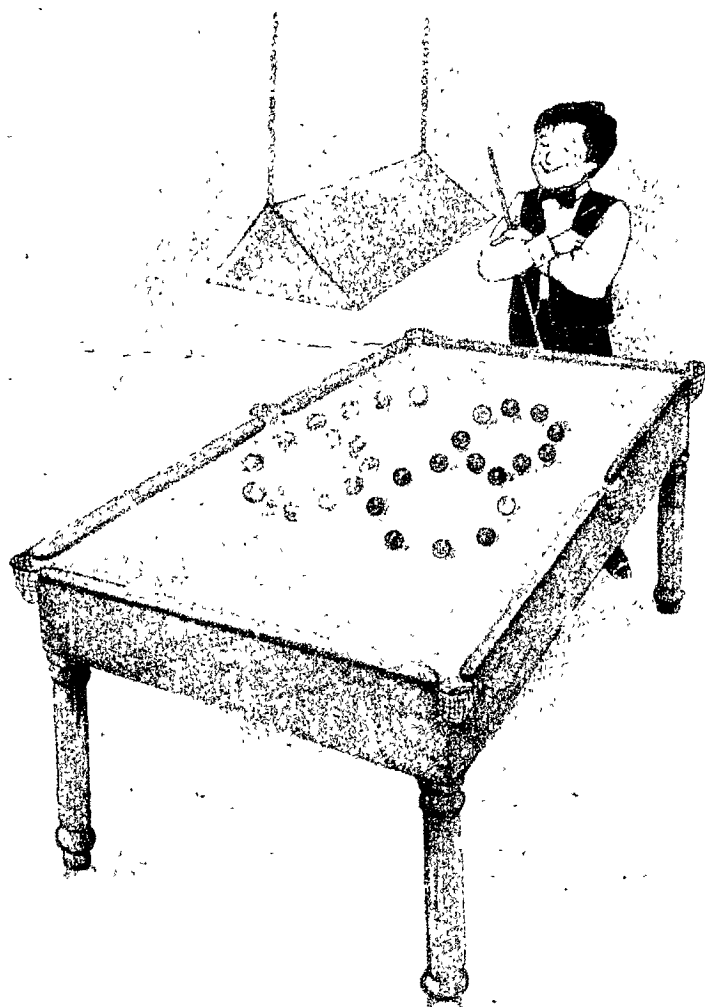


DIB DIB DIB



Welcome to the 68th issue of Dib Dib Dib - a zine dedicated to games, games players, and to the civilised game of Diplomacy. The cost is a fixed rate of 45p per issue in the UK and 28p + postage overseas. Send money, to Tom Tweedy, 29 Stanley Hill Avenue, Amersham, Bucks., HP7 9BD. Tel. 02403 4513.

\*\*\*\*\*  
 \* EMAIL: I can also be reached via bulletin board on 'West London TBBS' \*  
 \* 0895-52685 (1200/1200, 1200/75 or 300/300 baud - No parity, 8 data bits, 1 \*  
 \* stop bit), where all orders, articles and whatever can be sent to me in \*  
 \* the Diplomacy section reached via the SIGS Area (Special Interest Groups). \*  
 \*\*\*\*\*

#### EDITORIAL

First off to get my mistakes out of the way (well, not ALL of them, which might be too numerous to mention here). It was John Colledge who wrote the JOHN CAVANAGH letters in Dib 67. An easy mistake to make when copytyping, if the author signs himself only as 'John'. John Cavanagh rang me later wanting to know how come he was writing such interesting letters! Sorry Mr Colledge, fancy thinking Mr Cavanagh could write such interesting letters!

The other - minor - mistake was the GODS board does NOT support 1200/1200 baud as advertised in my last editorial, only 1200/75 and 300/300 (tho' I've never been able to get on at 300).

Well, nothing much has been happening in the Tweedy household of late, so I'm not going to mention it. The fact that Jan makes sure I'm continuously overworked, alternately typing up Dib, Spots, the modem games and various letters might have quite a lot to do with it - GOD knows how Kinzett manages! Not that Jan makes sure he's overworked - he does it all voluntarily!

