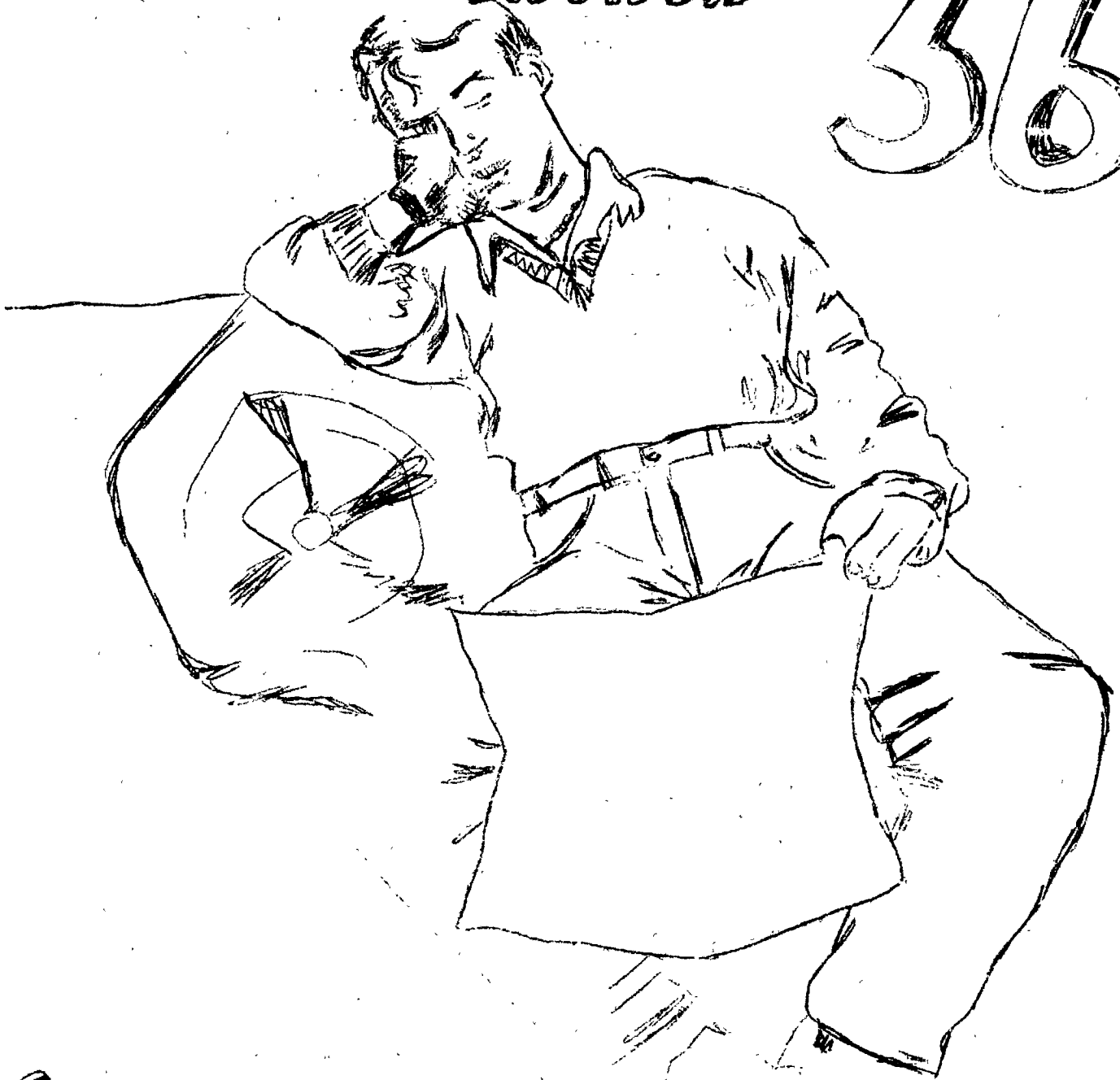


DIB DIB DIB

36



Rise and shine! It's the Dib Dib
Dib Zine!!

