

DIB DIB DIB

ISSUE 23



Whichever way you look at it, Dib is great!

"Wot, another?" I hear you ask. Yes, I realise you probably haven't yet got over the effects of last issue yet (some of you probably still re-reading it in wonder), but this is Dib Dib Dib 23, which, once started, couldn't be stopped from exploding onto the streets. Let it be (generally) known, that this thing you have in your grubby mits will now cost you 34 pence including postage (reason for the new price given below) and comes to you from: Tom Tweedy, 29 Stanley Hill Avenue, Amersham, Bucks, HP7 9BD. Tel. 02403 4513

EDITORIAL



Well this is it, the time has come to change the price of Dib. No no, don't go away, it's not as bad as it seems; you see I'm only changing the price to 34p per issue including postage. This can't really be seen as putting the price up, as last issue, being 28 pages and a little too heavy, cost 14p (28 pages @ 1p a sheet) plus 23p postage (= 37p overall for people like John Field, Clive Booth and Nicholas Clifton). I'll absorb last month's £7 postage, but I can't do that too many times - I mean, I'll subsidise my hobby to a certain extent, but there has to be a limit, as I'm sure you'll all agree. So, as from this issue, Dib cost 34p an issue. (There, I think I've said it enough times now.)

Apologies for not putting "continued on page 25" at the bottom of page 3 in the last issue - from the replies received it seems as though it confused most of you! This hardly surprises me; Dib didn't get where it is today by having subscribers who could remember what they had read 5 minutes before. Consequently, replies ranged from:-

"You ended a paragraph on page three with 'How!!' to ...

"How is someone as simple-minded as myself supposed to hold the meaning across a cartoon, an article from George North and pages of letters about anything from word processors to telepathic chameleons? I am only human."

Quite, but is it enough to be human nowadays? And what has that to do with my subscribers? Nothing. But I digress....

Last issue ended up being a real pain to put out. After fighting with some determination to reduce the one week turnaround (by a couple of days at least), I suddenly found when came the time to print up the stencils that I didn't have enough extra-sensitive stencils to finish the job. Great, I thought - and proceeded to hunt round for more. Unfortunately no-one had any, so I took a chance and used my old stencils (I must admit to being surprised how well the daisywheel printer cut them). It was because of this, the rush, that I forgot to put 'continued' at the bottom of page three.

BUT, my misery didn't just stop there. Oh no, when the Ghods have got it in for me, they've really got it in for me. My next problem came when I had to duplicate everything. I normally use 'Croxley Script' duplicating paper, but unfortunately my supplier didn't have any in stock. Would I like 'Roneo', it's just as good, he said. Pah! I fed a few reams through my duplicator (an automatic Gestetner 360), walked away, and when I returned there was paper all over the place. The bloody machine was picking it up, chewing it up, and spitting the bloody stuff back out at a fair rate of knots (as only a sodding automatic can). Oh yes, you may laugh, but it put your issue of Dib back two days - so there. It took a lot of soothing from Jan to ease my troubled brow. Thankfully everything seems to be going great guns this issue touch wood, touch wood - have I spoken too soon? Doesn't do to get too complacent you know - the powers up above don't like it!

I'll have to tack the CGS lists on in a minute, but before I do I'd just like to comment on a suggestion Richard Walkerdine brought up in the latest Mad Poicy. In a reply to a Mike Benyon letter about contributions to Novice Package flyers, Richard said, and I quote:-

"The flyers direct newcomers, mainly, via the Novice Package to the CGS. So why shouldn't the CGS help to pay for the flyers? If Tom Tweedy SOLD CGS games to GMs for, say, £1 each that would generate quite a reasonable sum. And there'd be no problem about collecting the money as a GM wouldn't get his game until he'd paid his £1."