We have more or less given up looking for a house now, as Stuart is taking his GCSE's in 1988. We said from the start that come May if we hadn't found anything, we'd look some other time. It'll be just our luck now if every house that turns up will be exactly what we want.

Anyway, just to finish off, talking of Stuart: he has now decided to run D&D on West London TBDS. I thought I'd give it a mention because I know there's a few of you still interested in playing D&D by 'mail'. So far he's DMing for three people - one of them being the SYSCP (Iain Phillipps). Each player has a single character - die rolled by the DM - with the rest of the party being made up of Non Player Characters. It should prove faster than postal D&D anyway as Stuart's on the board once, even twice, a night.

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#### NOMINATIONS FOR THE 1986/87 GLADYS AWARDS

1. Best Diplomacy Zine: Dolchstoss, NMRI, War & Peace, Mad Policy.
2. Best Games Zine: Vienna, TTYF, Zeeby, Hopscotch, Small Furry Creatures Press.
3. Best Looking Zine: Home of the Brave, Gazfinc, Diversions, Vienna, Small Furry Creatures Press.
4. Best Lettercol: Denver Glont, Dib Dib Dib, NMRI Thing on the Mat, Vienna.
5. Best Writer: Richard Sharp, Tim Collieu, Brian Creese, Pete Doubleday, Ross Christie.
6. Best Subzine: Ac-Mong, Piles, Serendipity, Heimskringla, Fellow Traveller.
7. Best for Hobby News: Mad Policy, Home of the Brave, Zeeby, Ode, Vienna, Hopscotch.
8. Best New Zine: Small Furry Creatures Press, Bloodstock, Sharp Practice.
9. Best Postal Games GM: Martin Draper, Alan Parr, Nick Kinzett, Pevans ((?)), Richard Egan.
10. Most Regretted Fold: Boojum, RGR.

((Address cont'd top over the page...))

Please vote for the above nominations in order of preference, and send your votes in to Brian Creese, 256 Canbury Park Road, Kingston, Surrey, KT2 6LG - to reach him by Saturday 18th July at the latest.

I shall be printing the results of course, but if anyone wants to see the original results in NMR! then write off to Brian at the above address.

~~~~~

SENDING OVERSEAS ORDERS IN VIA EMAIL?

This subject caught my interest when Luke Clutterbuck sent in a letter asking about linking computers between Australia and the UK. Apparently a tie up IS feasible, using what is called FIDONET. This is a network of FIDO and compatible bulletin boards all over world. You don't have to pay anything until mail is actually sent. You have so much credit with your local board (a bit like credit with a zine), which is deducted every time you send some International NETMAIL. I don't have a list of the NETWORKS and NODES yet ('nodes' are the single ordinary bulletin boards in a network) and have only recently found out about this service... so I'll let the System Operators (SYSOPS) explain for me. Starting with a notice pinned up on W.L. TBBS...

