

DIB DIB DIB

ISSUE

24



Welcome to the 24th issue of Dib Dib Dib the greatest literary achievement since issue 23 - well.....so Clive Booth tells me. As with every other issue this issue will cost you the small sum (hardly worth mentioning, really) of 34p - and that's with no postage to pay! Yes, well now that I've once again impressed you, all monies can be sent to Tom Tweedy, 29 Stanley Hill Avenue, Amersham, Bucks, HP7 9BD. - Tel. 02403 4513

EDITORIAL

Before starting anything else I'd just like to say thanks to all those who sent Birthday cards and Birthday good wishes - much appreciated I assure you. And for all those that asked, I'm a young 34. Or alternatively, an old 33.

Now, what news....I had a surprise visit from Pete Birks the other day (it certainly surprised me). We were having a nice lazy day. Jan was in her long socks and heavy cardigan preparing to go out and do a little gardening (thought it was time she dug the potatoes up), and I had just finished my dinner, when all of a sudden the doorbell rang. "Hi, I'm Pete Birks" was the greeting when Jan answered the door and this zine was pressed into her hand. She was just about to use her usual "Not today thanks" phrase, thinking that this rather miniscual (slight?) figure was trying to sell her something, when Pete strode past her. I think it's an obvious thing for me to say he wasn't anything like I pictured him (a phrase that seems always to be used whenever one hobby member meets another). To tell you the truth, from all the articles, letters etc I've read about him, being aggressive and wotnot, I thought we would never get on (aggressive people get up my nose to the point that I feel like jumping on them) - but to my surprise I found him nervous, but likable. The only trouble is Pete talked as fast as Jan, too fast for me to keep track of the conversation - especially after dinner. Thus when they both started up on 17th Century England (a subject Jan has just covered in Open University), I was stymied; I couldn't get a word in edgeways (edgewise?). I've had this problem with Pete before of course when I used to diplomc over the phone with him. After a while the amount of information/words, whatever, coming at me seems to fog my brain up. I suppose I'm more of a realaxed talker myself - over dinner, drinks, a game or two (under the table). And I tend to leave 'high-powered' discussions like 17th Century art and history until after I get to know who I'm talking to better (have I said that right?). It's not that I'm coy I hasten to add - as I seem to have made it sound - but just the fact that I find people more interesting than 'things'. Still it's nice to put a face to the name. (By all means come again Pete, we'll be pleased to see you. Perhaps next time you'll have time to try a few computer games.) But, to more serious stuff....

[[Some of you may, or may not, have heard recently of the Novice Package argument (a debate it isn't!), in which certain parties - namely Malcolm Smith, Martin Le Fevre (RYODA) and Simon Billenness - have suddenly decided to produce their own Novice Package. Their reasoning is that Paul Simpkins (original Package Custodian) isn't doing a good enough job, and the package he's putting out is rubbish. Actually they may have worded it better but it amounts to the same. Anyway. they think they can do a better job.]]

This was the way I started off the next paragraph (above), fortunately (unfortunately for me as I've got to redo quite a lot!) things seem to have worked themselves out at MidCon. Paul Simpkins is still giving up doing the package (he was fed up with doing it anyway) but is being allowed time to sell off the 100 existing packages. This of course gives everyone time to sort out the new package.

So, what's happening? Well, John Wilman will be editing the whole package in booklet form, asking for articles etc from various members of the hobby. Martin Le Fevre (RYODA) will be doing the printing. This is okay by me (John Wilman I am sure will do an excellent job), I just hope Martin doesn't use this position merely as another platform for his printing service. Don't blame me for

sounding paranoid you lot made me like this! Anyway, Dib wishes the best of luck to John and Martin in their new enterprise.

Whilst I am being serious for a moment I'd just like to make a few comments on the CGS. Being fair to everyone in regards to CGS games (novices and zine editors) is getting increasingly more difficult. Once again RYODA seems to be at the root of the problem. Lately dozens of new zines have sprung up, the majority of which are being printed by RYODA. Consequently these zines are appearing late with the respective editors seeming to have no control over their zines whatsoever. People (novices) keep ringing me up (sometimes just dropping me a line) asking me what's happening about their particular zine. What am I supposed to tell them - it'll always be like that because it's the way RYODA is run? Tell them that the expense must be paid because I must be seen not to favour one type of zine over another? It doesn't help the bloody novices much. But it's not only RYODA to blame. I've had a couple of applications for a CGS game from editors who are pushing out 'zines' comprising of 5 or 6 single sides of photocopy and costing 20-30p. Can a zine be classed as a zine produced in this way? Is it fair to introduce novices to this type of zine? Personally I don't think so, even though the zine has met my requirements of having started at least one game on its own. Is it my job to use my own judgement as to what zine is acceptable/unacceptable? If so I can think of a dozen offhand, being either too expensive (for what they are) or too unreliable. I'm quickly coming to the conclusion that I ought to say, to hell with the editors, think of the novices, and give the games only to what I think are reasonable zines.

