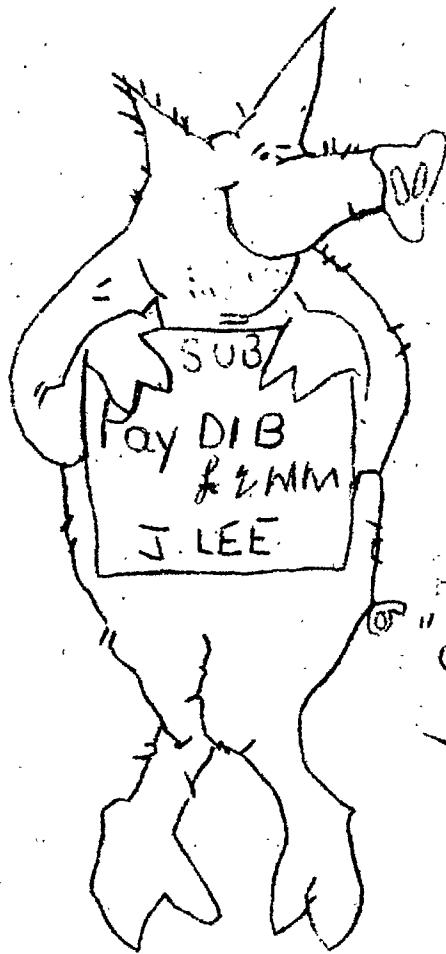
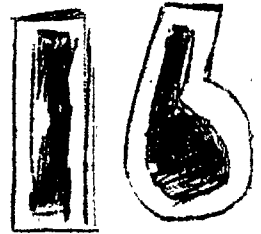


DIB DIB DIB

ISSUE



"Oh Gee John
You shouldn't
have"

This is supposed to be a rather thin issue of Dib Dib Dib 16...supposed to be because I had expected to get the 'After Christmas Blues' blues - plus I didn't think that many people would have time to write (what am I doing the bloody editorial here for?!). As with other issues this issue comes to you at just 1p per sheet + postage. If anyone wished to unload more money on me my address is, 29 Stanley Hill Avenue, Amersham, Bucks, HP7 9BD. Tel. 02403 4513

EDITORIAL



Here we go again. As I said above, I'd banked on this being a thin issue, (a) because of lack of time, and (b) because I didn't think you lot would be interested enough to write; what with celebrating the New Year an' all that. Trust me to get it wrong. It's now three days before the deadline, and this is the first bit of typing I've done towards the zine. Great start to the New Year this! Anyway on to the first thing that pops into my head - COMPUTERS!.....Nah, better not - which brings me on to GH and Birks (unfortunately).

If you'll remember last issue, I mentioned the fact that GH held a rather unfavourable review of Dib 14. Well apart from the fact it sparked off one of Dib's subscribers to....um....take up my cause, so to speak (Birks deserved every word of it, says I), it seems as though the review was initially done for the good of the hobby! To quote Pete:-

"Twenty-nine lines in Dib Dib Dib in my response to my less than adulatory review. Now this is what the public like to see. Let's get a bit of down the line gutsiness in a hobby far too prone to becoming a mutual admiration society for rather self-satisfied editors."

Great, eh? "...less than adulatory review..." ho ho, I like that! Mind you, I'm not really sure what the hell Pete meant. If he was suggesting that it was for the good of the hobby, why pick on me? There's far more deserving cases to pick on....what about John Wilman, he started it all off by arresting that 'Moonie' (tsk tsk, shouldn't have done that, John). If he hadn't have done his duty the Birksonian anger would have stopped at Watch Your Back's doorstep. I BLAME YOU ENTIRELY, WILMAN! You know when it comes down to it, a horrible thought kept occuring that Pete really believes that issuing chummy reviews is good for the hobby. Could this start off a new trend? Will editors start trying to 'help' the hobby, and therefore themselves, by slagging off each and every zine? It's possible I suppose, but to me it's just the same rut as the 'self-satisfied editor' status. Already I'm falling into that rut - another 20 odd lines given to the subject (piss off, Birks).

I'd talk about what sort of Christmas I had but for the fact I'm already fed up with Christmas and I'm glad it's over - roll on the summer! Oh I had a good time, don't get me wrong, but I think it sufficient to mention that we finally finished wrapping presents at 12.30 Christmas Eve: after which we dropped them by Stuart's bed, sneaked gratefully to our own bed, only to hear the little sod get y up and start opening them.....I just covered my head with a pillow. That, coupled with the trip I had to make down to Brighton to visit Jan's family (and back again the same day - on the 29th) might give you some idea of how hectic my Christmas was becoming. So.....NO MORE...

Once again the CGS list has changed since last issue - a game has been successfully installed within the pages of Perspiring Dreams. Not that I expected any gripes (from the players allocated), but I was a little worried the much-talked-about PD/Sodds Law merger might upset things. Anyway, the list now stands as: Dib Dib Dib, Outposts, Bohemian Rhapsody, Fall of Eagles, Match Abandoned, and Home of the Brave. Any other editor wishing to put their zine on the list please let me know....novices have to be placed somewhere.

The CGS gamestart for Dib shouldn't take too long to fill, I have five players already. There were a couple of novice Dib subscribers who wanted to play in my CGS (to save subbing to more than 1 zine) so please let me know as soon as possible if you want to join.