```

*****
*                >>> NOTICE FOR ALL PDSig MEMBERS <<<                *
*                =====                                                *
*                                                                 *
* This BB System is now fully FIDO Mail compatible. This means that you *
* will be able to send messages to users on MOST other PDSig BBS (all, *
* soon!) from here, as well as to all the other FIDO nodes worldwide.   *
* As this is currently a FREE service it is available EXCLUSIVELY only *
* to PDSig Members.                                                    *
* Callers who wish to make use of this service should leave a *
* message when when they log off, and the facility will be added.      *
*                                                                 *
* NOTE. ALL users may receive NET-MAIL here free of charge. - Iain.    *
*****

```

((Just to be sure, I asked the West London SYSOP... who replied...))

IAIN PHILLIPPS: "Yes, this BB now interfaces to a network host system, where it can send (in one batch) messages destined for any Fido-compatible system, and receive messages likewise. I.E. If you wish to send a message to say, someone on Fido Liverpool, you can enter it HERE, and it turns up there. Similarly, the recipient of that message can send you a reply in Liverpool, and you'll get it here."

((I asked him about International mail...))

IAIN PHILLIPS: "You can get FIDOMail messages sent to you here from ANY other FIDO system worldwide. All that has to happen is for you to tell your people to address messages to you net 503, node 60 ((The West London node)). If you send them a reply (just as a normal message), then they'll get that. There's nothing else (from a user point of view) to it."

((I asked the SYSOP on the Cambridge TBBS node about prices...))

ALAN: "Hi Tom that's very easy question, first of all there are two types of users on this system, paying and non paying, it costs money to send messages anywhere in Britain and for the rest of the world. As normal users do not pay, then they do not get access, unless they request and pay for the service. Now PDSig members pay for a service, and this board is being used as a trial for those who wish to use it. All they have to do is ask and their account will be credited, free. Now if you want to send mail abroad, phone your local operator and ask how much it costs at cheap rate to phone the country of your choice.

All data sent abroad from this system, is at 2400."

((I asked him if someone in Australia could easily contact me using the PDSig boards and NETMAIL. And was it practical...))

ALAN: "Hi Tom, yes we have about 15 FIDO systems in Australia - he would have to do the same at his end.... At 2400 you can send a fair size document file to and from other systems for a unit cost... so what you do is find out the cost of a three minute call multiply that how many times you want to send data to Australia, send me the money, I open up a credit limit to that on your account and away you go."

((Simple. So there you are Luke... international high-speed email... NOW all I have to do is find the network lists.))

~~~~~

ERECTION INSTRUCTIONS

put forward by Kris, 'What Word Have I Missed' Morris

Your ? is a quality British-made product which will give many years excellent service if treated carefully and well-maintained.

DO erect your ? before first using it. It does help if the outer is weathered to make your ? more watertight.

DO use your ? on as even site as possible, clearing away sharp objects. In wet weather try to avoid low lying areas. Avoid sites under trees as sticky sap may drip down after rain.

Do treat zips gently. If they are not running smoothly it is possible that some obstruction is present. Keep the strain off zips when your ? is not in use.

Do keep your ? under firm, all-round tension during wet weather since rain will tighten the outer, and as your ? dries out the tension will help it retain it's shape.

DO brush off all dirt, grass etc. when packing your ? away. If it is packed when wet, erect within 48 hours under full tension until it is thoroughly aired. Otherwise, mildew will irreperably damage it.

DO change the rubber \* when they show signs of cracking or losing their elasticity. New rubber \* can be passed through the ? loops and then pulled back through themselves.

DO reproof your ? when necessary. We recommend FABSIL. Alternatively, MESOWAX can be used if very long use of the ? has made it limp.

DO store your ? in a dry, well-aired place.

DO NOT remove \$ by pulling them out by the ? walls on rubber \* . Use a proper tool designed for the job.

DO NOT place any sort of heat near the sides or top of your ? .

I'll leave you to work out what the ? , \* , and \$ mean !!

