

DIB DIB DIB

42



Welcome to Dib Dib Dib 42 - this will cost you, the subscriber, 40p an issue in the UK - new prices have yet to be worked out for overseas. All money should be sent to, Tom Tweedy, 29 Stanley Hill AVENUE, Amersham, Bucks, HP7 9BD. Tel. 02403 4513.

Please remember to put Avenue on my address, because the man receiving it at Stanley Hill is getting fed up with passing my mail along.

EDITORIAL

Oh rats! It's all Janet's fault. I've just been dragged kicking and screaming from one of those rather boring Soccer games to do this editorial. Which could well be one reason why this issue might be a couple of days late. I just thought I'd better explain the reasons - then you know you can put all the blame on Janet (send all your complaints to her).

It's strange really, but when I used to see all those boring reams of print involving SoccerLeague, United, and Soccerboss, I used to find myself agreeing with the popular thought that these types of games could be clumped together under the heading 'SoccerDross'. No way was I ever going to play them. Not so now though - Stuart's new BBC computer game 'Soccer Manager', by 'Addictive Games', is GREAT! We stayed up till two in the morning playing just one game (we started at five) and still didn't want to leave it then. (Once again Jan spoiled things by dragging us off.) I can thoroughly recommend the game, though I don't know if they do it for other computers. The BBC version is certainly "addictive".

Like I said, it's all Jan's fault - she went down to the computer shop so Stuart could buy himself a new colour monitor - and they came back with that and the game. Mind you, don't get me wrong when I say HE bought the monitor. I don't want you going away with the idea that we give him mounds of money (hell, Jan doesn't even give ME mounds of money - in fact she gives me nowt). No, he paid for it out of his Premium Bond winnings. Do you know he only had his Bonds for 3 or 4 months and he won no less than three times!! Only £50 each time I admit, nevertheless, I've had mine for must be getting on.... yeesss... 25 years or so now, and I've not got (not got?) so much as a sausage. Where's all this 'on some a little rain must fall', and, 'the sun shines only on the righteous'? I'm righteous and it's been raining on me for a very long time now! Where's my colour monitor, that's what I want to know?

For those that haven't already heard, I'm handing over the Diplomacy Central Gamestart Service to Nick Kinzett. Of course, the now mighty Nick, jumped at the chance to rival the lowly Walkerdine for domination of our glorious hobby. Mind you he vacated one position; he's handed over his 'HDF Wise Man' position to me (a gesture on his part), as he felt he couldn't be HDF banker and choose who gets the money at the same time. Is there now a pie Kinzett doesn't have a finger in? I suppose he doesn't have a key to Dib's Piggy Bank..... er, does he? Anyway, all papers, lists and credits (£24.26 towards the HDF) have been handed over to this hobby pieman. If editors could please publish the details - eventually the information might float back to Martin LeFevre, who has just completed some Diplomacy box flyers so I hear. Pity my name and address is on them. Still, I had to give someone else a chance and I can easily forward everything on.

I hear Mark Billenness is handing over 20 Years On to Ian Shaw. I don't know anything about the man, so can't say whether it's a good or bad thing. But Geoff Chalinger seems to approve of him so that's one thing in his favour. I suppose Mark will be sending out details along with the next issue - I hope so anyway. I don't see the constant (seemingly to some) passing over of 20YO doing its image much good though - although a useful magazine (especially to editors) it may well put off some subscribers, the life-blood of the magazine. I wish Ian the best of luck of course - I'll still continue to get it.

Chris Sandow tells me that he's had to hold 'Catacombs of Copernica' over because of "some readjustments". It seems that if he is to pick up new starters on the waiting list, some amendments must be made to the starters package. It's not much, but in the long run he hopes it'll save him a lot of time. Further information as to what the adjustments are, has yet to be supplied.

HOBBY MEET LIST:

Now here's a novelty. Thought I'd introduce a list of those that I've met recently, as my record lists are all met with derision, especially by Mearns and Birks.