This is it. I've got the number right this time. Welcome to issue 36 of Dib Dib Dib - still a zine catering for the loonies and the misfits of our hobby; those who like drink, girls, bawd (er, board) games, music, politics, and other such friivolities (that is, etc etc). And for all this you'll be glad to hear the price is still the same - 35p per issue. From the very poor (skint after Christmas) Tom Tweedy living at 29 Stanley Hill Avenue, Amersham, Bucks, HP7 9BD. Tel. 02403 4513. So anyone wanting to send me more money, now need feel no shame in doing so.

EDITORIAL

Quite a largish issue this time I'm afraid, so I'll just plod on if you don't mind. Not much an editorial this time more a collection of Tweedy ramblings trying to clear out odd pieces of rubbish cluttering up the ol' brainbox. Garbage disposal in computernik terms (horrible word that).

Yes we had a rather jolly Christmas thank you, we had so many Christmas cards (170 at the last count) we had them strung out on almost every wall - place looked like a card shop. Still, many thanks to all those who kindly sent one.

THIS NEXT BIT IS ABOUT COMPUTERS IN CASE GEORGE NORTH WANTS TO SKIP IT. Stuart got his BBC computer. Hell, he hasn't been off it since it was unpacked. I warned him at the time that he needn't think he was monopolising the colour TV all the time (I gave him my old 9" black and white one, to use in the dining room), but to tell you the truth I've quite enjoyed watching it myself, and it's been up to Jan to ban us both from the main TV so she can see her programmes now and again (she always spoils things - women just don't understand).

He's got quite a collection of reasonable programs already - Johnnie Reb (quite a nice 2-player wargame that); Paras (computer verses human wargame); Cylon attack (similar but nowhere near as good as Atari's 'Star Raider'); Space Adventure; Killer Gorilla; Hopper (similar to Frogger but better); 3D Bomb Ally; Gunfighter; a really excellent Chess game; a music synthesiser program; and a couple of others. Not a bad collection so far. What surprised me was the fact that Stuart raved about getting the fast-action arcade games, only to end up favouring the more sedate thinking-type wargames. I'm quite pleased about that; they make far less noise. (Though we get noisy when the playing gets personal, and he smashes my advantageously placed Confederates.)

Mind you compared to Apple or Atari computer games the BBC programs are really quite primitive (apart from the Chess cartridge that is). I guess because the Beeb is relatively new (only being out about a year) the only programs about are ones mainly rewritten from other machines. Things like Apple's famed Wizardry took about a year to write, and maybe software of this quality are ready to come on the Beeb market. The only thing I can see holding them back is that not many Beeb users have disc-drives yet. And I haven't seen ANY disc-based games advertised.

Actually one funny thing I must mention whilst on the subject of BBC computers - IMPORTANT DISCLOSURE OF MEARNS FALLIBILITY - was when Pete Mearns came down last weekend on his two-week stopover working in Ipswich. Pete came in raving about apparently being the bees-knees at playing Killer Gorilla and had I seen someone finish the 4th level yet? I told him I hadn't and Stuart had only just reached the 4th. So, cracking his knuckles, and applying nimble fingers to the keyboard he proceeded to show us just how miserable he really was at playing the game - in fact he never did get off the 1st level. But the really funny part came when Stuart went on to not only exceed his previous score by completing the 4th level, but sailed on to do the 5th, 6th, 7th, and nearly the 8th. I was in stitches by this time watching Pete's reaction, with tears streaming down my face, whilst Pete could only gape miserably with an open mouth. "Stupid bloody game anyway," was the last thing I heard him mutter. You'll do for me Peter!

But enough of us and onto hobby matters. After my plea for information last issue on the Diplomacy box flyers, it seems that things have finally been sorted

out (though who really decides and allocates these jobs I don't really know). Simon Billenness rang me up a couple of weeks ago saying that from now on he'll be handling the flyers. He'll get in touch with HP Gibson, and also sort out printing and suchlike with Martin Le Fevre. So that leaves payment, which I think should be the job of the Hobby Development Fund. But this is really up to Pete Birks, Rob Chapman and Nick Kinzett to decide. Anyway Simon says he'll get in touch with all concerned when he's ready. Boy, am I glad this is sorted out. Thanks for taking the job on, Simon.