And whilst I'm on the subject of the CGS, I notice there has been some talk in Home of the Brave about how the CGS is run. Apparently, a game allocated to Casus Belli

EDITORIAL (cont.)

by the last CGS organiser, Richard Hucknall, has now had to be rehoused in HotB. Geoff says:-

"The whole question of 'Ab Initio' ((the orphan game)) raises some kind of question mark over the way the CGS system operates. After all, everyone in Ab Initio is new to the hobby and is probably rather brownd off at the disappearance of their GH and their money."

Now, this is a worrying situation. I agree with what Geoff says entirely; something must be done to protect newcomers to the hobby from this kind of very demoralising problem. My idea was to be strict with new zines. Something which has cropped up with Pete Doubleday's Thing on the Mat. My rule is, newish zines asking for a CGS game for the first time, go to the top of the CGS list - but they must have started at least one game of their own (not just a proven track record. Pete asked for a CGS game to 'start him off' - unfortunately I had to say no. I felt bad about refusing a new zine (I would much prefer to encourage new zines), but felt I had no other choice; the novices come first - after all it's they that have to pay out the money.

Of course Pete put forward some very sound arguments against my decision, saying that a new editor peaks in enthusiasm soon after starting his zine, and by the time he has proven himself is probably close to folding anyway. Also, that players in any zine might find a 'reliable' editor chucking them out in mid-game. What he says is entirely probable - but I have to make a stand somewhere. What do others think?

But getting back to HotB, Geoff went on to say:-

"The CGS's role in helping new zines is essential. But couldn't we work out a way of arranging a sort of after-sales service? I'm not saying Tom should be lumbered with further work rehousing orphans but couldn't CGS operate some kind of deposit scheme for the GH's? Thus if you want to take a CGS game then you must have some kind of track record or you must give Tom a £10 deposit returnable on the game reaching say, Autumn 1904. Should a GH disappear before the game reaches Autumn 1904, the money could be passed on to the new GH so as to compensate the orphaned players' credits."

Once again I agree; Geoff's put forward a very sensible suggestion. It would mean anyone could take a CGS game, but the novices would be protected. And I certainly wouldn't mind the extra work of rehousing orphaned CGS games - I keep an eye on them anyway (the ones I've allocated that is). Ideas on this will be gratefully accepted.

JOTTO (Round 5)

Nicholas Clifton: 5th (4,1,4,1,1,3)	Martin Allen: 5th (3,1,2,3,2,2)
John Miller: 5th (1,3,2,1,2,1)	William Fisk: 5th -missed-
George Davies: 4th (3,0,1,1,2,1)	John Lee: 4th (4,3,3,0,-1,2)
	5th (3,5,3,0,1,1)
John Field: 5th (1,0,2,2,1,3)	Richard Bass: 5th (0,0,1,0,1,1)
Keith Loveys: 5th (1,0,2,2,2,2)	David Huson: 1st (1,4,1,1,1,0)
Sandy Peters: 5th - missed -	2nd (2,1,2,1,0,3)
	3rd (1,0,1,2,3,1)
George North: 5th - missed -	4th (3,3,3,0,1,1)
	5th (3,0,2,1,2,2)

Good turnout this issue - I'm pleased with the amount of interest generated by this simple little game (I don't know why other zines stopped running it). Keep it up gentlemen. Those that want to catch up just send the two words in next issue. Mind you, it shouldn't be too long now before someone takes some guesses...

In case anyone is interested, I've still got 2 Atari Cartidges FOR SALE: Othello and Checkers (as new). Better hurry up though as Pete Mearns says he'll snap them up in a year or two. Offers invited.

WINGE!

Chris by Mark
Sardow & Newman



SECRET WEAPON
RESEARCH.
KEEP OUT,
BRITISHER
AGENT.

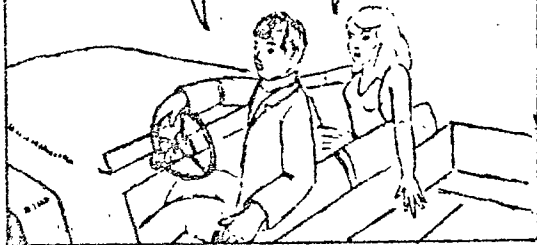
EPISODE 5:

In which the plot
is finally explained.

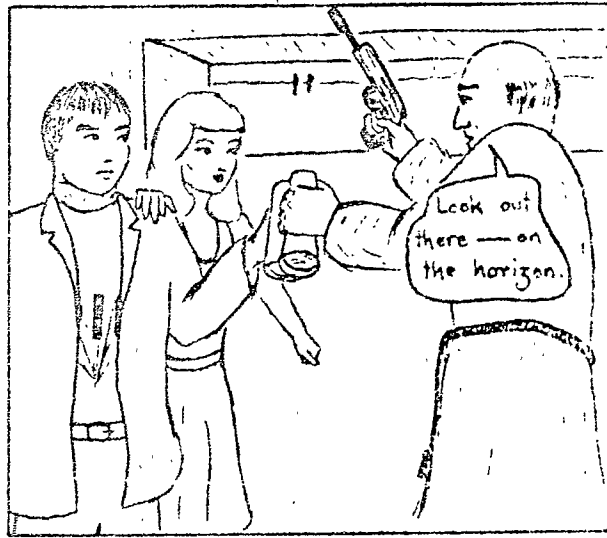
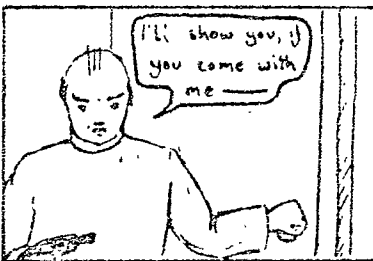


Well, well, Miss Angel and Tweedy, ipse prassens!