((Er, thanks Kris - of course MY subscribers will never take this the wrong way, and, will EASILY guess the missing words.))

~~~~~

JOTTO Turn 8

STEVE THOMAS writes that his word isn't in the 1979 edition of Chambers, but is in the 1983 edition. I say again, it doesn't bother me what dictionary you dredge your guesses from, all that counts for fairness is where I get MY 6 words from. I use the 1977 edition of Chambers.

MICHELE MORRIS · 8TH 112222

MIKE CLOSE : 8TH 200213

STEVE THOMAS : 8TH 211222

KATH COLLMAN : 8TH 200443

ROSIE ROBERTS : 8TH 343020

RICHARD SHARP : 8TH NMR!

JAKE CHEUNG 41 PORTMAN STREET, MIDDLESBROUGH, CLEVELAND. TS1 4DQ

## EN GARDE

### JUNE 1601 - THE GREAT WATER FIGHT

The great French army stood silently on the lush plain. The mighty walls of the Flemish city before them yet all eyes were on a solitary figure on a nearby hill top. Sword aloft, and just as he was about to bring it down [boom] A clap of Thunder followed by torrential rain. The General sighs as he watches the army scattered to find shelter, its going to be one of those campaigns.

The rain continue for two solid weeks turning the entire region into a quadmire. Major Pastuer (4th Frontier regt. attach) found things too wet for his liking so he stayed in his tent for the entire month. Captain Gardien (2nd Frontier Regt. attach) didn't have a Majority to protect him and he was send on guard duty, patrolling the supply tents. Whilst he was galloping around his horse slipped on the treacherous ground and he was thrown. Luckily he wasn't badly hurt and a couple of weeks in the field Hospital soon put him right.

At last the rain eased then finally stop, not that battle could commence as the field army dry itself out. The Royal Marines were given the job of scouting the enemy, since no one could walk a hundred yards without a boat there wasn't much for them to do. Captain Charles Valliant was seen (MID 2) winning 200ocr at cards.

Major Forebreath was noted for his organising skills (+1 MA, MID 4) in setting up a fishing contest. His skill with the rod however wasn't quite to the same standard and he only manage a few tiddlers which he sucker the QM to buy for 300ocr. Captain De Jawbreaker prove quite adept with rod and line or maybe his mum's oxtail stew he was using as bait had something to do with it. He later sold the lot to the company cook for 450ocr. Major Perce-beumbed was seen landing a gigantic Pike (MID 5) which won the contest (MID 3) for which he earned a pat on the back from the General. A quick trip to the kitchens and he was 800ocr richer.

Major Fallen and Captain Tastanute was ransomed back by the army, thanks to the newly formed charter ' The King's Ransom '. They both elect to fight for King and country rather than face their troubles back home. On the way they had to swap their horses for a rowing boat as that was the only possible way to reach the encampment. As they were in sight of the camp they found a rather wet messenger boy hanging for dear life to a waterlog branch. After a Long argument they decide to rescue him, a good thing too as he was carrying important documents for the General. For this act they were rewarded with 350ocr each and mention in dispatches ( 3 & 4 repectively ).

Vacancies arising from this month's drowning - Regt. Adj.s PM, 4TH. Aide to Crown Prince.

Next month: The field army will be on assault

### STATUS TABLE

| <u>CHARACTER</u>     | <u>SL</u> | <u>SP</u> | <u>REGT</u> | <u>MIST</u> | <u>MA</u> | <u>CR</u> | <u>CLUB</u> | <u>PLAYER</u> |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|---------------|
| Louis Pasteur        | 7         | F         | MAJ(QOC)    | Sally       | 1         | 841       | BG          | D.Brooks      |
| Jean Gardian         | 7         | F         | CAPT(DG)    | Ethel       | 5         | 344       | BG          | B.Moore       |
