don't take up much time. I was offering to run RM and Sopwith in Power Play, but since the number of people interested there seems minimal I reckon that project can quietly be abandoned. And there's my subzine for Mica, Swanee Whistle.

Mica, as I've said, was the first gameszine I ever saw (excluding some fruppy stuff in 1987ish from the likes of Tyrone Stoddard -- quite good -- and Brian Duguid -- bloody awful) and I've known Dave for quite a while, so it was natural that when I wanted to dip my toe into doing more than just playing games, it was Dave I asked "Do you want a subzine?" And he did, so I did one.

The trouble with Dave, though, is that he blows hot and cold. Mica has been through good patches, and it's been through bad patches. When I first joined, it was going through a bad one (like, eight months between issues). My contributions to Mica seemed to perk Dave up rather, and he was hitting a good five weekly schedule once more until the end of last year or so, when his enthusiasm waned dramatically once more. The last couple of Micas were done at least partly through my nagging Dave, and the most recent one still isn't fully distributed several months after being done. The 'current' Swanee Whistle contains such wonderfully relevant material as predictions for the zine poll; it was due in January, but I'm beginning to wonder whether it'll ever be seen at all.

I say this isn't good enough; and Dave agrees, as a matter of fact.

So all this is another reason I'm launching this zine now. There's a possibility that at some point Mica will fold into U-Bend as a subzine, or that the games will come here with Dave as an external GM. All this needs discussion between Dave and me, though, and obviously it'd be best if Mica were to get back to regularity.

So how do you get this fledgling superstar of a zine delivered to your doorstep every five weeks, then? There's quite a variety of ways:

1) Sub. 50p gets you an issue, £1 two, £1.50 three, and so on in perfect and aesthetically pleasing mathematical regularity.

2) Trade. Self-evident, mainly. If you're willing to trade, and I already sub to your zine, you can either send me back the balance of my subscription, or hang onto it for a while in case you're afraid I'll burn myself out in three issues flat, or keep it to pay game fees with if you're the sort of zine that charges game fees, or whatever. If I already sub to your zine and you don't want to trade, have no qualms about saying so -- I shall then simply keep subbing to your zine in the normal way.

3) Barter. This medium of exchange is rather out of fashion these days -- unjustly so, I feel. I would like to revive it. For instance, a good tape full of my sort of music (which is almost any kind of music) will net you four issues, I should think. Trinkets, curios, rags and bones and hanks of hair accepted and credited pro rata. Particularly welcome are old Hank Janson books (no, seriously -- 3 issues for these); and

3a) Old Zines. I am a fanzine collector, or some would say accumulator. My library (what a pretentious word to use) of sf fanzines is probably among the country's five or six biggest. I am not averse to collecting gameszines on the same basis. So if you're going to throw some old zines out, or have an attic full you never read, every two sent to me gets you a nice new U-Bend in return. Former

CONFESSIONS OF A PARANOID

In my less lucid moments I sometimes wonder whether the reason that I play diplomacy isn't that it justifies my feeling that everyone's out to get me. 'Cos they are, you know.

Now I know intellectually that people have better things to be doing with their lives than spending them persecuting me. But on the emotional level, I know they're doing it. They're cockin g up my housing benefit, losing my letters; why, at this very moment they're probably consulting one another about my weakest subjects in preparation for setting the summer exams.

And it's not just people, either. I still have qualms about turning the light off at night due to the monsters under the bed. And then there are the inanimate objects that still manage to somehow hold a feeling of lurking menace...

"Bells are like cats and mirrors; they're queer things, and it don't do to go thinking too much about them".

-- Dorothy L. Sayers, THE 9 TAYLORS

Quite so. For one who is supposed to be of adult years and mentality, I find that the irrational figures awfully large for me. Why should a solidly built foot-bridge over a railway, which has been there for years and must have been crossed by umpteen people a day since it was built, collapse under me when I cross? No, I can't think of a reason either, but it doesn't stop me tensing up when I get to the middle.

Still, I suppose it could be worse. I know one woman who feels the same way about gasometers.

This paranoia shapes my life somewhat, as you can probably guess. It makes me slow to make friends, as I always wonder what people are trying to get out of me, rather than believing they may actually like me. It makes me sit facing the door in restaurants. (Have you heard of Wild Bill Hickok?) It makes me very reluctant to go into pubs at all.