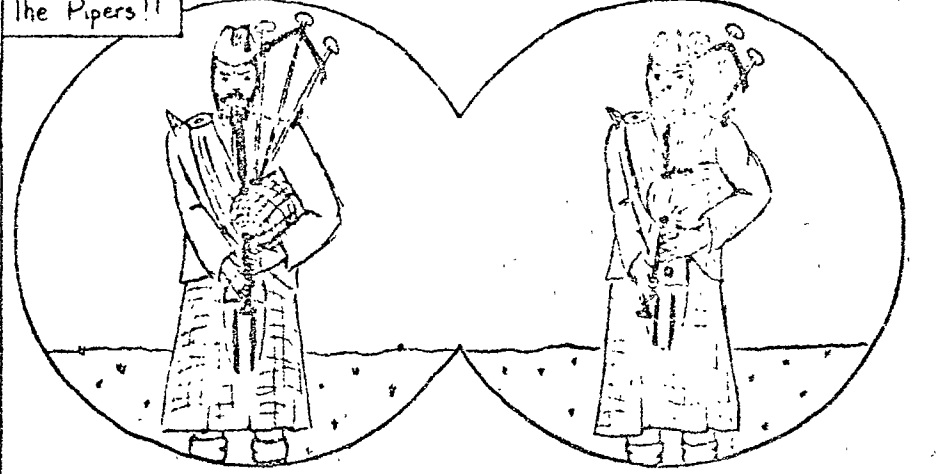
Reverend Johnson!



2 in person



The Pipers!!



What will happen next?
How long will the script-writers avoid the revenge of the Pipers?
How much will you pay us not to write you into the next episode?
These and other questions will probably not be answered in the next episode of:

WINGE!

Another good episode of Angel - thanks Chris. I think you've done it now taking on the Pipers, though -- the consequences could be quite horrible. Mind you, you should make quite a packet with people paying you to keep them out of the story (story?) -- don't forget my 10 percent cut, will you? But.....to other things...

DENNY BLACK

Well golly gee here I am again and all ready to sock it to you with all the news. I guess the biggest happening of the month was the Dib Dib Dib office party which was something of an eye opener, although having worked in Margate Carnival A Gogo '81 I thought it would have taken plastic surgery to open mine wider.

Looked like it was going to be quite a respectable and low-key party at first but then Mr. Tweedy told me he thought that five people do not a party make, especially when two of them are his cute little boy and his over-affectionate Dalmatian, so he'd invited a few more people from the Hobby. Mr. Ashbey was not able to come to my chagrin as he was going to be wintering in Klosters, which I think is nr. Broadstairs but Geography was never my Forte so maybe it's nearer Herne Bay. Anyway my chagrin evaporated when I started to think about how I would get to actually meet some of these Famous People after reading back copies of their zines for a month!! Well I mean a Girl has to look on the Bright Side haven't you?

The first to arrive was Mr. Clive Booth and well really I hate to say it but he was just such a disappointment. It was my fault I guess because I had mixed him up with the balding Australian gentleman who writes witty Television reviews for The Observer and features on Panels. Whereas in fact he wasn't like that at all, except maybe in appearance a little bit.

Michael Allaway and his fiancee. Well I guess it was around then that things started to go wrong. I'm sure Mr. Allaway can be a Very Nice Person sometimes but like all the great writers he does have these Pouts come on him now and then, of Black Depression I mean, and he seemed to be right in the middle of one. So I really tried to jolly him up a bit but somehow I don't think Marie appreciated my efforts, at least not the Can-Can routine, though I think the Songs from the Shows bit was more to her taste. Anyway Mr. Allaway just sat there for a while looking like what I imagine John Paul Sartre would have looked like had Mr. Tweedy invited him to the party rather than Mr. Allaway. So I gave up and played games with Mr. Tweedy's little boy for a while, and we were just in the middle of a nice game of Squasp when unfortunately I swatted Mr. Allaway by mistake, right on the Pernod. Well it was a shame of course and I was just apologising to him but he became really ve'ry Demonstrative and started throwing things round the room.

Well what happened next was Mr. Tweedy showed his Acumen and took several Positive Steps, ending up in the corner behind his dear wife and dog. This was undoubtedly the best Tactic and seemed to me to underline his prowess in the Diplomacy field, as I don't think anything could have calmed Mr. Allaway down quite so much as being administered several slobbering kisses in quick succession, by the Dalmatian, whilst at the same time having Mrs. Tweedy speak rapidly to him in her special telephone voice, which has been known to unnerve the mightiest in the Land.

Well Marie very wisely took Mr. Allaway home, and Mr. Booth helped the rest of us to clean up the room a little bit whilst Mr. Tweedy telephoned the glazier. I never got to finish the game with Stuart but somehow it didn't seem to matter, I just felt so grateful at having sat at the feet of one of the Hobby's greatest thinkers. (Or was it on them?)

Thanks for the article Penny, it certainly shows Allaway in his true light. I'm not too sure who you mean when you say you sat at the feet of one of the Hobby's greatest thinkers.....surely you can't mean Booth?.....nah, you must mean me! Please accept this issue free...