I'd welcome comments from you lot - editors and subscribers. Should there be a certain standard for a CGS game? Once upon a time, not long ago all zines were, at the very least, reasonable: if not brilliant. Yet lately the amount of zines has increased, to the detriment of the quality (in service) of publications.

CENTRAL GAMESTART SERVICE

This is the list at present. I have a full game ready and waiting, but no-one has sent the £1 fee for the game. TCM is next ... Dave, do you still want a game?

List Of Zines Awaiting Regular Starts:-

The Church Mouse, Thing on the Mat, Perspiring Dreams, Last Stand, Watch Your Back, Panzerkreuser, Foiled Again, DSM, The Question Mark, Shellshock, Home of the Brave, War and Peace.

List Of Zines Awaiting F(Rom) Starts:-

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

STABCON

The venue is Woolton Hall in Fallowfield. Accommodation: Bed and breakfast £9 per night, with 50p convention fee for residents. For visitors it's £2 (£1.50 if booked in advance), which covers the whole weekend.

Will be held Friday 7th January to Sunday on the 9th. Anyone wishing further information should write to the organiser, Dave Waring, c/o 11 Grandfield Avenue, Radcliffe-on-Trent, Nottingham, NG12 1AL.

Time for ... 'Guess the author of the spacefiller'
A SERIOUS FOOTNOTE "Pete Birks sits on the right hand side of God."
Discuss the theological basis for this statement on no fewer than 6 sides of foolscap (or in one sentence, whichever is longer), and demonstrate the anatomical implications using the plasticine provided. ((Heh heh, er ... just a joke Pete))



JOTTO Turn 5

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.

((To those that NMR'd, just send in two words/guesses next month to catch up. I have a faint suspicion that a couple of you gave your words over the phone - sorry if I've mislaid them.))

IAIN SINGER: 5th (3,3,1,3,2,2)	ALAN PARR: 5th (2,4,1,3,2,2)
KEITH LOVEYS: 5th (3,2,1,3,2,2)	PETER COWLING: 5th (3,2,2,2,1,2)
RICHARD BASS: 5th (1,1,3,3,2,0)	ROBERT LCZYNSKYJ: 5th (1,2,1,2,3,2)
SANDY PETERS: 5th (1,2,2,3,1,0)	RICHARD MORRIS: 5th (- NMR -)
WILLIAM FISK: 5th (2,3,3,2,1,3)	GEORGE NORTH: 5th (3,3,1,1,3,3)
NICK MARSHALL: 5th (3,3,1,1,3,2)	NICHOLAS CLIFTON: 5th (- NMR -)
TIM BALL: 5th (2,1,2,2,3,2)	RICHARD WALKERDINE: 5th (- NMR -)
MARK LIPTON: 5th (- NMR -)	SIMON CRADDOCK: 1st (2,3,2,3,0,2)
R.J. LAMPARD: 1st (1,1,2,3,2,2)	2nd (3,1,1,2,2,1)
2nd (1,2,2,3,1,2)	3rd (2,2,1,0,2,2)
3rd (3,2,1,0,2,1)	4th (2,2,1,3,0,1)
4th (4,2,3,2,1,3)	5th (2,1,2,2,0,2)
5th (0,2,2,2,2,1)	DAVID HALL: 1st (2,1,2,3,4,2)
ALAN SHARPLES: 1st (3,2,2,2,1,2)	2nd (2,3,1,1,3,4)
2nd (0,2,0,1,1,1)	3rd (2,3,2,1,1,3)
3rd (1,2,1,2,1,2)	4th (1,4,0,2,2,3)
4th (2,3,1,2,0,1)	5th (1,2,2,2,2,1)
5th (1,1,1,1,0,3)	

Oh no, not.....

THE MIDCON ARTICLE
by Richard Bass

(It's a shame really, but I have been conned again by young Thomas to pen a few words. Sorry lads.)

I went up to Birmingham on the Friday afternoon by train. With the map provided I easily found the Angus Hotel which was just a short walk away. The rooms at the Angus are pretty good, colour TV, bathroom, shower, radio etc. It took me about 10 minutes to work out what all the switches did. On the 2nd floor the reception committee awaited. Tringham, Dodds etc, they were all there. At this time, Pproximately 5pm the committee outnumber the rest, or appeared to do so. We didn't stop to chat, the bar was open!

The next couple of hours were spent in the lounge with a constant flow of drinks. The MidCon booklet told you all you would ever want to know about the event; local pubs, restaurants, the Diplomacy Tournament rules, a list of those attending etc. I did not read the booklet for long though as there was an ever increasing crowd. Richard Walkerdine, Brian Creese, Brian Dolton, Jeremy Tullett, Bill Dove etc were all there, as were many others. The discussion was principally about the hobby, the CGS and Novice Package, and Walkerdine's Finchley Central game. Simon Billenness came in for a few insults every time he went past, but he took it well. Zine turnaround and CGS gamestarts were discussed for a while, hobby meets were also mentioned as people came and went,

went off to eat and returned.