Well, this last is only partly my paranoia and is more related to (a) the fact that I drink very little (and usually cider, which a lot of pubs don't have on draught, but only in bottles at exorbitant prices and dubious qualities), (b) I don't really subscribe to the stereotyped pub sort of bloke, and (c) my hearing isn't very good (another excuse for the paranoia; if you can't hear people creeping up on you, it means they probably are). Pubs in London, and elsewhere too, will insist on installing either juke boxes or muzak tapes and playing them at high volume. I have enough difficulty as it is trying to follow a conversation in a crowded pub with hundreds of other conversations going on around me (I usually end up with one hand round my pint and the other cupped round my ear), but the music drowns any chance I ever had, I'm afraid. I am no enemy of music, but if I wanted to listen to some, I would be at home playing records or listening to Capital Gold, not down the pub.

So, like I said, one reason for playing diplomacy is that at least you know everyone's out to get you. You feel justified -- I say 'you', but of course I mean 'I' -- and everybody likes to feel justified, especially when they know they aren't really.

Because the employment of logic tells me that people aren't out to get me at all. I have about as many enemies as the average man on the street must have; I can think of four or five people I'm not on speaking terms with, and a few more I'd go out of my way to avoid, but that's about all.

So why do I allow myself to be paranoid? Hey, that's it -- I must be out to get me....

BIRTH OF SEVEN NATIONS

Not 'Birth Of A Nation', or 'Birth Of A Notion', or even 'Birth Of Five Nations' (which I suppose would be about rugby); 'Birth Of Seven Nations' must be, as any fule kno, about the history of Diplomacy in its earliest days.

As I've said already, I'm a science fiction fan as well as a Diplomacy one; and like the Diplomacy hobby, the SF fanzine hobby has a set of archives. These are held by Vinç Clarke, who lives quite near London, so I quite frequently pop round to browse through the collection (which includes zines as old as the 1930s). And last time, I learnt that he had some very old Dippy zines too; so I asked if I could borrow them to write this article about them...

The date on the first of them is August 29th, 1964; which is pretty good, considering that the first postal game ever was only started in 1963. Indeed, I think the game reported (yes, there's only one; zines were only one or two sheets long in them days) can only have been the fifth or sixth postal game ever.

The name of the zine? Brobdingnag ("The Fanzine No One Seems To Be Able To Pronounce" proclaims issue 9), edited by Dick Schultz of Detroit. Issues 8 to 16 cover Spring 03 to Winter 05 of game 1964C; also in the library were issues 72 and 73, by which time the editor had become J.A. McCallum of Alberta, Canada, the year had become 1967, and the zine 18 pages long instead of 6 maximum.

But let's start with the primitive. An awful lot of things had yet to be discovered about postal Diplomacy; the two-season year, for example. In Brob, after every Autumn a separate issue was published just to show adjustments; a horribly time-consuming and roundabout way of doing things, as it seems to us now. Also yet to be invented was the shorthand code for adjudications, giving us such beauties as "Fleet Norway to Skaggerak Strait" every time. No wonder the zine only ran one game; it must have taken him all his time to type that one out. Also yet to be invented were conditional retreats; "In the Ionian Sea, the Italian Fleet has been forced to retreat. It may retreat to Apulia, Naples, the Tyrrhenian Sea, Tunis. Bailes is hereby requested to send me his retreat order immediately." (Issue 12)

Some things are familiar, though, such as game headlines. Brob habitually printed four or five of these per season, all for the one game, and some of them show a nice wit; "FRENCH STAND FIRM, GAMESMASTER MILLS IN CONFUSION" is one of the neatest. Also (sadly) familiar is the sentiment shown by the headline "US POST OFFICE DECLARES WAR ON US PUBLIC; BROBDINGNAG DEVASTATED AS BATTLE LINE SWEEPS ACROSS NATION!" (Issue 15), a headline occasioned by the USPO's delaying both France's and Italy's orders over Christmas 1964.