AN ADVERT AN ADVERT AN ADVERT AN ADVERT AN ADVERT AN ADVERT AN ADVERT AN ADVERT AN ADV

I've got some 70+ wargames for sale. They range from SPI mini games through to such gems as Warsaw Rising. The bulk are SPI standard games and S & T games. If interested send me a SSAE for a list or 'phone: Frank P. Dunn, 32 Gateacre Park Drive, Woolton, Liverpool, L25 1PA. Tel. 051 722 7915

month!

I'm not sure I have the strength to see this column through, but here goes anyway. A nice easy one to start with from a new subscriber....

DAVE HUSON: "Cheers for the letter with issue 14. In fact I've had enthusiastic welcoming responses from all the editors I've written to, which is a kick in the head for what I said to you earlier about it being difficult to get into the hobby - I'm really glad it's like that."

((Thanks for the letter, Dave - welcome to Dib. Pity you didn't let me print the rest of your letter, the points you brought up about newcomers expressing their own views needed to be said (still, I've said it now). Nice to know you're receiving good responses (most editors are really not too bad!) and that you're settling down to things okay.))

However to prove you can't please all Dib subscribers all of the time....

JOHN MILLER: "I found the stuff about the Police boring and somehow out of place - you'd do well to take George North's advice (I never thought I'd hear myself say that...) and stick to chameleons etc. Humour suits Dib much more than comment on current affairs does, in my opinion.

Are you aware that dear ol' Bob Howes was once on the point of opening a real waiting list for Postal Snap? Rules were courtesy of Terry Hill - what more can I say?

Wonder what the Germans have against tortoises - or is the hedgehog a national dish? Maybe in Norway it's Hare and Lemming? Rabbit and Pork in London's East End? Hare Today and Gone Tomorrow in the Portobello Road? Kangaroo and Koala Down Under?...

P.S. I bet Rob Chapman's 'active dislike for the Police' is nothing compared to my active dislike for Adam and the Ants....or for all that reggae, come to that...."

((What more can you say indeed! I think you've been exposed to too many Martin Allen and George North letters, John - you're beginning to sound just like them! You could well be right about 'serious' topics not being right in Dib, but I still have views, and this being the case, subjects like the police are bound to crop up now and again - I admit, I find them harder to type though.))

GEORGE NORTH: "When you read the other letter you will be thinking I already said enough. Still, there is a true story needs to be told. Peg and I have a mate who got into trouble with the police for nicking lead. He went inside for a goodly few months when we met his wife who told us "Len came out two days before Christmas".

She said it was too late to get to the Social Security and claim benefit and they hadn't a thing for the kids for Christmas. She kept telling them Father Christmas won't be coming this year, but they didn't really believe her.

On Christmas Eve the kids were ready for bed, and their last words were: "Father Christmas will be coming, won't he mum?" and our friend had told them "yes, she expected he would turn up". And this was rather stupid because there was no way she could buy the kids toys that time of night even if she had the money.

Then there was a knock at the door. It was the police.

She said her first thoughts when they asked for Len was, "Oh my goodness, what's he been up to this time?"

Well they asked to see Len. Then they wanted him to tell them how long he had been out of prison. Then they suggested he was broke. After that they brought in the biggest hamper you ever saw in your life. It was from the Police Benevolent Fund and not a penny did they ever have to pay back after Christmas or at any time. She said she never saw Len cry before.



LETTERS (cont.)

"So when you talk about the police in your zine I think you should know that there are good as well as bad in any community, in any colour or creed and in any group of people on earth."

((Quite right, George, there's good and bad in everything. But this letter reads so much like a fairy story, that I can't get over the feeling that this letter just isn't going to be believed. It's a terrible confession really, to think that we've become so cynical we can't (or daren't) believe what might be a true 'good' story....don't you think?))

MIKE CLOSE: "Firstly, the serious bit. It's people with attitudes like Rob Chapman's who make the Police what they are today. It's very difficult for a person to get on with someone who hates him! If people are antagonistic and unhelpful a policeman's job becomes very unrewarding, and difficult to do.

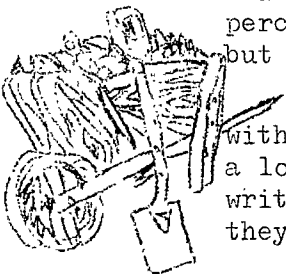
There was a time, not so very long ago, when the general public regarded it as their duty to report suspicious activity, crimes being committed etc. People just don't care anymore. It's hardly surprising that unsolved crime is on the increase, and that police become bitter and disillusioned, and sometimes react.

((That seems to be true - people can't report crimes nowadays without getting labeled "grass", "coppers nark", etc. It certainly is a strange state of affairs. Perhaps it's because since the war people have become less and less 'part of the community' and tend to keep themselves to themselves. Any interference of any kind is considered 'not the done thing' - it's generally accepted now one keeps out of other people's affairs as much as possible. So, it someone's being murdered next door.....))

MIKE (cont.): "And now to something much more interesting - shoe boxes. Yes, when did you last get a new pair of shoes in a shoe box? Nowadays the shops just chuck them in a plastic bag (and then try and sell you some of that wretched aerosol shoe polish stuff). It's done Blue Peter out of a whole line of make-it-yourself-at-home things, from jewelry boxes to pinhole cameras.

I think the Don and Saxville Shoe Cororation are winning you know, as predicted in 'The Hitch-hiker's Guide To The Galaxy'. (What do you mean, you've never read it?...with your daft sense of humour??) Perhaps we ought to start a Campaign to Re-Instate Shoe-Boxes before it's too late.