The discussion on the future of the hobby was attended by about 60 people. Paul Simpkins took the chair and controlled an excitable group very well. I did not attend it all but I think it was decided that John Wilman will edit the Novice Package (due to lack of spare time by John Marsden) and Martin Le Fevre (RYODA) will print and distribute it. (Forgive me if I'm wrong but I was called to the bar.)

I cannot remember much about the rest of the evening (did I have too much to drink?) but I did chat to Gary Piper, Julian Shepley, Peter McDonald, Tony Wheatley, Niall Litton and many more. Some of us had postal Diplomacy games to discuss (or not as the case may be). I will not make any jokes about Gary Piper - he would walk into a hobby rugby team (and no, I am not suggesting such a thing).

About 16 teams entered the Quiz that evening. John Dodds stood on a chair in the lounge and hollered out the questions in true University Challenge style. Each group duly wrote down the answers. (How many Democrat Presidents have there been since Eighteen Hundred and something?)

After going to bed around 2.00 (when many were still around) I surprised myself by managing to get into Breakfast at 9.00. I spotted a familiar face in Ray Miller and joined his table, introducing myself to Rob Chapman (of Putty Riffo) and John Wilman (of Watch Your Back). I just about managed breakfast, and then - the Diplomacy-Tournament.

I did not do very well on the Saturday. I drew France, seeded as a strong country. (England and France were seeded strong, Russia and Austria weak, based on last year's results). I finished on 4 units. Not one of the better France players, Mike Allaway for one, got 5 centres. I was guilty of several tactical mistakes and some awful misorders. Still, it was generally agreed that it had been a cracking game. Peter Northcott got a 19 centre Germany so obviously the knives would be out for him the next day.

Our Quiz team of Ray Miller, Bill Dove and myself having come an average 8th or so then decided to enter the darts, aided by Peter McDonald. Both Blackmail teams got into the semi-finals beating the 'Guildford mob' and Foiled Again. Gary Piper's 'Street Credibility' (including Rob Chapman) knocked out Howay the Lads only to go 2-0 out to us. We were amazed! Blackmail A took the first final place and then we came back to beat the 'Bridge 4'. We were Chimaera as we knew Clive Booth would be impressed with a group of no-hopers naming themselves after the wonder-zine (!!!). Then to astonish ourselves yet again we won the final against Mike Woodhouse's Blackmail A. Due to the darts we did not go out for a curry, but had a meal in the restaurant (to celebrate).

We rolled out of the restaurant just in time for the Quiz semi-finals and final. This was won by Woodhouse's team of, himself, Colin Gamble and Richard Walkerdine ("what a trio" was one comment) from (I think) Brian Dolton, Simon Billenness and Mike Allaway.

By now it was 12.00 and time for Walkerdine, Ray Miller, Brian Creese, Richard Morris and co. to continue the 1829 game that they had played whilst the Diplomacy was going on. By now Dave Thorby and Richard (or is it Robert?) Clyne were playing in two games simultaneously. They were still at it at 2.00 when I couldn't take any more.

Sunday morning dawned but I had to crawl out of bed. I took a shower to help me wake up/sober up. I made it down to breakfast a little earlier, joining Richard Walkerdine, Niall Litton and Bill Dove and others. There were several observations on the number of breakfast knives in Peter Northcott's back. "I don't suppose there is room for any more," said Richard Walkerdine, drily.

I did better on the second day of the Diplomacy. I finished with a 9 centre

Russia, the second best Russia on the day. (Apparently competitors will be sent the full results - I expect others can get copies for a minimal from Paul Simpkins). On other tables Peter Northcott survived as Italy, Nick Carter, got a 21 centre Austria and Gary Bolten got a 25 centre France!! (Who would believe it?)

And so to the finish. Walkerdine collected spirit minitures on behalf of the winning quiz team (I was envious as a darts competition winner). Richard then announced the Les Pimley Memorial Award. This was done by the single transferable votes system and was won by Paul Simpkins (and he thoroughly deserves it). The Diplomacy was won by Nick Carter ((who?)) after his 21 centre Austria on Day 2. Niall Litton, Peter Northcott, Willy Haughn, David McCraith (?) were other names I remember as being in the top 7. I apologise to those others whose names I have forgotten as I hurriedly bring this scribble to a close. I have skipped over a lot of what happened but the above is some of the impressions and memories I have of MidCon. (Yes, I will be going next year.)

Thanks for rushing this report to me, Richard, you've earned yourself another free issue. I would dearly love to know what was said about the CGS. Like, was anything important said?

I distinctly remember telling you not to tell Booth about you choosing Chimaera as the name for your darts team. We'll not hear the last of it now! Anyway, surely there'd be more glory in choosing Dib for the zine to play for? I can see I'll just have to have a word with Charlotte.