This is an excellent idea, and unless someone can come up with a good reason for why I shouldn't, the idea will be put into effect as of now. Actually I wanted to charge some sort of fee before (to deter editors who have a mind to fold) but could find no good reason for needing the money. The Novice Package, or perhaps Diplomacy box flyers will do fine.

CGS LISTS FOR REGULAR AND F(ROM) DIPLOMACY

That's better. Last month's plea for more zines to come forward for CGS games met with a good reponse. Remember now though that the price of a CGS game is £1 (payable before getting the game). Anyone not wishing to stay on the list please let me know. The Lists now stand as:-

REGULAR:

Thing on the Mat (for issue 11), Perspiring Dreams, Last Stand, The Church Mouse (Regular or F Rom), Watch Your Back, Panzerkreuser, Foiled Again, DSM, The Question Mark ((?))

F(ROM):

Denver Glont, Shellshock, Bohemian Rhapsody, Watch Your Back, Panzerkreuser

JOTTO Turn 4



Damn! Got this explanation wrong last time (trust Walkerdine to ring up and point it out, throwing the Tweedy household into a turmoil), matching Detour against Mortar gives you THREE points, not four. So, I'll try again.

I choose six words from the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, each six letters long. Each month you send in one word and I then score each letter against each of my six words. For instance, if you submitted DETOUR and the six secret words were: RESORT, BASKET, GENTLE, PRIEST, MORTAR, FLOWER the scores would be: 4, 2, 2, 3, 3, 3 respectively. Obvious aim is to find all six words.

When you think you know all six words you may take a guess at them (you must guess at all six) - but you must get ALL six right! Get one wrong and you're out.

New players wanting to start this game need only send in 5 words/guesses next issue to catch up. There is no game-fee and the prize is £2.

((Will players please note a couple of re-adjudications. I'm now using the computer to work out the Jotto (instead of Jan), so now there won't be any more mistakes I hope!))

IAIN SINGER: 4th (2,1,2,2,3,2)	ALAN PARR: 4th (2,2,2,2,2,1)
KEITH LOVEYS: 4th (2,1,4,1,1,1)	PETER COWLING: 4th (1,1,2,3,3,1)
RICHARD BASS: 4th (3,2,1,3,3,2)	ROBERT LOZYSKYJ: 1st (2,3,1,2,3,3)
SANDY PETERS: 4th (2,4,1,2,1,2)	4th (1,2,2,0,1,2)
WILLIAM FISK: 1st (3,0,2,3,3,2)	RICHARD MORRIS: 4th (1,3,1,0,3,1)
4th (2,1,2,2,3,2)	GEORGE NORTH: 2nd (1,2,2,4,1,1)
NICK MARSHALL: 1st (2,3,1,1,0,2)	4th (2,3,2,1,1,2)
2nd (1,2,1,1,0,2)	NICHOLAS CLIFTON: 1st (2,2,3,1,0,1)
3rd (1,1,3,0,3,2)	2nd (1,2,0,2,3,2)
4th (1,2,1,0,2,2)	3rd (2,3,1,1,1,2)
TIM BALL: 1st (3,3,0,0,3,2)	4th (2,3,0,1,1,2)
2nd (3,3,1,1,2,2)	RICHARD WALKERDINE: 1st (2,0,2,3,3,2)
3rd (3,3,1,1,2,3)	2nd (1,1,2,2,1,3)
4th (2,4,0,0,3,3)	3rd (2,2,1,1,2,1)
MARK LIPTON: 1st (not allowed)	4th (1,3,1,1,2,3)
2nd (2,2,1,1,4,2)	
3rd (2,3,1,3,1,2)	
4th (2,0,6,2,0,1) !!	

SOPWITH (Review)

This is a game I always enjoy playing - a welcome addition to ANY gamester's collection I would think. An aerial game for six players set in World War I. It's a game requiring strategy, tactics and skill. There's enough skill to satisfy even the most fickle of gamesplayers, yet fun-type and simple enough to get out and play at any time (well, I wouldn't try it in the bath of course). In fact the only time dice is used is to move clouds of standard shapes across the board, thereby introducing the only random effect in the game - the dice have absolutely no effect on the skilled player.