| Piers Tastanute      | 6         | F         | CAPT(QOC)   | Wanda       | 4         | 557       | HG          | S.Craddock    |
| Charles Valliant     | 5         | F         | CAPT(RM)    |             | 2         | 330       | F&P         | U.Jiretorn    |
| Grene Perce-Beumbed  | 4         | F         | MAJ(PLLD)   | Phylis      | 3         | 946       | RP          | D.Abbott      |
| L'Ancelot Fallan     | 4         | F         | MAJ(13th)   |             | 4         | 128       | RP          | C.Ozog        |
| Gaspin Forebreath    | 3         | F         | MAJ(27th)   | Ruby        | 7         | 1394      | RP          | C.Sandow      |
| Aramis De Jawbreaker | 3         | F         | CAPT(PM)    |             | 6         | 700       | RP          | S.Tweedy      |

| <u>MISTRESS TABLE</u> | <u>SL</u> | <u>FRIEND</u>       |
|-----------------------|-----------|---------------------|
| Kath Finate           | 11 BI     |                     |
| Sally Munella         | 10 B      | Louis Pasteur       |
| Wanda Lust            | 10 I      | Piers Tastanute     |
| May Strome            | 9 I       |                     |
| Phyllis Stein         | 8         | Grene Perce-Beumbeb |
| Ruby Conned           | 7 WI      | Gaspin Forebreath   |
| Ethel Luent           | 7 W       | Jean Gardian        |
| Linda Hand            | 5 WI      |                     |

### REGIMENTAL TABLES

| RANK   | RFG | KM | CG | DG | QOC | CPC | ALC | GDM | PLD | RM | PM  | 13  | 53 | 27 | 4 | 69 | GAS |
|--------|-----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|----|----|---|----|-----|
| COL    | 3   | -  | 4  | 5  | 4   | -   | 6   | 5   | 1   | 5  | 4   | 1   | 6  | 5  | - | 3  | -   |
| LT.COL | 2   | 4  | -  | -  | 2   | 4   | 1   | 4   | 5   | 4  | 5   | 6   | 5  | -  | 4 | -  | 5   |
| MAJ 1  | 3   | 5  | 3  | 5  | 3   | 6   | 6   | 3   | 3   | 4  | 6   | LAF | 3  | 1  | 5 | 6  | 3   |
| MAJ 2  | -   | -  | 4  | -  | LP  | 1   | 2   | 1   | GPB | 4  | -   | -   | -  | GF | - | 1  | 2   |
| CAPT A | 5   | 5  | 2  | 4  | 4   | 5   | 2   | 3   | 6   | 4  | 1   | 4   | 2  | 3  | 2 | 6  | 6   |
| CAPT B | 4   | 1  | 6  | 3  | 1   | 2   | 3   | 3   | 6   | 3  | 4   | 6   | 4  | 1  | - | 2  | -   |
| CAPT C | 1   | 2  | 5  | 6  | 3   | 2   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5  | ADJ | 2   | 2  | -  | - | 4  | -   |
| CAPT D | 3   | 5  | 3  | 2  | 3   | 4   | 2   | 2   | 4   | CV | -   | 6   | 6  | -  | - | 2  | -   |
| CAPT E | -   | 3  | -  | 3  | PT  | 2   | 3   | 4   | -   | -  | -   | 2   | -  | -  | - | -  | -   |
| CAPT F | -   | -  | -  | JG | -   | -   | -   | -   | -   | -  | -   | -   | -  | -  | - | -  | -   |
| SUB    |     |    |    |    |     |     |     |     |     |    |     |     |    |    |   |    |     |
| PRI    |     |    |    |    |     |     |     |     |     |    |     |     |    |    |   |    |     |

SHYLOCK: JULY L'AF 220 CV 440 GPB 440  
AUG JG 550 PT 660

### THE KING'S RANSOM

This is quasi charity that will ransom back Officers in the regular army. The cost of the ransom must be paid back to the charter within one year otherwise you will be permanently expell from the army regardless of rank and position held. Officers will not be ransom back again should they still own the charter money.

### ATTENTION ALL PLAYERS

NMR:6 GM:2

Rather ridiculous. If you don't want to continue please let me or Tom know. I've adjudicated this month's game as most of you were scheduled for Frontier duty. If I receive the same kind of response for the next adjudication then I'll expell the offending player/s and suspend the game, either to wait for new players or to fold it. It's up to you.

Humm a space. well as this Zine is rather computer orientated I'll do a MICRO TRIVIA

1. What does O.S.I. stand for ?
2. Name it's seven layers ?
3. When the ZX80 was first release, how much free RAM did it had ?