LETTERS

SANDY PETERS:

"DDD 23 well up to standard. Excellent article from Richard Bass and I particularly enjoyed the frog on P3.

Sopwith 'Redwing' - P24 - You're right, it is only 5 pts when an Ace shoots down a mere mortal so my HP score should read only 17 (total Sopwith grading now 67 so you can shoot me down in 'Gotha' if you like - see if I care!)."

((Thank you for those few kind words on Dib 23, Sandy. I too thought Richard's article was good.))

oo000oo

WILL SHAND:

"The subject of this months stunning revalation is Psycho-Analysis. One Dave Tottey (or should I say Tootey, even your computer can spell as well as I can), wrote that Diplomacy players were in danger of becoming Megalomaniacs. I then looked up Megalomania in "AN OUTLINE OF PSYCHOLOGY" by William McDougal (published Methuen). Speaking of pride an vanity the learned gentleman wrote, "When these impulses take a more active role and seek progressively and insatiably to compel the admiration, deferance, homage and submission of an ever larger number of men we call this 'Megalomania'".

Does then the ignoble Tootey ((er, Tottey I believe is the correct way - not that Dave will mind)) display these tendencys we ask? Yes, I reply.

(1) I first cite the fact that he always beats me at Diplomacy as one strand of evidence he wishes to compel the 'admiration, deference, homage and submission' of all the people he played against.

(2) "Of an ever larger number of men" is not this displayed in the wider audience of the 'zine and particualy ((?)) that offensive letter was an attempt to exert his paranoic megalomaniac personality over us all.

So I come to the major part of my letter. I will not stand being called a megalomaniac by this even worse absolutely loony, RAVING MEGALOMANIAC and so while I retire to foam at the mouth in a corner, I will just mention that I have

sent in a bit for Dib's Gallery."

((There speaks a man who finds it hard to raise his head higher than 'one who calls himself Tottey' - thus proving he's as paranoid as the rest of us. The things a game of Diplomacy can do to a man ...))

oo000oo

DAVE TANT:

"How much is the software package that spots spelling mistakes? Perhaps we long-suffering subscribers could buy it for you for Christmas."

((Oh I see, with other editors erratic spelling gives their zines 'that personal touch' - with me it's 'spelling mistakes'. There's loyalty for you. Anyway, I'll accept the spelling package gladly, hoping it'll bankrupt you all (it only costs £51.99). Er, do I take the price out of subscriptions? Yours first, eh Dave?))

oo000oo

Right. head for the bunkers, it's.....

MARTIN ALLEN:

"By the time this here humble offering is made public I will be entering my eighteenth year of residence in this world of abode. ((And to think I didn't believe in miracles...!)) To celebrate this great event, I will be giving a party to all Dib readers. Entrance is just one copy of Dib (as proof) and a mere 20p. Yes, 20p and a mind blowing night of fun and frolics can be yours. However, due to circumstances within my control, any person whose surname and Christian name both begin with the twentieth letter of the alphabet will have to pay £20 entrance fee as well as giving 20 years of Dib issues free.

20 miracles

Entertainments include Simon Ratcliffe's celebrated armpit impressions, human look-alike competitions (which usually attract few entrants) and a pascafist's wrestling match. This involves two people staring at each other and threatening to beat themselves up until one submits. Quizzes include 'Spot the famous toe clipping' and 'guess the number of sweets in the jar' (if you guess right, we give you all three).

The highlight of the evening is when we let a dozen unemployed thugs free to add their own touches to the house with cans of creocote, crow-bars and flamethrowers.

If you wish to join in the fun, turn up at 29 Stanley Hill Avenue, Amersham, when you-know-who isn't in."

((Before anyone recklessly dashes down to Amersham I'd just like to warn them of the hazards of being associated with this man. Ask Simon Ratcliffe - he's being harangued from all sides for just saying he's made the aquaintance of said loony. Congratulations on reaching your 18 year on this planet, Martin.))

Talking of Simon....

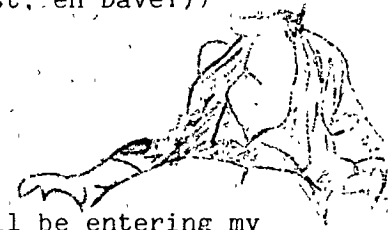
SIMON RATCLIFFE:

"I would like to announce that the afore-mentioned gentleman ((Martin Allen)) is having a party soon. If you wish to attend then contact me at the address below and I will donate two tickets to the person I think deserves them most.

Bromsgrove Mental Institution
12 Wendron Close,
Stoney Hill,
Bromsgrove,
Worcs. B60 2LT."

((Now listen Simon, I haven't done anything to upset you, so I don't deserve the tickets do I?))

oo000oo



Look you lot. an intelligent letter. Thank God I got to him before Birks did...

NICK MARSHALL:

"About 'Blade Runner'; you raise some interesting points.

There seem to be two types of science fiction: the type in which the hardware is important for its own sake, and the type where the science is only important in that it enables the writer or director to explore ideas which would not otherwise be available.