Press releases, too, were already a standard feature of the postal diplomacy scene. Indeed, several issues contain what might be thought of as a subzine, called REUTERS REPORTS, edited, written and apparently printed by John Boardman, who was playing England in the game. (And Turkey, under the pseudonym Eric Blake, though this didn't come out till after he'd won -- probably the first example of the use of underhand tactics in a postal Dippy game). While almost all press is game-based, quite a lot (especially Boardman's) is nonetheless rather good; for example, after France turned on England and invaded Wales, Boardman reported on the reaction of the House of Commons. (Brob 12): "...James Kier Hardie maintained that this treachery showed the futility of the entire war. He urged that the Government initiate negotiations at once for a peace settlement with other powers. At this point, a mixed group of Conservatives and Liberals forcibly ejected the House's sole Labour member. Col. Pompey Blimp, the Tory member for Nether Tooting, warned Hardie that 'if you show your d-d face again here, you d-d b-y anarchist, I'll bash in you d-d hooter, so help me G-d.'"

Colonel Blimp makes several more appearances in these copies of Brob, which may make him the first example of a 'borrowed' character appearing in a press saga. The unfortunate Mr Kier Hardy finds himself exiled to Stornoway.

Another thing that had already been invented, it seems, was the NMR. Both Austria and Russia had stopped sending in orders very early, although the concept of anarchy had not yet been thought up; and since putting a player's name by their country was as yet unheard of, it's impossible to tell who played these countries (or would be if Schultz didn't mention it once in a paragraph of chat).

Humour, as I intimated, is not unknown, and neither are silly orders. In Brob 14, France orders Army Belgium to the moon (the GM adds redundantly that "in legal terms, this means a hold order") and adds a press release: "Peenemunde (ILS Bulletin): Rockets launched from Peenemunde Missile Centre today are reported in trouble at an altitude of eighteen feet. Scientists at this base are frankly worried, since at their present course and speed, the spacemen's journey would be lengthened from nine days to some seventeen hundred years."

So what scale and position did the hobby hold in those far-off days? To be frank, it was little more than an offshoot of science fiction fandom. There's a directory of players and subbers to the five zines of the day at the back of Brob 10; all the names which are familiar are from sf, with the sole exception of Allan Calhamer, and two or three of them are still active in sf fandom, having presumably paid no heed to Diplomacy for twenty-five years. (This includes Brob's British agent, Ken Cheslin of Stourbridge, whose son used to play D&D with Iain Bowen and is now a member of the leading indie group, Ned's Atomic Dustbin!)

The influx of wargamers and the establishment of Diplomacy as a hobby on its own, independant of science fiction fandom, was yet to come, as was the entry of Diplomacy to Britain (apart from the agent, only one British subscriber is listed out of twenty-eight).

Twenty-eight subscribers would be a very unfortunate number for a zine to have nowadays, of course, but they thought smaller in those days. I wonder what Dick Schultz would have thought if he'd seen one of today's zines, with perhaps half a dozen games of Diplomacy and another half-dozen of other games, plus pages and pages filled with letters, politics and general chat?

As a matter of fact, I think he'd have probably reeled in horror and chucked in doing Brobgingnag that instant. Pioneers have a way of being disenchanted with what comes of their pioneering, and certainly the hobby has progressed so far from Brob's badly typed and overinked stencils that, as you might say, one can hardly be seen from the other. Then again, what would we say if we could see the Diplomacy zine of the year 2015? Will such a thing exist? Will it be as far from us as we are from Brob? Or has the hobby developed to its logical conclusion already, meaning that future developments will only be cosmetic and minor?

Hard to say, boss. Certainly I don't think that the hobby will sail serenely on forever just as it is; but who could have predicted the influx from the RPG hobby, for instance, which has probably shaped the recent format of zines more than any other single event? Whilst I have no doubts that the hobby will continue, I shall say only this; "The future is not only stranger than we imagine, it is stranger than we can imagine."