The board itself is one large hex made up of smaller hexes (for postal play the board is numbered A1-S19). In each of the six corners of the hex sit the six airfields; each airfield has three airstrips.

As in Diplomacy all movement is simultaneous, though each season or "Turn" the players can move three times. Each player has a board on which he records his moves and firing. He has his airfield (comprising of three airstrips) from which he takes off, and a credit of 16 ammo, 12 damage. Realistically, the firing has declining affect, depending on the distance between each plane, 4 points being the maximum damage inflicted, falling to 1 point when planes are 4 hexes apart. See?

Planes also take damage from the clouds. And because planes are considered 'dead' when damage points reach zero, you can be in a position to 'kill' your opponents great fun, especially when the plane being killed has already landed to reload or repair.

In all a game I would thoroughly recommend playing. Unfortunately, the boxed set of this game is very hard to come by, as its production has been discontinued. Originally produced by a firm called 'Gametime Games'. Since then all rights have been handed over to Avalon Hill, who, I am informed, have no immediate plans for its re-release. A great pity.

The reason for its demise, so I'm told, was because the game was originally aimed at the serious hex wargamer - who found it far too simple for their taste and therefore useless. Consequently, it was sniffed at by wargaming fans and faded into virtual obscurity. Now that it has started up again, I think people are beginning to see possibilities in the game - Diplomacy fans are sure to enjoy the appeal of 'stabbing' ones opponent in the fuselage - and what better motive for playing a game is there?

Still, not to fear, although the boxed set is not made any more, the game now has a strong postal following (growing stronger by the month). The game slips excellently into the postal mode of play: players are issued with maps of the board and rules (supplied by the gamesmaster) at the start of their game. A player does NOT need the boxed set to play by post.

ooOOoo

SOPWITH STOCKIST: Thanks to Richard Bass for spotting boxed Sopwith sets at Gamesday. Anyone wishing to own, what must be getting on to be a rarity, one of these sets can write to:-
'Esdevium Games', 185 Victoria Road, Aldershot, Hants, GU11 1JU. Tel. Aldershot 311443 (or evenings Farnham 722269). Shop open: Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 9.30-1.30am, 2.30-5.15pm. Saturday 9.15-5.15.

GAMES DAY 1982 by Richard Bass.

(Last year I wrote an account of Games Day for Lemming Express (now Walamalasia Gazette). In a note to Dave Thorby which accompanied the article, I mentioned that if he did not want the article, I would pass it on to Tom Tweedy or Clive Booth for their consideration. Dave leapt upon this, printed the article and suggested in LE that Chimacra and Dib Dib Dib were only good enough for his cast offs. (I think he only printed the article so he could get a good insult in on Booth!). Tom Tweedy eventually got hold of the offending remark (and article), which led to his twisting my arm about a possible article for this year. I tentatively agreed as I am in Dip game with Tom and I need all the goodwill I can muster. Unfortunately, Tom remembered when Games Day came around again, the arm was twisted once more and this is another offending article.

The alarm went off at 3.00am. I eventually emerged from Dreamworld and slowly realised it was Saturday. I blissfully dropped my head back onto the pillow. At 3.30 I remember I am going to Games Day and leap out of bed with all the speed of a Centurian Tank. I have to be at Haslemere station in 30 minutes. 15 minutes later I am putting the kitten back inside the front door for the second time. Charlotte is taking me to the station and is suitably pleased to be up and out and about at this time on a Saturday morning. Oh dear! What a shame! Never mind! She will be doing the weekly shopping in Haslemere so she will not be frittering her time away. Still if she gets bored she could always do the washing, decorate the bedroom, re-roof the shed, mend the garage door or cut the grass (thinking about it now, there's an awful lot of gardening that needs doing). No, she'll not be bored while I'm at Games Day!