Paul & Jill Morton: Paul recently married... Jill is far too nice for him.

Ian & Elaine Tillson: Came to help collating Spots, for which many thanks.

Clive & Pauline Booth: Had a great day with Clive mucking about with his new video camera. Took some fantastic shots of the new litter, though it's strange seeing oneself on TV. (Got our copy of the cassette yet, Clive?)

John Keight: John comes round regularly showing off the new computer games he's got for his Atari... and proceeds to take over my Apple to play Wizardry! Good on yuh, John.

Mike Dean: Mike was very civilised bringing round a couple of bottle of very nice German wine, after polishing them off between the two of us it didn't really matter what the label was anyway. Came completely sane... left, a shattered wreck and a completely hooked terminal junkie. I had to pry his fingers from the computer keyboard.

THE 1984 ODE DIPLOMACY MAGAZINE POLL

Otherwise named, by John, the Revenge Poll. I'm not sure whether this is a good idea or even if it will be that well received. Certainly I'm publishing it because I like Polls, and normally think to hell with what others might say. I did talk to Richard Walkerdine about it, in passing, and he didn't seem to mind; polls are meant to be fun-type things anyway, and anyone can run one. The only other misgiving I have about this Poll is 'Zine Eligibility' sub para (c) - once again this leaves Hopscotch out, who I think only runs one Diplomacy game. Is this taking revenge too far? Still, this IS supposed to be a hard-line approach type Poll. So....

1. Zine Eligibility: To be eligible a zine must:-
 - (a) be an amateur publication concerned with postal games;
 - (b) be published in the United Kingdom;
 - (c) be running, as of 1/1/85, at least two games of postal Diplomacy that are eligible for Boardman Numbers;
 - (d) have published at least three issues between 1/9/84 and 1/1/85.
2. Voter Eligibility: Anyone who subscribes to or trades with at least two eligible zines may vote for all eligible zines they receive as trader or subscriber (see note). Editors, subeditors, and anyone closely involved in the compilation or publication of a zine, may not vote for that zine.
3. Voting Method: Zines should be listed in order of preference, with the most preferred listed '1', the second '2', etc. There is no need to awards marks, and any such will be ignored.
4. Assessment: Results will be calculated by use of a preference matrix.
5. Deadline: Votes should be sent to John Marsden, 17 Church Road, St. Leonards, Hastings, TN37 6EF, no later than Friday 4th January 1985.
6. Results: Next following Ode. Non-subscribers may receive a copy of the results from John for 20p.

Note regarding voter eligibility: The intention is to exclude anyone who reads or sees someone else's zine without themselves subscribing or trading. Clearly in the case of couples or people who share a house votes may be cast by any one member of the household, or by all in committee. Any editor who sends John his mailing list in advance of the deadline can have his voters checked for eligibility.

LANDMARK II - POSTAL CAMPAIGN
A brand new FRP game by Richard Downes

Following the success of my last postal campaign, Land I can now announce LANDMARK II. Some of the major features include:-

- *Flexible deadlines. You submit orders whenever you feel like it. By return of post or every six months. It is up to you!
- *Low cost. The set up which includes rules and 3 turns as well as character and order sheets. £2.50. Subsequent turns cost 50p. All prices are inclusive of postage, combats etc, etc. *Absolutely no hidden costs. If you have payed for turns in advance and there is a price increase your money will be proected against such an event, so that you get what you pay for.
- *A wide range of classes to chose from. There are currently 24 catered for. If there is not the one you would like. Tell me and I'll try to sort something out.
- *28 races to choose from. You can be a straight human, or an Elf (6 varieties) or you can play a monster such as a Stone Giant or a Jackalwere or even a Mind Flayer.
- *Prizes to be won. Scattered about the world there are many artifacts for your hero to find. And when (s)he does you get to keep the item. (e.g. The Ancient Gemstones of Thrale may turn out to be in reality a set of gem dice!).
- *Length of campaign. This is estimated to be about 3-5 years long.
- *Flexibility of campaign. You decide what type of character you play, what their traits are. Also you may choose to explore lots of dungeons or towns or wilderness, mountains, woods, swamps etc, etc.
- *Tested scenario. Land has been running for well over a year now.
- *Extra rules to enhance playability, by post it is easier to deal with matters such as armour disintegration (and armourer's repairs), encumberance, thieving etc, etc.
- *New spell system for all bar Clerics. No longer do you automatically acquire more spells upon attaining a new level. Rather all new spells must be bought (difficult) or found.