Does anyone else apart from me find 'Wrinkles' (Radio 4 Tuesdays 10.30 pm) funny? Am I the only person listening to it?? ((You're the only person that'll admit to it...)) I am absolutely 100 percent - 200 percent - 300 percent sure that it's superlative. (Actually, the jokes are diabolical, but don't tell anyone.)



Penny Black is obviously your beloved Janet - only a person living with you for what probably already seems like a lifetime could write such a load of rubbish as that. Hang on a minute (...reads letter he's just written..) perhaps it's me? I know, it must be the Dalmatian of your lad - they are the only ones who don't torture people with crazy phone calls..."

((So the 'in' subjects to discuss now are shoe-boxes, polish and 'Wrinkles', eh? Don't forget, you read it first in Dib.

You're completely wrong about Penny Black, Mike - it's a very well-known hobby personality. But I agree with you...my dog could quite well have written it! Never fear though, in case you missed it dear old Penny is back again with us this issue on page five.....you lucky people you.))

PETE DOUBLEDAY: "In order to keep you off the very, very boring subject of computers (on which, after all, I have to work in vacation jobs - so why should I have to read about them in my spare time (O.K., so I don't have to - I'm a trades, and anyhow I don't have to open the bloody zine in the first place ("Tom Tweedy's rag. Er, computers. Well, good the fire looks like it's dying down - another seven hundred and eighty megajoules free"). I'm suitably chastised, but don't think I don't feel narked anyway)). Got all that? ((Er...)) Good. Now, to get you off all that stuff, what about games? And don't tell me that you get games on computers, because it isn't really

LETTERS (cont.)

true. Yes, I know you can play draughts, and othello, and Hammurabi ((?)); but what makes these computer games? Either you can play them without the infernal device, or else like Hammurabi (which is the game in which the player controls a kingdom's corn supply) they're simple and boring algorithms. Where's the imagination and invention in that? You're paying £600 up for a masturbation device. Mind you, if you can interface a golf-ball typewriter to your Apple you will at last have achieved something useful; the only way to change the appearance of a monthly zine is to use word-processing software that can be provided on a micro. But as I say, there has so far been little effort made in the direction of creative game systems. ((All the more reason for home-users to build up interest.))

And while we're at it, I'm not sure much useful can be said of 'Kensington'. Once more the Skirrid people have produced a self-involved conceit aimed at a market created largely by using publicity gathered from testimonials by famous names (phew!). The game itself is nicked from Nine Men's Morris, with one or two superficially interesting ideas. However, in practice I've found that the first player has an ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ enormous advantage (as, I believe, in Nine Men's Morris), since he can usually form the first shape, and this entitles him to shift one of his opponent's pieces. Again he can oscillate with this shape ((oscillate - Ed)) for as long as he wishes, since there is no provision to limit this. Consequently the declared objective of the game, forming a hexagon, is far less important in the player's mind than is the forming of a lesser shape, after which the game will almost certainly be automatic. It will satisfy the cretinous big name twats, but will it keep a real games-player long? So, Pete Tamlyn likes Sopwith a lot, eh? There's hope for these fairies yet.....

I would be happy to engage in discussion with you in your Police Debate, but I don't think there's much future in my doing so. After all, you don't seem susceptible to logical argument, do you? Please don't take this as an insult (actually I'm just trying to be controversial and gain publicity for Thing from your lettercol - hello, readers!); few other people are, most holding a given view until a deluge of new information strikes them emotively, at which point, for no clear reason they change their mind. Thus we see a sudden furore blowing up over nuclear weapons even though they've been with us for a very long time, and everyone with any interest has known all the pro's and con's. It isn't a new logic behind the sudden mass morney, it's a fashion trend backed up by the emotive pull of the subject.

Similarly, in the case of you and the police, logic goes out the window when faced with your deep-set political axioms. "With all the letters, true arguments seem to be mixed up with biased or misleading arguments (for instance the paragraph in Geoff's letter)". Eh? Come again? If this refers to Geoff's para. where you interpolate "((Misleading))", I don't see why either of your two objections apply. Indeed the whole letter struck me as eminently reasonable. And I suspect from your appended comment that you and he are agreeing, but seeing the same argument from different political viewpoints and therefore both coming away saying "Well, that confirms what x I said in the first place" when this is different in each case."

((Thanks Pete - although confusing at first, a well thought out letter....but MISLEADING (A good word that, covers a range of sins). You're correct of course, Geoff and I were agreeing to a certain extent. This was why I couldn't really comment on his letter. But, he did have that misleading sentence in, and so, I used it to underline the mistakes in arguments in other letters. Take for instance Rob Chapman's letter where he says the police in other countries are tyrannous, repressive and Draconian - this is true of course, but it's misleading; the state of the police in other countries shouldn't be applied to our police force. Rob was using every hated thing he's heard about 'POLICE' to sway my feelings....and neglected to use just the bare facts. I came away feeling I couldn't agree with what they were trying to say (which in a lot of the cases was true) merely because some of the arguments used weren't factual.....the finished arguments weren't completely true.

LETTERS (cont.)