Anyway. I fork out £4.30 return and catch the 0.03 at 9.06. This being one of, if not the train of the day - there are only 4 carriages. I make a beeline for the rear one. Half of it is First Class (unlike me) and the other half is reserved. Reserved?! A porter yells at the group of us who have gone to get into the fourth carriage. I slip into the next carriage and manage to get a half share of a three-seater seat. There are harder things in life than sharing a seat with a pretty blonde. Have I stirred your imaginations? (I hope so - I just made that bit up!). Godalming, Farncombe, Guildford, Woking, Waterloo. I vaguely read a copy of The Gamer (which is now 2 months old), and I drift back to sleep a couple of times. People come and people go as the stations pass but I rarely notice.

Waterloo and I meet up with Bill Dove the other side of the ticket collector. (I used to work with Bill and it is he who is responsible for my being in the hobby today). We had arranged to meet by W.H. Smiths but he got on the same train as me at Woking and had spotted me in the crush on the platform. After a brief discussion we come to the conclusion it's St. James Square we want tickets for. In next to no time we are there and actually recognise this place and so we are assured we got it right! It's raining. Terrific. Donning Anoraks we go out and past Scotland Yard. The little triangle that used to go round and round is still not there. Gone for good I reckon. Nicked.

Around a few corners and we are here, Greycoat Street. It's easy to find, just follow the kids. We have learnt our lesson from previous years and have bought tickets in advance. Smart thinking eh? No queueing in the rain for us! The doors are not actually open yet. It's 10.30 +. Having walked past the queue we stand across the road opposite the door and it's drizzling. We have a brief chat with some others who also have tickets. The doors open and the crowd surges in. These kids treat it like a football match. We cross the road and go through the centre of the two queues to the ticket entrance. I am restrained and only use my elbows a few times.

Inside we are duly presented with the ubiquitous (look it up) Games Centre bag. The Information stand is crowded. We wander over to see why. The kids are booking up for D&D, AD&D and Runequest games. How very nice for them. We exit left and go for a quick tour of the hall. Spears, Games Centre, Flying Buffalo, Games People Play, Wonderworld, Avalon Hill, H.P. Gibson, Hartland Irfoil, TSR Hobbies and more, much more yes, they are all here for Games Day. David Watts is here with his Railway Rivals. This year he is running some games too. One game has already started with the two lads we were chatting to outside the Hall. David seems to have a better placed stand this year. I think he was a bit hemmed in last year. We move on to The Gamer stand. We get talking to John Lamshead, co-editor - co-editor that is with Nicky Palmer, a familiar name to many of us. John Lamshead is interested in what we think of The Gamer. Bill immediately tells him. Well he did ask. He seems pretty keen on this new Computer Gamer subzine. but we do not respond to his enthusiasm as we work with the infernal machines all week. We tell him it's nice to have Richard Sharp back as he writes so well. It was nice to have that Civilisation article too. We diplomatically say nothing about their 'postponement' of the last few paragraphs to the next issues (where I think they were

garbled even then). The Gamer seems to suffer from that sort of thing. The first half of Richard Sharp's (Tales of Bedbug Island) Quirks article did not say that it continued or even where!

Having had a quick look round we retire to the Cafeteria for a cup of coffee, or two. We have a look at the latest copy of The Gamer that we have each bought. It is improving. Geoff Challenger has been commissioned to review 'The State of the Art of Diplomacy'. Geoff has written it well. That 'War in the Falkland' game is reviewed too. There is an article on 'Continuo', a game that I saw on The Gamer stand. It looks a fairly simple abstract game so (for £2) I decide to buy it later on.

Games Day is actually two days, though for me and many others, Saturday is the day. This is my fourth Games Day and Bill's seventh. The Horticultural Hall is fairly full, the spread over two days has not reduced the attendance at all. Who knows, a couple more years and maybe they'll be looking for a bigger venue again.