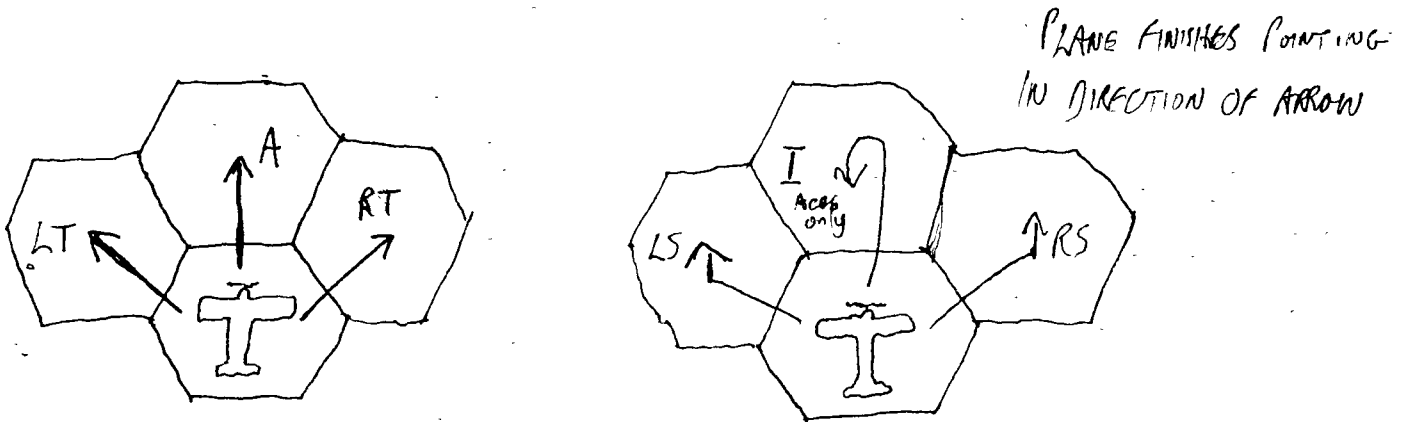
On which plagiaristic note we end for now. There may be more material about the later issues of Brob next time, if interest warrants it.

U-Bend Postal Sopwith Rules

- 1) Rules will be as per the Sopwith rule book unless stated otherwise.
- 2) The following abbreviations will be used for moves: RT=Right Turn; RS=Right Slip; LT=Left Turn; LS=Left Slip; A=Ahead; O=Zero Move (Also sometimes known as N for No Move, but I use the former); I=Immelmann Turn. O cannot be used in move 1, and if ordered in move 2 must also be ordered in move 3.
- 3) Players should choose a name for their pilot, such as (but hopefully more imaginative than) Snoopy or The Red Baron.
- 4) Each player starts with 16 ammo and 12 damage. Ammo may be replenished by a simple landing at the player's home airfield.
- 5) Clouds will be placed randomly by the GM at the gamestart. Henceforth they move one hex in a random direction at the end of each turn.
- 6) Each airfield has three runways, known as Alpha, Beta and Gamma (alternatively Left, Right and Centre, but I use the former). When landing or taking off, players must specify that they're doing so, and which runway they intend to use. When taking off, the first two moves must be Ahead; if no runway is specified, Beta will be used by default. If a player doesn't say he's landing, he won't be considered to be doing so.
- 7) A sample set of orders for turn 1 might be written down thus;
T/o Gamma: A, A, A fire-A.
- 8) Firing and damage: players are only allowed 3 bursts of fire per turn, but they may be spread at will over the three moves. Thus RT, A, A fire-R,L,A would be acceptable, as would RT, A fire-L, A, A fire-A would be too. A fire A, A isn't -- you can't fire twice in the same direction in one move.
- 9) An underlined firing order (A fire-A) means that a hit was scored by you. An underlined movement order (A fire-A) means that a hit was scored on you!
- 10) Damage scored is inversely proportional to range; 4 pts at 1 hex distance, 3 at 2, 2 at 3, 1 at 4. Planes in the same hex cannot hit one another. Aces score an extra point (but do not get an extra hex range). Clouds block fire, though you can fire out from the edge of a cloud. Ambiguous firing orders (eg A - fire) will be centralised.
- 11) A player NMRing will fly three hexes straight ahead. Players may NMR any number of times (but this will inevitably carry them off the board or attract live players to the sitting target, so dropouts won't last long).
- 12) A player who accidentally (or deliberately, for that matter) flies off the board is deemed to have crashed and is out. The five points are lost as though the player had been shot down.
- 13) A player who has scored 40 points from his games so far is declared an Ace by the Sopwith Statistician (currently Dave Tant -- see footnote) and receives the ability to do the Immelmann Turn, plus increased firepower. Aces will be declared as such by the GM at the start of the game, or during it if they are newly qualified. Ace status may be lost by dropping below 40 points.
- 14) Points table:
Per hit scored on enemy plane -- 1pt. Enemy shot down -- 5pts. Enemy Ace shot down -- 10pts. Own plane shot down -- -5pts. Own plane shot down if Ace -- -10 pts. Last plane left flying -- 5pts
If a plane crashes by ramming a cloud or flying off the board, its remaining damage points are shared out between remaining players (fractions round down).