In the first genre I would instance '2001' - not a deeply profound book, but one which made an excellent film, because the effects and design were superb, the music well chosen, and the direction good. I've seen it four times and enjoyed it each time, without being unduly bothered about the significance of the ending. 'Alien' is a very fine film for similar reasons (though the 'novelisation' is semi-literate dross of the worst kind). I suspect that there is supposed to be a message in 'Alien' about mankind's over-dependence on technology, but if there is that doesn't make it a better film.

In the second category I would put Le Guin's 'The Dispossessed' (twin planets; one the home of a decadent propertarian society, the other of a spartan anarchist breakaway), 'Do Androids Dream...', and, amongst films, Truffaut's 'Alphaville'. In these, the technology is taken for granted, as it is in real life. It is only there to hang the ideas on: in Le Guin, the moral and practical difficulties of sustaining a free society; in Dick, the questioning of what constitutes humanness. How could you begin to believe that an android might just be human if you were preoccupied with the technology that produced it?

This does not mean that in 'Blade Runner' the designer's contribution was much less important than in, say, 'Alien'; but instead of being the star of the film, his function was to provide the physical terrain, and to some extent to evoke the spiritual terrain, in which the action took place. And the book's setting is clearly bleak (cold, cheerless) - part of the protagonists' dilemma is the dehumanising effect of their environment. Sleaze, I think, could be quite comforting!

I was disappointed with the film because it seemed such a cop-out... there was a lot of substance in the book, and not much in the film.

But then, everybody else whose opinion I've heard or read likes it..."

((Thanks Nick - clearly you have the edge on me in regards of 'Do Androids Dream...' and 'Blade Runner', as I've not seen nor read either. However, your assessment of both genres of science fiction sound plausible enough (truth to tell I agree entirely). but '2001' not profound? Man's evolution from ape to star child (a space inhabitant in that form) may be a little ridiculous, yes. but if ever there was a message about man's over-dependence on technology it was when the computer 'Hal' took over all decisions and started killing off the ship's crew. I'm not sure if this same excuse does apply to 'Alien' though, because I think the outcome of the film was distorted by the fact that large chunks were cut out of the finished film. From what I could gather, the finished product should have portrayed an alien species trying to procreate and survive. I don't class stuff like 'Alien' as serious science fiction anyway (if SF at all), but see it as a jolly good, enjoyable, horror movie.))

oo000oo

DAVID HALL:

"I'll have to read Philip K. Dick's 'Do Androids etc', I've read a few others by him which are very good. I can't see how they can ever get films right when they are based on some book, since you can never get the sort of depth into a 2 hour film as you can into a book. 'Alien' was better because it wasn't based on any particular book - though of course it's a very old idea - and so could take full advantage of all that film can offer. Of course basing a film on an old book makes you lots of money (or on an old series, like Star Trek, which was a great disappointment). The best books just can't be done on film.

Oh yes. I saw a 'postal Diplomacy' advert in the paper. Think I heard about that somewhere. Trouble is, I can't really see it attracting anyone, since if you're interested enough in playing Diplomacy to be interested in the advert,

you'll probably already know how to get to play Diplomacy by post. I may be wrong though. In the Guardian if you care, which you probably don't."

((As far as I'm able to tell I have had no feed-back whatsoever from this kind of advert.))

oo000oo

JOHN HARRINGTON:

I noticed Dave Tant mentioned the 'Dragon' last issue and how it compares with others in a similar price bracket. Now, although I spend all day working on one of the most advanced financial computers in Europe I know bugger all about the things. However, through my work I have been able to keep an eye on the share price of METTOY, who make the DRAGON (as well as Corgi toys - or is it Dinky?). In the last three weeks or so their share price has risen from 7p to around 21p. Only a few months ago LESNEY, their big rivals and manufacturers of MATCHBOX cars, had to call in the receiver. At the time Lesney's shares were suspended, you could buy them for around 5p or 6p.

I don't know what this proves exactly. I deduced that Mettoy were in just as bad a state as Lesney but the DRAGON is viewed by the City as a hot proposition.

Certainly when I went into our local computer centre in Romford they claimed to be selling 12 Dragons a week and I would have bought one myself (I had the money there) but the sales assistant put me off by insisting on assuming I was "into computers" as an end in itself even though I told him I knew nothing about the damn things and merely wanted to know what ways I could make use of one (rather than 'have fun with one').

In the end I sent off for the Jupiter Ace ((a machine very similar to the Spectrum)) which is a more modest machine."

JOHN (LATER):

"Since writing that twaddle about the Dragon, Mettoy have announced they are selling at least 65% of the subsidiary which produces/manufactures the Dragon. This resulted in an immediate slump in the share price from 21p to 15p and, as I write, the selling has continued (the day after) with the share price crumbling to 11p. Glad I didn't buy any of them!"