Write now for a place to Richard Downes. 8 Treasury View, Ickham, Canterbury, Kent, CT3 1QY. Enclosing a cheque for £2.50.

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JOTTO Turn 5

|                  |             |                 |             |
|------------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|
| James Steele:    | 5th: 312321 | Richard Sharp:  | 5th: 230222 |
| James Cowie:     | 5th: 222222 | George North:   | 5th: 322221 |
| Ulf Jiratorn:    | 5th: 231220 | Victor Hall:    | 5th: NMR!   |
| Larry Trask:     | 5th: 303222 | Richard Morris: | 5th: 513212 |
| Richard Lampard: | 5th: 211503 | Tim Collieu:    | 5th: 323321 |
| Richard Downes:  | 5th: 414222 | Nicholas Whyte: | 4th: 222130 |
| Brian Moore:     | 4th: 201213 |                 | 5th: 312212 |
|                  | 5th: 131221 |                 |             |

I must point out that it doesn't matter if your initial Turn guesses are in the SOED or not (though it helps if I recognise the word; no anagrams as Turn guesses), all I said was, that MY 6 secret words are in the SOED. Victor, if you want to catch up just send in two guesses next time.

LETTERS

It's no good... I haven't anyone else to start with...

RICHARD SHARP:

"No, you've got it all wrong again! ((Impossible!)) I "don't bothered", as you put it, about where I came in the ratings - no one who's played as many games as I have can rate near the top on any average system. What I "do bothered" about is your constant misinforming of your trusted readers. You told them that in Wink's latest list I was "way down some where near the bottom". Surely 120th out of 350 is not 'near the bottom', is it? ((Well it's not near the top, is it?))

And who's this bloke who's "lost 30 games" - surely only Davidson could claim that, and where does he come in? You can't mean me - even if you count a draw as a loss (a bit extreme?) I've only lost 26, and if you don't I've lost 18. Tut-tut."

((What's all this "don't bothered" and "do bothered" stuff, is the mega-pedantic, doddering Sharp finally cracking up? I don't talk like that. Well, I do, but I certainly don't write like that! Your very words, Richard, were: "I've played 33 games; won 3". You may well have drawn in some games, but you don't count a draw as a WIN, do you? I say 30 games, sir, and not one less...))

oo000oo

But, I see Richard's scribblings have spurred others on to make some comment...

MATT QUARTERMAIN:

"Replying to Richard Sharp: there are still several farce games going on at the moment - a case in point is one in 'Year of the Rat' (ex Dragon Lords). Has been running for 1½ years on 2-month deadlines and is mucking around in 1903 I think. One holdover occured because of lack of Diploming time! Last I heard, Ian Marsh had given up and called it a day. Abandoning the game, thasright. ((sic)) But next thing I know is the info that 1984's upstart Andy Blakeman has taken over the game for Party or whatever he calls the zine. The fact that I didn't sub to Party (having received issue 1 just at the point of my hobby rundown) means I never heard of the transfer. Bleah.

Next. Cut and Thrust at 6 in the zine poll. Well deserved. It runs Dippy efficiently (and is never late) to 5-week deadlines and also runs the best En Gardel campaign in British zines current. If Acolyte could come 4th and 3rd in 1982/1983 for being an En Gardel zine that runs Diplomacy then surely there's nothing wrong with C&T. Besides, Glyn and Derek are okay guys (and Derek's a damn good bridge player). 6th is, therefore, an acceptable position.

