

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 hurridly 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