I'm not into computer games fully yet, as I've still to buy my disk-drives. From what I hear most of the really good Apple games can only be bought on disk (e.g. 'Wizardry' - which is a 3D graphic Adventure game). The games I have so far (considered useless, by Apple standards) are the Avalon Hill games: Lords of Karma, Planet Minors, B1 Bomber and Midway Campaign. I did hear these were actually based on Avalon Hill boardgames. And from what I've seen of the average wargame, I'm bloody glad all those thousands of little pieces (cardboard squares) are sorted out by the computer - I couldn't stand to get that many pieces out, and put them away again. If nothing else, one can't lose the pieces of a computer game. Not worth £600 by itself I know, but who wants to play games all the time?

So much for not talking about computers.....

Damn you Doubleday, but you're right about the 'Kensington' game - done me out of a review now. Well hard luck, I also got 'Warlock' for Christmas, so I'll review that.....once I can work out how to play the blasted game! I know what the Red and Gray symbols stands for - but what the hell do the White stars and circles stand for? I can't find anything about them in the rules....))

Well it had to come....a George North letter to end all George North letters - and all because of one innocent comment in the last issue....

GEORGE NORTH: "I wish to reply to the letter from Frank Dunn who jests about the Angel producing a blow-up doll. This might not be as funny as it sounds. I have produced such a doll and give fair warning that these dolls do tend to puncture at the slightest whim and since the doll does not come complete with puncture outfit, your problems are only just beginning.

You see, it does not puncture with a load and all embracing explosion that would plaster the user all over the bedroom ceiling, but is more likely to puncture and become deflated very slowly indeed. Not only is the doll deflated, but likewise one's ego.

So you either give it up as a bad job or you get to thinking you can blow your doll up hard and then 'if you are quick' - but you never are. It is a most frustrating situation and a doll that is not quite inflated always seems better than a doll that is not inflated at all. Your next trick is to try and blow up the doll while the doll is in action.

This can land you in hospital. Have you seen where they put the nozzle for blowing up your Angel doll? It is firmly entrenched in the centre of the back. Only a contortionist or someone who is a bit funny in the head has a dream of blowing and using at one and the same time.

Should you be fortunate to have an Angel doll long enough you will soon discover that the doll will float. However, it is by no means easy. Over three inches of water and the doll will insist on being on top with the user underneath. I know a man drowned this way one time. The doll tends to sort of roll over and it is complicated and undignified and not easy to see the point of being on the bottom. The only solution is three inches of water and in this weather it can be a bit draughty round the nether regions. But worth a try in summer.

Worst of all is the doll that refuses to be blown up without the use of a footpump. By the time you are finished puffing and blowing you are too knackered to do the doll justice.

My neighbour wouldn't use the footpump because he said it would wake the house. Instead he tried blowing and got halfway through when he ran out of puff and then the doll shot up to the ceiling and whizzed around the ceiling before it flew out of the window.

I might never have known about this except Angel dolls cost money and my neighbour hung on like grim death and wasn't going to lose his doll that easy. So he followed his doll around the chandeliers and out of the window and the first I saw was this nude body flying across the garden fence and landing in the snow still ranting and raving and telling everyone he was having a problem fixing the balloons this year.

So if you produce an Angel doll for Christmas, don't say you haven't been warned."

((An aghasted SILENCE....what else can I say? I can't help feeling my column might

(cont'd over....)

LETTERS (cont.)

never be quite the same again. There you are, Miller, an' you say you agree with him! I'd just like to say, that I haven't a clue as to what George is on about. Thank God for my Convent upbringing.))

MARTIN ALLEN: "Am I that indispensable that you have to print my notes to you from my orders? I don't know, you'll be passing around facsimiles of my envelopes to people next.

But never fear, who said the Hobby was dying with so many famous people supporting it (apart from me). For a start there is the internationally well known actor Marvin Steinmaster, well known for his part as a passer by in May 7th's edition of the 'Sweeny'. And there's Henry Krugcr-fax winner of an acadamy award in 1934 for the best supporting supporting actors support for his part in the epic 'Al Scarface takes an acid bath' for the immortal scene in which he leapt into his black Ford and said: "Step on it, Rico".

Definitely one for the archives.

Then there's Sidney 'The Tiger' Smith, who is related by a mass tangle of relatives to one of the notorious Jessie Jamez's 'Mole in the Wall' gang. He is most famous for his famous last words

"They'll never get me".

This phrase ranks next only to Captain Harry Bartbraite, hero of the Londong Pass in the 1900 Boer War, whose famous last words were

"Aaaaarh" CRUNCH.

during his epic dive off the craggy ledge.

Finally, before you tell me what a load of crap I'm spewing out, I'd like to remind you of the italian proverb:

"Piacer e popone,
Vuol la sua stagione".

((Ahh....a breath of fresh air....back to normal - the man's definitely mad! I don't know how he gets the nerve to write stuff like the above.))

FRANK DUNN: "MIDCON was good. Trouble is that tho' I met a lot of faces and names they are now all jumbled up! The tournament was extremely well run and the team that ran it deserves many congratulations. The most impressive element I thought was the individual order sheets for each season, well thought and laid out: great!"

((It seems everyone enjoyed MidCon as a gaming event, rather than as a Con. - with so much praise being heaped on it and its organisers, it's bound to be set up for this year. For more about this event see 'ANGUS' in Dibs and Drabs section.))

For those who find Sopwith boring please skip the next four letters...