((That says it all really. Just goes to show how fickle and unstable the computer business is. Which is why I chose to go for a well-backed (with software) well-known computer. Mind you, I've since heard that Mettoy/Dragon computers have had an injection of more cash - though whether this will keep them afloat remains to be seen.))

oo000oo

Anyone for STABCON (Fallowfield) next January?

BRIAN MOORE:

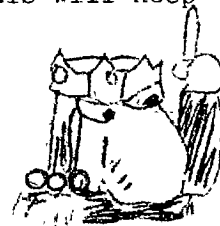
"First of all, can you ask within your pages of DIB, whether any car-owners will be going to Fallowfield Con next January, and if so, if any of them would like free accomadation over the weekend in exchange for a lift to the Con. Fallowfield is about 15-20 miles from where I live."

((No sooner said than done. All those interested can contact Brian at: 17 Westway, Hall i'th'Wood, Bolton, Lancs, BL1 8SS.))

BRIAN (CONT.):

"Interesting to see Dave Bird is looking for a gamesmeet. I'm after the same thing up here, but gamers, and postal gamers seem to be a rarity in this part ofc the country. No-one within meeting distance at least. I know of Brian Douglas and John Lambert in the Morecambe area, but who is there that is closer? Certainly no other postal players in Bolton.

Your reply to Mick Antrobus reminded me that I'd not heard from THING



editor since I sent a sub in July, nor, from Simon Billeness since 20 Years On No.2. I'm writing to them anyway, to see what the situation is with them."

((Of Dib's subscribers, Alan Frost lives in Bolton, I. Winstanley's address is in Lancs, the same with Nick Hoyle's address (when he's home). Is that enough to start another hobby meet?))

oo000oo

ANDREAS SARKER:

"In my experience Cluedo is a dreadfully boring game: everyone except me manages to solve it at exactly the same time, and yet my scrap of paper is almost entirely devoid of deductive reasoning. I also manage to get thrashed in Ace of Aces, and just about every other game I try. What is wrong with me?"

((Dear Loser, It seems to me that you need to see a copy of 'Tweedy's Cure For Gaming Ailments'. It's a specially written hardback for losers and postal-gaming beginners, in a not-so-easy-to-read style and will only cost you a small fortune. Read this and you need never worry about losing again - it'll cure you of games altogether. Just write to: Iver Sucker, PO Box 6, Amersham, enclosing £50 and I'll personally see to it you get yours.))

oo000oo

R.J. LAMPARD:

"Re your reply to Will Shand's letter in Dib 23. I reckon that the apparent lack of studies of hair is due to people's sensitivity about it. If you've got 'Denis Healy' eyebrows, hairy feet and thinning hair at the front like wot I've got, you are likely to avoid the topic of hair, aren't you? ((Yes, I suppose I would)) Why do women (and some others) dye their hair funny colours, frizz it up like bog brushes, pluck eyebrows, shave legs etc. if they aren't paranoid about hair? Also, I would not take a bet on nobody having 2' hairs growing out of their noses. If you look carefully (horrible thought!) at some politicians on T.V. you might catch sight of the scissor marks which give the game away."

((Now that you point it out - people ARE sensitive about hair, aren't they? But why? Is it because it's the only thing about our bodies that we can control; i.e. to cut off/not cut off?))

oo000oo

SIMON BILLENNESS:

"Student life can be good if you're prepared to make the most of it. I just started parachuting and I'll be making my first jump on Wednesday. Last Wednesday we were given plenty of reassuring facts. Like the harness which keeps us attached to the parachute could lift a chiefton tank and nobody has ever needed to use the emergency parachute etc. I'm quite looking forward to it."

((Better you than me. Whilst I was in the army I decided to try every course that came my way (army training being better than most). Consequently when a parachuting course and skin-diving course came up I had absolutely no hesitation in putting my name down. Fortunately the skin diving course came up first (1 month's training - it was the hardest month of my life). and it was while I was stepping off a 100 foot gantry (what they called an incentive test) into 60 feet of water that I decided jumping out of a perfectly servicable airoplane was definitely only for fools and heroes. No way was I going on that parachute course!))

oo000oo

ANDREW SMITH:

"Your comments on I. Winstanley's letter and thoughts on colours in general brought back memories of school-days. We had a german teacher, renowned for his unique 'sense of humour'. who once observed, "How do you know that when you turn

the light off, white paper doesn't disappear??" Following this and other pearls of wisdom he left teaching and joined Aunty Beeb, where he has his own padded studio, and can be heard masquerading under the name of Trevor Barnes in 'Sunday', on Sundays at 8.15 on Radio 4."

((If I ever ended up in a padded room - which day by day looks more likely - it will be because of my subscribers, not because of pearls of wisdom.))

oo000oo

And to end....