The Fall of Eagles Diplomacy ID Tournament is finally coming to a close after 3 years of play, with yours truly finally in the final (er...). When it started we all chipped in the £5 starting fee - now it's Richard Scott and myself (as I said) down to the final. After winning my semi-final from John Jackson (a very tough game for me indeed) I received my £16 semi-final cheque from Richard Hucknall just in time for Christmas, thank you very much. The winner of the final game gets a nice round £40 - I don't like to count my chickens but hell, I've always been an optimist. Why play the bloody game say I if I didn't think I could win! At the moment it looks as though I have the edge, but one never can tell in these bloody ID games; fortunes change so quickly.

Putty Riffo folding - a sad loss. It's funny, but PR never was what one might call a regular zine. In fact it used to turn up once in a blue moon. The odd thing was he always got away with it; Rob's subscribers and trades will always look on the zine with some fondness. Beats me why even though I'm one of the gullible ones, if I tried his kind of turnaround I'd get my ears chewed off. Mike Allaway's Pyrrhic Victory is another zine that seems to get away with it. Anyway Putty Riffo 39 sees it out as the last one. Rob says he no longer has the facilities to produce the kind of zine that he wants. Nevertheless, he goes on to say that he may start up again in the future one his time and enthusiasm returns. And it'll be welcomed back.

Once again it's time for hobby members to vote for who they think has done most for our hobby in the Les Pimley Award for 1983. Les was one of the hobby's earliest editors who died in his late twenties in 1976 - and it was thought at the time it might be a good idea to remember him by giving this very personal award to one person each year who most deserves the hobby's thanks. The nominees are: Simon Billenness (for his work with 20 Years On and doing the most to advertise our hobby to the public); Clive Booth (for the years of joy he gave us with Chimaera and being the first to introduce a 'games magazine' to the hobby); Martin Le Fevre (for his work in litho printing quite a few of the hobby's zines and his work on 'The Novice Package'); and Nick Kinzett (for his work as OGR Custodian and - HDF - moneylender). If you'd like to vote then please rank the above four and send your list to Richard Walkerdine, 144 Stoughton Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 6PG. Deadline is February 11th.

I forgot to mention in the last Dib because of my rather rushed weekend turnaround that the latest Diplomacy stats - Diplomacy Quarterly 5 from Pete Calcraft - turned up on time again in its new zine format, and made very interesting reading indeed. I now have no qualms about recommending these stats if you are interested in such things to one and all. Though I notice Pete has chickened out of his "I'll match every £1 I get with a £1 of my own" promise with some excuse about getting more donations than he thought he'd get. So I hear anyway - don't hold me to that. Is this true, Pete? Anyway DQ costs 50p four times a year, and can be had from:-

Pete Calcraft, 25 Garners Lane, Davenport, Stockport, Cheshire, SK3 8SD. Tel. 061 483 3604

I see Boojum is now out with the latest Sopwith stats, and also sports the new computerised format of left and right justified margins. Richard has interfaced a new Silver-Reed EX44 daisywheel to his BBC 'B'. It certainly makes it look a lot neater. That makes three of us now that I know of using word processors to do their zines - the shape of things to come in the hobby? Certainly I think in a year or two computer produced zines (whether in hardcopy or electronic/video format) will become more the norm.

As for the stats, Richard has 4 sections this issue: the list of Aces 'Aces High'; the normal Ratings List (based on damage done); a Keith Loveys (?) Ratings List (based on positions in game); and an 'In Flight' section requested by John Norris, detailing status of all current games not completed. Seems a lot of hard work to me to please certain people. Still, it makes interesting reading. Aces so far are:-

<u>ACES HIGH</u>	<u>DGE</u>	
1. Tom Tweedy	(90)	It is clear that I was meant to be at the top, but
2. Richard Morris	(68)	Morris will insist in doing other Ratings that don't
3. Dave Tant	(62)	show me in my true light. Ah well, as he is Sopwith
4. Sandy Peters	(62)	statistician I suppose I must humour him. But it
Brian Moore	(62)	galls, it galls. Anyway, those next likely to reach
6. Nicholas Clifton	(53)	this Ace list are: Nick Hoyle (32); Iain Singer &
7. Frank Dunn	(49)	Richard Turner (29); Larry Trask (27); Malcolm Peltz
8. Rob Chapman	(41)	(25); and Brian Douglas & Ian Tillson (24).