ROB CHAPMAN: "Sopwith: Back to the discussion about Aces etc. I must say that Pete Tamlyn's proposals seemed very reasonable, particularly his point about being able to 'retire' from the game before being shot down (that's an option I would take now in Raven - I am in the position of having inflicted considerable damage to several of my opponents and shot one down, but in doing so have suffered a lot of damage myself; I am now faced by three opponents two of whom have maximum ammunition and damage remaining. I am obviously going to be their prime target and my chances of surviving the game are very slim). This would not be unrealistic (if we are going to use that as an argument), sensible pilots would not hang around in a badly shot up plane but would get back home as quickly as possible. Of course, a player would still have to get safely back to his airfield to survive, and that would not necessarily be easy.

The only problem with this idea is that games could finish without a clear winner. But it seems that these Sopwith games are being played as some kind of tournament anyway, players trying to become Aces so that they can join their next game with some advantage over their opponents, and a 'league table' being kept of the leading players, so I don't see that having a 'winner' for every game is all that important.

((I really must butt in here early or I'll have too much to answer later. The reason

(cont'd over...)

LETTERS (cont.)

I think Pete's ruling isn't necessary in the basic rules (more about basic + later) is because players flying back to their airfield (say to retire) can load up with maximum ammo and build up to 8 damage points anyway. Also, what's to stop you from writing to the other players explaining that because of your low ammo and damage points, you're much less of a threat than the players with maximum points - where's this diplomatic skill I've been hearing so much about? I think the 'retire' rule really isn't needed.)

ROB (cont.): "Pete's idea about maintaining a positive kills score to become an Ace also has merit, as does Ian Tilson's idea of a 'tick sheet' for damage points inflicted. So how about combining several of the ideas already mentioned as follows:



1. A record is kept of the number of damage points a player inflicts (the tick sheet). ((Good...))
2. A player becomes an Ace on reaching and maintaining a score of 40 points. ((Yes...))
3. For each 'Kill' a player is awarded 10 bonus points on his tick sheet. ((The idea is good, but isn't the bonus too high?))
4. Each time a player is shot down he loses 10 points from his tick sheet. ((Once again good idea, but isn't the penalty too excessive?))

This is a system that is easy to maintain and which rewards the players who inflict the most damage and those who score the most kills.

As for planes which fly off the edge of the board due to NMRs and are credited as kills to the winner of the game according to your current house rules, then these could either be ignored completely or the points divided equally between all planes/players still flying at the time of the 'crash'."

((Excellent, I think we've almost got this problem licked. In regards to basic +: All I'm trying to do at the moment is work out some workable basic rules to score points and to become aces. Anything else (e.g. what Pete Tamlyn suggested) I would say was a variant, and could be included in anyone's house rules at any time - but I didn't want it to cloud the issue just yet.))

KARL PIPER: "With regard to Sopwith and 'Ace' rating systems, I'd rather a player became an Ace by virtue of the number of people he/she has shot down, than by the number of points of damage inflicted upon opponents. Ever thought of trying to modify Sopwith so that players can design their own planes (whilst keeping to defined limitations, of course), so that one plane could, perhaps, have greater firepower, whilst forsaking manoeuvrability etc."



((Different planes is certainly an idea for later on - the beauty about the scoring system proposed so far is that it doesn't change even if someone was to play in a variant game of this type. If someone wins a game with so many points, it just goes on the league table.))

SANDY PETERS: "Just a thought about 'Sopwith' though - if acehood is to be achieved by number of kills, what happens if a player is downed by simultaneous bursts from two or more other players guns?, (as almost happened in 'Raven'). Also, how would it grab you if someone on 19 damage ((Now 15)) points were to deprive the others of a kill by flying into a storm-cloud? Jolly unsporting I'd call it. I'd be in favour of players achieving the 'ace' qualification after scoring, say 40 damage points. Not only would this give the games a much-needed boost, but it would lead to more satisfying, blood-splattered play. As for this tiresome business of being shot down: I feel sure that such a noble, fair-minded chap as your good-self would never lower himself by discriminating against the deceased."



((Not I, Sandy - but it has been suggested by others that I dock, say, 5 points.... we shall see. In answer to your question about a plane being 'downed' simultaneously. (oops, answer), please note my ~~xxxx~~ answer to Richard Morris' letter in issue 14 of Dib, page 10.

I agree, it is unsporting for a player on 15 damage to kill himself by flying

(con'd over...)

LETTERS (cont.)

into a storm cloud. This being the case I'll probably treat it as a normal 'crash' (e.g. fling off the edge of the board) and do as Rob suggested and share the points (16) between the players still in the game. The points shared will be rounded down for each player.)

I did have a Sopwith letter from George North (thanks, George), but he merely recounted ideas I was going to suggest myself (didn't want double the typing...). So, ideas seem to be turning towards a definite pattern: 40 points is agreed to reach acedom; a tick sheet registering points; penalty for being shot down; extra bonus for shooting down an ace; extra bonus for winning the game; bonus for shooting down a plane - all that remains to decide is how many points should be allotted. My suggestion is in this form:-

LEAGUE TABLE (sub-ticksheet)

B. Bloggs 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54+
~~27-28-29~~ 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54+

F. Scragg 1 2/3 etc

To give you a breakdown on what's happening: Numbers 1-15 are single hit points on other planes; 16 & 17 were awarded from a plane crash between six players (oops, impossible really, it would have to be five players and 3 points - ah well); 18 & 19 single hit points; 20-24 shot down enemy plane; 25 & 26 single hit points; 27-29 crashed plane shared out between five players; 30-32 single hit points; 33-42 shooting down an ace; 43-45 single hit points.