RICHARD LEWIS:

"In Dib 23 you disclosed that you had 'done time'. I was wondering what crime you could have committed to find yourself a guest of Her Majesty, could it be rape, arson, taking and driving away, burglary, rape, theft or a combination of them all? ((You forgot murder and treason))

You also stated you were partially successful in bribing prison officers, that simply can't be true - we're uncorruptable don't you know. Anyway I don't believe you, I find it highly improbable that a thoroughly decent chap like yourself has served any form of custodial sentence. ((You're so right - I'm a liar as well))

Nick Marshall's letter contained a wrongful accusation as Mr. Plum is a professor and not a man of the cloth and also the real culprit was Colonel Mustard who used the lead piping on Mrs. White in the Ballroom.

P.S. What's the difference between a socialist and a bucket of orc dung?

ANSWER: The bucket. "

((How true. So you're a prison officer eh? (I must do a Dib Questionnaire sometime to find out who does what). Believe me when I say it's not very comforting to think that those left to look after our most hardened criminals could be Dib subscribers; ranking themselves alongside such names as: Close, Allen, Booth, North etc. Could this be the first crack in the wall? Your guess is as good as anyone else's...))

*** DIB'S GALLERY ***

NAME: Steve Rennie

"22 year old graduate from Leeds University in French and management studies. From Manchester originally I am now living in the Birmingham area for a short while where I work - for a pittance of a wage - as a community service volunteer (looking after the physically handicapped). Amongst other things I am interested in boardgames, football and red wine (an interest cultivated cheaply during a 1 year stay in France)."

((Thanks for the introduction. Steve - you gain your free issue. Actually I've seen (and heard) the name Steve Rennie bandied about the hobby before. I can only assume from this that you aren't a passive member of the hobby. Hopefully this means we'll be hearing more from you again, eh?))

oo000oo

NAME: Will Shand.

"My name is Will Shand, I have been trying to get in a postal game for over three months. I am not related in any way to George North but I do know DAVE TOTTEY (Tootey). I am a student (supposedly) pretending to study ENGLISH and Religious studies while I am in fact studying sirocis of the liver and controlled feedback with the guitar. If you are ever unlucky enough to get in a postal with me I am loyal, a great ally and be nice to me because I've had a hard life."

((Right, because you used this column to advertise your loyalty etc in postal games, and not to actually introduce yourself, you're only entitled to half a

ITA: Ven, Rom, Nap + I
TURKEY - ITALY:

It's still not too late to realise you made a wrong decision about teaming up with the backstabbing Czar. Once I'm annihilated, you'll be next, you know.

DATELINE: CONSTANTINOPLE:

Heroic Turkish forces defend Ottoman civilization to the bitter end.

'Clota' (1981DY)

Autumn 1906

SLIPPERY AUSTRIA KEEPS EVERYONE MOVING ABOUT - RUSSIANS RE-GROUP

AUSTRIA (Peter Northcott) F(A1b)-ION, F(ADS)-Apu, A(Ven)-Rom, A(Tus)-Pie, F(IYS)-GOL, A(Sev) S A(Ukr); A(Ukr) S A(Rum)-Gal, A(Rum)-Gal, A(Gal)-Sil, F(BLA)-Con

ENGLAND (Karl Piper) NMR! Has: A(Yor), F(ENC), F(Lon), F(Edi)

FRANCE (John Wilman) A(Par) S A(Bre), A(Bre) S A(Par), F(MAO) S A(Bre)

GERMANY (Sandy Peters) *[[F(NTH) S ENGLISH F(Lon)-ENC]], A(Sil) S RUSSIAN A(War), A(Kie)-Den, A(Mun)-Bur, A(Pic) S A(Mun)-Bur, A(Gas)-Mar

ITALY (John Field) F(Tun)-ION, A(Apu) S A(Nap)-Rom, A(Nap)-Rom

RUSSIA (Alan Sharples) A(Lvn) S A(Mos), A(Mos) S A(War), A(War) S A(Swe)-Pru, A(Swe)-Pru, F(BAL) C A(Swe)-Pru, F(Nor) S GERMAN F(NTH)

Retreats: None!

COA: Peter Northcott, Lake Hall, The Vale, Church Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 3SX.

LUTON AIRPORT: Tho draw proposals last season were defeated. Another proposal has been put forward:-
= 1st: A/G/R. = 4th: E/F/I. ((Votes for next time please - failure to vote counts as 'NO'.))

*Also, because my computer cannot do dot-underlining, impossible or illegal moves will now be enclosed in [[square brackets]].

Winter 1906 Adjustments:

AUS: Vie, Bud, Tri, Ser, Gre, Bul, Smy, Ven, Con, Ank, (War) + Sev	Builds: A(Vie) for 11
ENG: Edi, Lpl, Lon, Bel	No Change for 4
FRA: (Mar), Spa, Por + Par, Bre	No Change for 4 (1 short)
GER: Kie, Ber, Hol, Mun, (Bre), (Par) + Mar, Den	No Change for 6
ITA: Nap, Tun, Rom	No Change for 3
RUS: Mos, (Sev), Swe, StP, Nor, Rum, (Den) + War	No Change for 6
	34

PRESS:

AUSTRIA - ITALY:

I agree that having 1 or 2 units isn't very attractive - but it's better than being wiped out.