- 15) A player whose plane is suffering may, if he manages to land it at his own airfield, repair it. For each complete turn spent on the ground, 2 damage points may be restored. Planes may not be repaired above 8 points in this way.
- 16) The Winner. This is usually regarded as the last surviving plane, although it is perfectly possible for this to be a different player from the one with most points; in which case, the latter player, whilst not the official winner, may take comfort in the fact that his rating has done better than the winner's...
- 17) Press always welcome.
- 18) Decision of the GM is final, and deception of the GM is naughty.

Pictorial Explanations Of Moves:



Christ, I'm a rotten draughtsman.

Footnote:

Does anybody know what's become of the Sopwith Stats? I don't think there can have been an issue for nearly two years, which must mean something is up somewhere. Does anyone have any contact with Dave Tant?

This is of importance because the whole Ace system depends on the Stats being published fairly regularly, or at the very least being kept up to date. If the stats and the concept of Aces are allowed to lapse, much of the point of Sopwith will be lost (and a lot of long-time players who've worked hard to achieve Ace status are going to be hacked off no end).

I'm sending this to Dave Tant, at the address which hobby service listings give for him. Dave, if you're reading this, hi. Sorry if I seem to come down heavy on you, but I believe the current situation of no stats and new games not being issued numbers shouldn't go on any longer than necessary. While it's obviously best if you can get the situation back to normal yourself, I'm prepared to give any aid I'm able to, up to and including taking the Sopwith Stats over myself if need be. Please do something, Dave; people are getting fractious.

U-BEND DIPLOMACY HOUSERULES

- 1) The word of the GM is law and no correspondence will be entered into.
- 2) The GM will run things as per the 1971 rulebook unless the houserules differ specifically.
- 3) Deception of the GM renders you liable to whatever retribution I think fitting, which will probably be a painful one
- 4) Players with no orders on file by the deadline will be NMRed and their units will all hold unordered, disbanding if dislodged. Orders arriving late may be accepted if I haven't adjudicated the game yet, but you're dicing with death. Orders delayed unreasonably by the post (i.e. posted 1st class 2 days or more before the deadline but not arriving in time) will not count towards anarchy under rule 5.
- 5) A player NMRing twice consecutively without a very good reason/excuse will be thrown into anarchy and out of the zine. Any remaining credit will go to feed my starving bank account. I am very unlikely indeed to use standbys, but may do so if I feel one is needed.
- 6) All provinces will be referred to by me as 3-letter abbreviations, with land spaces in minuscules (well, 1 capital and 2 minuscules) and sea spaces all in caps. Unless specified otherwise this abbreviation will be the first three letters of the province's name. Exceptions are Nwy=Norway; NWS=Norwegian Sea; NTH=North Sea; Lpl=Liverpool; Lvn=Livonia; NAF=North Africa; TYS=Tyrrhenian Sea. In case of ambiguity, orders will be declared illegal. The GM is the judge of ambiguity.
- 7) When moving a fleet to or from a province with multiple coasts, the coast must always be specified.
- 8) When supporting or convoying a unit of another country, that unit's nationality must be specified (e.g. F(ION) C Italian A(Apu)-Gre).
- 9) Implied orders are accepted but not recommended; i.e. F(NTH) C A(Yox)-Den does count as an order for both units. Best to write them out in full, though.
- 10) If you're deliberately ordering illegally it's best if you tell me so.
- 11) Retreats should be submitted with each set of orders, and may be made conditional (but see rule 13).
- 12) Builds should be submitted in each Autumn season; they too may be conditional, conditional upon rule 13.
- 13) Conditionals must be specific and not general. i.e. 'retreat(War)-Sil if dislodged by a German unit' is okay, as is 'build A(Ber) if Russia has moved to BAL., otherwise build A(Mun)'. Not okay is "build F(Bre) if England attacks me".
- 14) A surviving player may propose a game-end proposal. These are printed anonymously and voted on for next season. They must place all live players above all dead/anarchic ones. If defeated by abstentions only, the GM will repropose it immediately and this time abstentions will count as votes for. The GM may also propose game-end proposals.
- 15) Press is encouraged and will be printed at the GM's discretion, i.e. if there is space. Almost any byline is acceptable; but the names of the seven countries

followed by (govt), eg England (govt), are reserved for the players of that country, and the GM's reserved byline too is private. This is Judge English. Iain Bowen's houserules provide for a reserve GM byline, goodness knows why (so he can talk to himself, maybe), so my reserve byline Lord Bad Vibe is also, er, reserved.