I think 5 points should be deducted from an 'ordinary' players sheet, and 10 points deducted when an ace is shot down. If, for example, Bill Bloggs was shot down in his present position, his score would drop to 35 and he would lose his ace status until such time as he rose above again the 40 mark.

As you can see, 'kills' can be recognised easily from 'hits' and other bonus points (if not an asterisk can always define the odd bonus points). So, if Bill Bloggs was to be included in the main League Table he'd be marked down thus:-

Bill Bloggs 45 hits 2 kills
 Frank Scragg ?? hits ? kills etc.

Anyone with a score higher than 45 hits would go above Bloggs; anyone with a score lower would go below Bloggs. I think I've covered everything. So, the basic idea is agreed upon - it's really just votes for the points that should be awarded.

<p>xxx(a) Hits.....+1 point Plane shot down.....+5 points Player shot down.....-5 points Shot down Ace.....+10 points Ace shot down.....-10 points</p>	<p>(b) Hits.....+1 point Plane shot down.....+50 points (()) Player shot down.....-10 points Shot down Ace.....+15 points? Ace shot down.....-15 points?</p>
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That's it then for the Sopwith (thank goodness); votes for tables (a) and (b) for next issue please. Though if you decide on (b) how many points +/- for Aces? Myself, I prefer table (a).....)

Now back to a good letter.....

RICHARD BASS: "Martin Allen's plan to reduce me to a gibbering wreck amused me. Why ~~xxxx~~ should he want to bring me down to his level?!"



Your parting shot on p.16 of DD Dribble 15 ((Steady, Bass!)) referred to Lemmings ending it all. Dave Thorby must have taken it to heart, he has emigrated to Malaya!

I see the waiting list for SNAP has disappeared, not that I was interested of course. I was just thinking that your dog might be a challenging opponent for Martin."

((Now listen here, Bass - let's not get personal; my dog's quite intelligent and more than a match for most hobby members!; Actually, I had to stop the SNAP game - John Field found the going hard....couldn't understand the rules.

I see what you mean about Dave Thorby - he sent me Malaya Gazette asking why we weren't trading. At first I thought Booth and Fucknall were playing a hoax on me (being an editor makes one paranoid), I mean I'd never heard of the zine before!

LETTERS (cont)

Now I know WG to be a true zine I guess I will trade -- seems rather smallish for issue 14 though.))

And to prove that the GH review of Dib wasn't a waste of time, and didn't fall on stony ground.....

JAAP JACOBS: "I have read very positive reviews of Dib Dib Dib recently, so I thought I'd offer you a trade. My own zine, Oxymoron, is quite small, only 7 or 8 pages, and mainly in Dutch, so I can very well imagine you won't like it. If you don't I would like a subscription. And could you place me on your waiting list for Regular Diplomacy? At the moment I play in some three postal games here in Holland, as well as one in Greatest Hits. I would like to play in a second British Dippyazine, for which I choose Dib Dib Dib."

((Thanks for the letter, Jaap, with the offer to trade -- and/~~welcome~~^{welcome} to Dib. If you turn to the back page you'll see your name has been noted in the Diplomacy waiting list and/~~shouldn't~~^{the game} be too long in starting.

I don't understand Dutch, but I'd certainly ~~ki~~ like to see a copy of your zine to see how you've laid it out. Is there any difference, apart from the obvious, between Dutch and British zines?))

Damn....I'm making an awful lot of typing errors....think I'll take a break.

SIMON BILLENNESS: "About the flyer for the CGS with Compendium. I thought this would be a good idea since from my Eggocentral flyer I will have several novice subbers. As I explained over the phone, I thought it would be interesting to plug a Fleet Rome Variant CGS with it to see what sort of reaction it would get. You said (after a little bullying from me) that you would be willing to run it with the ordinary CGS. The flyer (which I'll print) will go out with my first issue of Compendium in early April, so you won't have any novice players till then.

This letter is mainly to tell other editors about the service so that they can plug it to the more established players who sub to their zines and maybe even join a waiting list for zines wanting a F(Rom) gamestart. As I explained on the phone, you might not even have to send a full seven players. There are plenty of waiting lists for F(Rom) games which are stuck on three or four players which you could just 'top up' with the amount of players needed. "

((I don't think my subscribers will be very keen on the idea when they find out they are not established, Simon. Are you doubting their foundations?

Seriously though, I don't mind taking on the F(Rom) job -- it really is no extra work. We shall see soon enough if anyone is interested in the service....mind you, if I get no editors putting their names on the list it could also mean no-one reads my letter column!))

And just to finish this column (thank God, I'd hate to have to start with him) we have England's answer to a depressed area.....

MIKE 'PASS ME THE ASPRIN' ALLAWAY: "Huh! Dalmation, eh! Well, perhaps I ought to let you get away with something -- you poor old, married men have to have some fun, I suppose. Actually, you write that wrong; "Mine's a Dalmatian, Mike, what's yours?" -- very kind squire, I'll have a pint of best bitter. I'll be round to collect. ((You'd better be careful, Mike, Ian's Dalmatian is twice the size of mine, and likes to hold hand's gently between it's teeth!))

Is this fame? To be mentioned in a George North ode?

I quite like 'Risk' -- but don't tell anyone I said so! ((Okay..))

Hmmm. 'Penny Black, eh! I wonder who it is!!! (retires sniggering to the corner and hopes the world will do him a favour and go away)."