And just the quick Top Ten of both Ratings lists:-

SOPWITH RATING LIST

<u>Pos.</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Rating</u>	<u>Games</u>	<u>Pts.</u>	<u>Best</u>
1.	Richard Morris	29	2	58	50
2.	Frank Dunn	24.5	2	49	26
3.	Nick Hoyle	14	1	14	14
4.	Tom Tweedy	13.66	3	41	42
5.	Dave Tant	13.33	3	40	26
6.	Sandy Peters	12.4	5	62	21
7.	Rob Lee	12	1	12	12
	Derek Povey	12	1	12	12
9.	Alan Sharples	10	1	10	10
10.	Len George	9	1	9	9

SOPWITH POSITIONAL RATING LIST

1.	Len George	6	1	6	6
2.	Frank Dunn	4.5	2	9	5.5
3.	Karl Piper	4	1	4	4
4.	Richard Morris	3.5	2	7	6
5.	Ray Harper	3	1	3	3
6.	Tim Sharrock	3	1	3	3
7.	Tom Tweedy	2.83	3	8.5	6
8.	Rob Chapman	2.75	2	5.5	4
9.	Sandy Peters	2.7	5	13.5	3.5
10.	Keith Loveys	2.66	3	8	5.5

Well that's it for the stats - if you want to see the full results, write to Richard Morris, 1 Highland Ville, Lightcliffe, Halifax, HX3 8AG. Costs 5p + postage.

THE 1983 GLADYS AWARDS

This is another thing I meant to mention last time but didn't. I think it might be past the deadline but do try and vote anyway. Mike has kept everything very low-key this time (why is that Mr A?), and with his rather lax turnaround might well include any late voters. Supposed to be a very light-hearted lead up to the more serious Zine Poll, but has recently taken on a more serious note when some people mentioned the fact that it showed things in a truer light i.e. zines/people getting credit for the things they do best. Pity, I preferred it light-hearted. Anyway, the categories to send nominations in for:-

1. Best Diplomacy Zine.
2. Best Games Zine.
3. Best Diplomacy GM.
4. Best Games GM.
5. Best New Zine.
6. Best Zine for Hobby News.
7. Best Letter Column.
8. Best Postal Game.
9. Best Looking Zine.

Like I said, be quick getting in nominations if you want them to be accepted. And send them to Mike Allaway, 60 Poynter Court, Gallery Gardens, Northolt, Middx, EB5 5PA.

This next piece is reprinted from both Putty Riff and the computer moderated game glossy, Flagship, by the kind permission of Rob Chapman and Nicky Palmer. I first noticed it printed in Flagship, and thought at the time that it was too good an article to let go and waste without some sort of comment. For those that didn't catch it, it was a piece written by Rob Chapman for one issue of PR which I had somehow overlooked. It says all the things I ever wanted to say about the game of Diplomacy (as Rob has a very similar playing style to my own), but of course couldn't. I never could push myself to write articles about the game. Matter of discipline I guess. Also, it must be said that I'm not as meticulous as Rob in regards to keeping copies of letters, orders, etc, in special files or a folder. That's too much like hard work for me. Anyway, for those new to the hobby, here's some very good advice on how to play the game of Diplomacy, without making too many enemies.

HOW TO PLAY POSTAL DIPLOMACY AND WIN (or at least Draw)

By Rob Chapman.

Some practical advice

Articles about tactics, the best openings for Italy or theories about German mid-game strategy, are all very interesting and entertaining to read or write, but will rarely give you any worthwhile advice about the practicalities of playing. A game of Diplomacy is more than just an exercise in strategic planning and tactical manoeuvring - it is a clash between seven diverse and often discordant personalities. No two games are ever the same. There are probably as many different ways to play the game as there are players. Not everyone will agree with my approach, but nevertheless I will offer some suggestions about how to best organise your games and conduct effective negotiations in order to achieve profitable game results.

First of all, then you need to ORGANISE ALL AVAILABLE INFORMATION about each game. Some kind of filing system is required. I use a ring folder, into which I file all incoming correspondence; I keep a record sheet in the front of the folder, with the GM's and players addresses and telephone numbers, and I record the date each letter is received or sent.