As for Hobby Package (Page 9): I sent £1 to Martin ages ago and never had anything, so I presume there's no action on this front. Mind you, this was 6 months ago."

((I should push Martin a bit further, Matt. Apparently he's back in business with a new/different litho machine, and anyway, has old stocks of the Novice Package ready. There's no reason why he shouldn't send you something if you jog his memory.

As for Cut & Thrust, why should it deserve 6th place because of a well-run En Garde game, or because the editors are 'okay guys'? I'm marvelous but that couldn't get me any higher than 7th in 1982! I'll admit though being a damn good Bridge player might get you to 6th...))

oo000oo

JOHN MARSDEN:

"I must strongly object to Richard Sharp's totally misleading and inaccurate statements regarding the sad end of 1974N (BDC41I) - as he rightly says, one of the finest Diplomacy games ever.

The first thing that has to be said is that I received nothing from John

Piggott at all. In fact all the Ethil games were delayed several months in rehousing because John kept promising to send me the orders, but never did, until finally I had to ask the new GMS to call for orders to be resubmitted. In the case of 1974N I could not have been aware of any standing orders, therefor.

I reprinted ( Ode 2, page 11) the Spring 1924 adjudication verbatim from Ethil 23, including the two game-end proposals, both of which were for concession to France. There was no 4-way draw proposed that season, so it couldn't have passed (it had been defeated the previous season). I then sent copies to all players, Robert's and Dave's by Air Mail. The deadline was only three weeks, and by Ode 3 I had only heard from Roland, who vetoed the game-end proposals and proposed the draw instead. I held the game over.

In due course, Robert Correll wrote to me, accepting any draw that included him but tendering his resignation because he had lost interest in Diplomacy. He also apologised for the delay in replying! I therefore proposed to put in a standby for Turkey, to avoid unbalancing the game. This produced a howl of complaint from Dave, who pointed out that the game had never used standbys before, and threatening to resign if I used one then. I telephoned John Piggott, who confirmed that standbys had not previously been used, and that if he had still been running the game he would have put Turkey into anarchy.

I therefore adjudicated Autumn 1924 in Ode 5, with Turkey in anarchy. This created a 'forced win' situation for France, and I therefore conceded the game to Dave.

Richard's piece contains the following untruths:

1. That everyone voted for the draw. The draw proposal appeared in Ethil 22 (Autumn 1923), and was vetoed by Dave Johnson. John Piggott knew this because he typed it up for Ethil 23, which appeared (eventually) as a supplement to Megalomania 14 (which Richard presumably didn't bother to open either, despite it being clearly headed "incorporating Ethil the Frog 23").
2. That I sent Robert Correll Ode by surface mail. It went by Air Mail Printed Paper Rate, and his reply arrived within ten weeks - which was very kind of him, since he'd dropped out of the Hobby.
3. That I NMR'd Robert. Robert never NMR'd; he resigned and went straight into anarchy.
4. That Dave Johnson was "very surprised". I wanted to either end the game as a draw or put in a standby, to maintain the balance, which seemed only fair after so long a break. Dave insisted on his "win", totally devalued though it was, and given the rules as they stood I couldn't deny it to him. I know Roland has never forgiven me for it, but I saw no alternative.

I suggest that Richard checks his facts in future before accusing people in such fashion. I further suggest that he could repay me the many pounds I wasted on writing or telephoning him about this and other games he was either playing in or had abandoned. If he wants 1974N redesignated a four-way draw I would be happy to declare it such - but only when I receive a letter from Dave Johnson agreeing to the result."