RUSSIA - AUSTRIA:

The only way that you can win now is if Germany or England stab me. If that happens, I'll give you the centres you need!

AUSTRIA - REST:

I will not accept anything more than a 3-way draw. You have plenty of time to sort out who will participate - I only have 12 S.C.'s (I think) - that's just two-thirds of the way there.....

RUSSIA - TOM TWEEDY, MASTER ANALYST:

I hope that your prediction last season has come true.

AUSTRIA - FRANCE:

Can I help you win?

AUSTRIA - GERMANY:

Smooth tongue Northcott indeed! It seems that smooth tongue Sharples has finally possessed you (though you did last 5 years). I'm coming to exorcise him....

AUSTRIA - RUSSIA:

What the hell are you talking about?!

IMPORTANT: From now on all illegal and impossible moves will be enclosed in [[double square brackets]] instead of being dotted underlined.

'Dagda' (1981GC)

Autumn 1905

THIS GAME HAS GOT TO BE JOKE OF THE MONTH!

AUSTRIA (Anarchy) Has: A(Bud)
 FRANCE (Frank Dunn) F(WAf)-Tun, F(WMS) S F(WAf)-Tun, F(Spa sc)-GOL, F(GOL)-TYS, A(Pie)-Tyr, F(MAO)-NVG, A(Yor)stands, A(Rom)-Nap
 GERMANY (Andrew Moore) A(Lvn)-War, A(Boh)-Sil, A(Mun) S A(Boh)-Sil, F(SKA)-Nor, F(Kie)-Ber
 ITALY (Anarchy) NMR!! Has: *F(Tun), A(Vie), A(Tri), A(Ven)
 RUSSIA (Karl Piper) NMR! Has: A(StP), A(Pru), *A(Sil), F(Den), F(Swe), A(Uar)
 TURKEY (Anarchy) NMR!! Has: F(BLA), A(Sev), A(Rum), A(Ser), F(ION), F(AEG), A(Con), F(Smy)

Retreats: ITALIAN F(Tun) dies (NRO); RUSSIAN A(Sil) dies (NRO)

Winter 1905 Adjustments:

AUS: (Vic)-(Tri), Bud, (Ser)	No Change	for 1
FRA: Bre, Par, Mar, Por, Spa, Bel, Lon, Lpl + Tun, Nap	Builds: A(Mar), F(Bre)	for 10
GER: Kie, Mun, Ber, Hol, Edi + Nor	No Change	for 6 (1 short)
ITA: Ven, (Nap) Rom, (Tun) Vie, Tri	No Change	for 4
RUS: Mos, War, Swe (Nor), StP, Den	No Change	for 5
TUR: Con, Smy, Ank, Bul, Sev, Gre, Rum, Ser	No Change	for 8
		34

PRESS:

FRANCE - RUSSIA:

Okay I give in, what are you playing at? ((Nothing...))

FRANCE - ITALY:

Deathwish eh?

FRANCE - TURKEY:

More! More! (or should that be less?) ((Couldn't get any less!))

'Epona' (1982BE)

Autumn 1904

ITALY COMITS SUICIDE...

AUSTRIA (Martin Allen) A(Rum)-Bul, A(Tri)-Ven, A(Rom) S A(Tri)-Ven, A(Ser) S F(Alb)-Gre, F(Alb)-Gre
 ENGLAND (Joe Gibbons) F(MAO)-MAO, F(ENC)-Bre, F(Den)-Kie, F(Swe)-GOB, A(Nor)-StP, F(Lon)-NTH
 FRANCE (Dave Fish) F(TYS)-Tun, A(Bur)-Mar, A(Gas) S A(Bur)-Mar, F(Spa sc) S A(Bur)-Mar, A(Ruh)-Kie, *[[A(Mun) S A(Bur)-Mar]], *[[A(Bel) S A(Bur)-Mar]]
 GERMANY (Anarchy) Has: A(Boh)
 ITALY (Graham Nixey) F(AEG) C TURKISH A(Smy)-Gre, F(Apu)-Nap, F(WMS)-TYS, A(Mar)-Pie
 RUSSIA (Richard Vernick) A(Ber)stand, A(Pru) S A(Ber), A(Mos)stand
 TURKEY (Iain Tillson) A(Smy)-Gre, F(Bul sc) S A(Smy)-Gre, A(Con) S F(Bul sc), F(Sev)-BLA, A(Arm)-Sov

Retreats: none

*LUTOII AIRPORT: Because my computer cannot dot-underline for illegal or impossible moves, all such moves will now be enclosed with [[square brackets]]

Winter 1904 Adjustments:

AUS: Bud, Ser, Tri, Rum, Ven + Rom, Gre	Builds: A(Tri), A(Bud)	for 7
ENC: Lon, Lpl, Edi, Mar, Spa, Den, Bre, StP	Builds: A(Lon), F(ENC)	for 8