It is impractical, and seldom convenient, to set up the board every time you want to consider the moves, so each season I make a map of the current position which I carry round in my pocket to study at leisure (a simple photocopy of the board with symbols for units and a different colour for each country). This also helps me to keep track of who owns which supply centres throughout the game. The map is filed in the game folder after each adjudication when a new one is drawn.

It is useful to keep a copy of all your correspondence to other players and to the GM (especially if your memory is as erratic as mine). I use duplicate books and keep a note of the page number sent to each person on the record sheet (each book contains 100 pages, and I am currently on volume 29...), but many players prefer to type their letters and keep a carbon copy which can be filed in the game folder.

NEVER NMR. Obviously, you must ensure that you always get your orders to the GM before the deadline. Make a note of the date on a calendar or in your diary, or on the game map itself. It's a good idea to submit a set of orders as soon as you receive an adjudication, you will probably want to change them again later as a result of your diplomatic efforts, but at least you will have a set of orders on file in case you forget the deadline. Always keep a copy of your orders.

WRITE LOTS OF LETTERS. Write to everyone in the game every season if you can manage it. Write long friendly letters (it's a very friendly hobby, enjoy your correspondence). Analyse the game, exchange information, suggest possible moves for your allies, ask for suggestions for your own moves. When you can't discuss the game, talk about something else, the weather, what you did on your holidays etc. Get to know your opponents: introduce yourself at the beginning of the game by giving some personal details about yourself, the others will usually

reciprocate. Stay friendly with everyone as long as possible.

ASK QUESTIONS. A question will provoke a response, your correspondent is obliged to reply. Ask direct questions Make your opponent commit himself. "What do you intend to do with your A(Bur) next season?" If he tells you, all well and good. If he doesn't, or is evasive, then you have good reason to be suspicious about his intentions (so ask him again). If he tells a lie, then you can claim he has double-crossed you and you have a good excuse to stab him) if you want to).

TELL THE TRUTH. Too many players think Diplomacy is about treachery and deceit. It's not - it's about honesty and trust. You will have to trust people throughout the game, and you will want the other players to trust you. They won't trust you if you demonstrate a willingness to tell lies. Tell the other players what your moves will be when you can, especially during the early stages of the game - build up a reputation for being truthful, this will prove very useful later on...

DON'T STAB INDESCRIMINATELY. If you are going to stab them then make it count, it's not much good if you don't make substantial gains. Attack the weak - persuade others to attack the strong. Be sure you have good reason for the stab; if you are the aggrieved party ("...he double-crossed me...") then neutral powers will not be so concerned about your belligerence. Try to avoid being seen as the aggressor. Apologise to your victim immediately and point out the very good reasons why you were FORCED to take such drastic action (blame another player if possible); remain on friendly terms (you might need his help later on and you don't want him to bear any grudges).

Always expect to be stabbed yourself. Each season work out what damage your neighbours can do to you and be prepared for the worst. If you are stabbed, write to your assailant in good humour (disguise the exasperation) and discretely point out the dire consequences of his rash decision. Whatever happens keep negotiating.

EVERYTHING IS NEGOTIABLE. Promises are not binding (although you can claim they should be if it is someone else making them). Keep your plans flexible, your options open - don't commit yourself or your forces, to any long term strategy. Be prepared to respond to the changing fortunes of the game.

And finally, KEEP A LOW PROFILE. You don't want to become a target so avoid getting a reputation. If you do win a few games, don't tell anyone. Don't start your own zine or become involved in Hobby politics. And don't write any Diplomacy articles...

((Thanks, Rob - of course it goes without saying you earn yourself a free issue.))

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An account of one undersirable's visit to the Tweedy household. A weekend I'll never forget in a hurry. I feel I must point out though the fact that Martin has embellished the story just a little here and there... the cloak he was talking about was in actual fact a bedsheet stolen from the local asylum.

THE BIG SHOWDOWN  
by Martin Allen

They both knew that the Big Showdown was inevitable and it was on a melancholic day in late November that the ultimate Battle Royale transpired. The hero knew that his evil and long term adversary would employ every dirty, cunning and underhand trick possible to defeat the representative of the forces of good who had for so long restrained the tyrant from absolute domination.

He tentatively approached the impregnable fortress, his cloak flapped in