((No need for me to comment any further I think - I'm sure we haven't heard the last from this, so I'm getting my head down. Did someone call Marsden soft-spoken, easy-going, liberal, middle-of-the-road? Hah!!!))

oo000oo

NICHOLAS WHYIE:

"I am appalled and disgusted by Larry Trask's comparison of English Christmas cake with Irish peat. ((Trust an Irishman to pick this up)) Irish peat is far more durable and burns far better. How many English power stations run on Christmas cake? I will admit that very little money is found in Irish peat. This is because we have the sense to keep it where we can get at it."

((Don't tell me someone has told you English power stations stoke up on Irish peat? As for peat being more durable than Christmas cake, you've gotta be kidding.))

oo000oo

ALAN FROST:

"Your letter page is getting as serious as the Times. ((Ridiculous!)) The tiresome colonial, Trask, seems to be at the root of the trouble, and forces me to burst into print:

(1) Sporting links with South Africa:

It may be that sports are played in a spirit of friendliness but you've only to go to a Chelsea match to see that the effect on the supporters is not friendly. If they've won, they have a sense of superiority over their opponents which extends far beyond their sporting prowess. If you give South Africa (if that's who you want to aim it at), they will gain a sense of moral superiority which is a propaganda victory to the regime. It is exactly this reason that Russia spends so much time and money on her athletes.

If you don't believe it's true, just try analysing your feelings when the National Anthem was played at the Olympics. You didn't do anything to win, but wasn't there a sense of personal achievement? A knowledge that we're better than them? That there must be something better about our way of life? ((No, just a sense of pride; pride for one's countrymen))

Sport shouldn't be a political thing, perhaps, but, without any help from the politicians, it is.

(2) Trask complains that we don't sound our r's. R's? Shouldn't that be 'ass', Lawwy? Have a nice day, y'hear?"

((It is true what you say about football supporters, Alan - however that wasn't quite what I had in mind. The feeling I have about most sport is different. I was thinking more of the great events. The Olympics, Wimbledon, watching the Clay fights, World Cup matches, these sort of things. It's not only about pride in one's country... it's just GREAT to be there (in spirit if nothing else). The Americans have the right idea about sport. Take a look at their pro football games and baseball: they make it a great day out; take the kids, the wife, even the grandmother. I wouldn't take my son to a football game over here. Forget British football... I try to.))

oo000oo

JOHN PIGGOTT:

"Many thanks for Dib 41 and your note therein. Flattering as it is to be asked for contributions, I half wish you wouldn't, as it seems to put me under an obligation I might find it hard to fulfil. Most of the 'hobby history' stuff I write is sparked off by a chance mention by someone else - as the piece on my TV appearance was - but perhaps I might let you have an entry for your series of pub guides which you must by now be close to starting. That pub in Lancaster where the ScotDipCon party were all thrown out for monopolising the dartboard might make a good start... I'll see what I can do anyway - but not for this issue, I'm afraid!"

((I quite understand the reluctance to write on demand, John, the only reason I asked was because I had promised to try. Certainly it wasn't my intention to put you under any obligation - I know when I was asked to do a couple of reviews, I hated it. Consequently the results were not all that I might have desired.))

JOHN (CONT.):

"And now for Larry Trask - or, as I can reveal, Laurence Cornelius Trask III, the son and heir of L. Cornelius Trask Jr. and Cordelia Dimpelburger. With a pedigree of those dimensions Larry could hardly be anything but an American Patriot, forcefully promulgating the successful aspects of his land while turning a blind eye to its failures. Nowhere is this demonstrated better than in his comments on food. We all know of the innate ghastliness of American food... the English muffins that are neither, the freshly squeezed orange juice that was removed from the freezer only this morning, to say nothing of the tortillas, each neatly embossed 'Du Pont' in the centre... The point is that Larry is not to blame for any of this. When he speaks of a pot roast, he means something that has actually seen the inside of a pot and not just a plastic bag! The problem is that in America such a thing cannot be bought for less than \$50 a portion.

And now to Language. Here Larry speaks with authority, for (as you'll have