Refreshed, we set off for a second look in the hall. By now we have had a look at the programme and know what we are interested in (and what to avoid). A whole row of tables down one side of the hall is taken up with various D&D, AD&D, Runequest etc games. A lot of the central arena is taken up with competition and demonstration games. Spears are there too. I pause over one of their games. Stranded. It looks pretty simple and an ageing guy in a T shirt wants to show me how to play it. O.K. and I win in about 3 minutes. It must be simple! I only view the Esderium Games stand from a distance but there looks to be a copy of Sopwith there. Nearby a new game 'Seahawks' is being demonstrated. It's a board game set in the 18th Century Carribean. 'Armchair Cricket' is being played not far away. Bill is naturally interested. Cricket is a major interest for him. (It was he who launched Cricketboss on an unsuspecting hobby). The game is played with a pack of cards. It follows the format of the real game, with a bowler presenting a card which the batsman has to deal with. Whale Toys are selling 'Kensington' and a few other games. 'Unhappy Families'? Err, I don't think so.

I come across Simon Billenness on the Zine Stand and introduce myself. Howard Wilcox is also there at that time and he introduces himself too. I buy a copy of 20 Years On which I wouldn't have done normally. I also buy copies of Zine to be Believed, Last Stand, Panzerkreuser and Denver Glont at 10p each. Oh the expense! Like the Zine Bank it's a good opportunity to see a few zines. (You are doing a sterling job there Simon). I move on and re-introduce Bill Dove to Howard Wilcox as they have not met for a few Games Days. We talk of Cricketboss, United! and sports games in general.

It is now 12.30 so Bill and I decide to adjourn for a Burger and a pint. There is a long queue for the Burgers so we go straight into the bar. I see Ray Miller through the crowd and offer him a drink. He's at the bar before I have hardly moved. Ray is an old acquaintance from previous Games Days. We coerce Ray into joining our Darts and Quiz team for MidCon. We then chat to Brian Creese and others for a while. Kim Dent, Brian Dolton, Mike Woodhouse, Len George, Mike Allaway and Marie are all there. The postal hobby dominates the bar. I introduce myself to Mike Allaway and have a long conversation with him. I even tell him why I no longer subscribe to Pyrrhic Victory. This is Mike's deadline weekend for issue 50. He is spending Saturday at Games Day, the evening in the Buckingham Arms, Sunday morning playing football and the rest of Sunday at Games Day again. It's a great life if you don't weaken Rip Gooch is there too, as is Peter Northcott, to whom I speak but briefly. There are many others who I do not get to meet. Pete Birks is wearing a T-shirt bearing the slogan:-

"O' NELL'S

I survived."

On the back it simply says "Birks". I have a chat with Pete and Nick Kinzett who's lapel badge states that he has to be 'Zine to be Believed'. Nick is an enthusiastic conversationalist and talks about 20 to the dozen. I had encountered Nick the previous Games Day GMing a game of Civilisation. Pete has recently played a game where he and others lost to Steve Doubleday. Several editors are handing out copies of their zines. Steve Doubleday issues copies of Gallimaufry to all and sundry. They are dated June 1981. he is clearing out his stocks. I also manage to have a word with John Dodds in whose zine, Perspiring Dreams, I am playing one of my Diplomacy games.

When the lunchtime session finishes I realise that I never did get that burger. Still, I can eat later. it's time to look at some games again. At the Avalon Hill stand Bill and I have a look at their version of Civilisation. It's cheaper than Hartland Trefoil, is it as good? (Are the rules the same too?). We also take a look at 1829 on the Harland Trefoil stand. it's very tempting. I try to find Alan Parr at the Rosthorne Games stand but David Watts tells me he has just left. We stop off at the Zines stand again. RIP Gooch is collating copies of Ripping Yarns for Biggles to