16) Units may be signed over to another player at any time. However, if this is done long-term, authority must be renewed every game year. The signing-over player must remain in credit.

17) Telephone orders are acceptable if the GM has a phone, but if I decide it is past my bedtime I may put the phone straight down on you and NMR you. This is after all a postal games zine, postal orders are best, and there's less chance of me making a transcription error.

18) Orders should include game name, game date, country name, and real world date. They should also be signed so I know it's you.

19) In case of GM error, inform me asap and I shall take appropriate action, which will probably be to readjudicate correctly and send the corrections out to players. If errors are pointed out late the game may have to be heldover. If they aren't pointed out at all and the situation is such that to correct it now would be horrendous, the error may be allowed to stand.

20) Countries in anarchy may receive support for their units. When making winter removals for such countries, the GM will remove units for them in this order: furthest from owned supply centre, fleets before armies, captured sc's before home ones, and finally alphabetical order. This goes for countries who don't order removals, too, or who don't order enough.

21) When signing up for a game, efforts will be made to give players who have supplied a preference list their choice of country. Players who haven't will get what's left over.

22) The GM reserves the right to change these houserules at any time. (And when he does one thing he'll do is put them in a more logical order).

23) That's all, folks.

Haz Sez It, 16-3-91

Last bit of space for news and so forth. Since it's below the House Rules it's going to find itself being photocopied along with them and sent out to new players, so I'd better ensure that it's well written and correct...

It seems the announcement earlier about my not running games in Power Play was premature; PP 6 arrived an hour ago and it seems I am going to run Sopwith there after all. Fair enough. Sopwith is after all not very time-consuming to GM.

At least some of the Diplomacy games from the collapsed Will It Lead To Trouble are going to Mopsy. The Railway Rivals games are heading for Arfle Barfle Gloop whilst the Sopwith, according to the last Electric Monk, are moving there. The Monk over the last few issues has picked up quite a number of external GMs, and this orphaning will add Tim Lomas to that number; I hope it isn't growing too much at once, is all. Hell, if you can't trust Andy and Wadi, who can you trust?

Thank heavens for Tippex. Did you know it was invented by Mike Nesmith's mum?

U-Bend 1...Page the last

This has been the first issue of Up Around The Bend, a zine which intends to run certain games by post to regular deadlines. For details of what those games are, you are requested to cast your eyes a short way down the page. These games will be run without game-fee or deposit.

Up Around The Bend, for which the invited abbreviation is U-Bend, will appear every five weeks and will cost a mere fifty pence sterling per issue, to anywhere in the world covered by the postal services. (Rates negotiable for places that aren't). This first issue is complementary.

The deadline for the next issue is WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24th, 1991. This deadline is somewhat less important than deadlines will become in the future, since as yet, the zine hasn't got any games.

It also, as yet, has no subbers or traders -- both of these are welcomed with open arms. Zine editors receiving this are humbly asked to remember how it was for them when they first began, and to aid me by giving me some publicity -- positive publicity is best, but hell, any port in a storm.

WAITING LISTS

Diplomacy -- Seven wanted.

Sopwith -- Six wanted.

Asteroid Dogfight -- Six wanted.

Railway Rivals -- Four to six wanted (depends on the map).

Atlantic Airlines -- Five wanted.

Diplomacy Variants -- I intend to run perhaps two or three out of the list given on the front page. Seven wanted, or maybe less, for each.

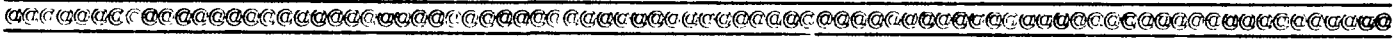
All these games are to be GMed by the same bumbling cretin responsible for everything else about the zine. He is

HARRY BOND, 6 WOLSEY AVENUE, WALTHAMSTOW, LONDON E17 6RE

(Phone 081 521 4212, before 11pm, plizz)

and he looks forward to hearing from you.

%%%% Credit Box
% (Another feature which at the moment is something less than useful)
%
%%%



From: 6 Wolsey Ave
London E17 6RE

TO: NICK KINZETT
11 JAWWAY ROAD
GREEN LANE
COVENTRY CV3 6JF