4. Before the C64, Commodore make another range of micros. what are they called ?
5. In standard ASCII, what is the back-space character ?

Answers next time

DIB DIB DIB DIPLOMACY LEAGUE TABLE

((This table was compiled by James Cowie from all Dib games up to and including Quadri. P = games played; D = dropped out; and Pts = points.))

| Pos. |                      | P | D | Pts  | Pos. |                    | P | D | Pts |
|------|----------------------|---|---|------|------|--------------------|---|---|-----|
| 1.   | Mike Close           | 2 | - | 5600 | 58.  | Simon Craddock     | 2 | - | 450 |
| 2.   | Martin Allen         | 4 | 1 | 4000 | =59. | Mark Lipton        | 1 | - | 400 |
| 3.   | Steve Gregory        | 2 | - | 3875 |      | Ulf Jiretorn       | 1 | - | 400 |
| 4.   | Victor Hall          | 2 | - | 3300 |      | Richard Hucknall   | 1 | - | 400 |
| 5.   | Frank Dunn           | 2 | - | 3100 |      | Kenny Adams        | 1 | - | 400 |
| =6.  | John Piggott         | 1 | - | 2800 |      | James Steele       | 1 | - | 400 |
|      | Martin Ives          | 1 | - | 2800 | 64.  | Mike Motely        | 1 | 1 | 400 |
|      | Chris Bartrum        | 1 | - | 2800 | =65. | Jon Rogers         | 1 | 1 | 350 |
|      | Luke Clutterbuck     | 1 | - | 2800 |      | Paul Hopkins       | 1 | 1 | 350 |
|      | Paul Finch           | 1 | - | 2800 | =67. | James Cowie        | 1 | - | 300 |
| 11.  | R.J. Lampard         | 5 | 2 | 2370 |      | Keith Loveys       | 1 | - | 300 |
| =12. | Steve Rennie         | 2 | - | 2120 | 69.  | Chris Steadman     | 2 | 1 | 300 |
|      | Ian Winstanley       | 2 | - | 2120 | =70. | Ian Jago           | 1 | 1 | 300 |
| 14.  | Alan Powis           | 2 | - | 1900 |      | Nick Lourie        | 1 | 1 | 300 |
| 15.  | Alan Sharples        | 2 | - | 1575 |      | S. Bailey          | 1 | 1 | 300 |
| =16. | Jon Moss             | 2 | - | 1375 |      | Mike Pollard       | 1 | 1 | 300 |
|      | Dave Bird            | 2 | 1 | 1375 | =74. | Iain Forsyth       | 1 | - | 200 |
| =18. | Robert Lozynskyj     | 2 | - | 1320 |      | Mike Allaway       | 1 | - | 200 |
|      | Gary Piper           | 3 | 1 | 1320 |      | John Field         | 1 | - | 200 |
| =20. | Nicholas Whyte       | 1 | - | 1300 | =77. | G. Nixey           | 1 | 1 | 200 |
|      | Alan Frost           | 1 | - | 1300 |      | Jaap Jacobs        | 1 | 1 | 200 |
|      | Richard Downes       | 1 | - | 1300 |      | T. Boogert         | 1 | 1 | 200 |
|      | Bill Haygarth        | 1 | - | 1300 | =80. | Mick Bensted       | 1 | - | 150 |
|      | Rob Chapman          | 1 | - | 1300 |      | G. MacLennan       | 1 | - | 150 |
|      | Colin Bruce          | 1 | - | 1300 |      | Piers Shepperson   | 1 | - | 150 |
|      | John Lee             | 1 | - | 1300 | =83. | M. Bell            | 1 | 1 | 150 |
|      | Martin Clifford-King | 1 | - | 1300 |      | P. Haw             | 1 | 1 | 150 |
| 28.  | Richard Wernick      | 3 | - | 1200 |      | W. Shand           | 1 | 1 | 150 |
| =29. | Pete Northcott       | 1 | - | 1075 | =86. | Alan Charlesworth  | 1 | 1 | 150 |
|      | John Wilman          | 1 | - | 1075 |      | S. Nightingale     | 1 | 1 | 150 |
|      | Sandy Peters         | 1 | - | 1075 | 88.  | Daniel Worthington | 1 | - | 100 |
|      | Pete Mearns          | 1 | - | 1075 | =89. | S. Brown           | 1 | 1 | 100 |
| 33.  | William Fisk         | 2 | - | 1050 |      | G. Freeman         | 1 | 1 | 100 |
| 34.  | Chris Sandow         | 4 | 2 | 1000 |      | Mike Deans         | 1 | 1 | 100 |
| =35. | Richard Bass         | 1 | - | 920  |      | Mike Benyon        | 1 | 1 | 100 |
|      | Mick Antrobus        | 1 | - | 920  |      | Chris Williams     | 1 | 1 | 100 |
|      | Julien Shepley       | 1 | - | 920  |      | D. Hudson          | 1 | 1 | 100 |
|      | James Mills-Hicks    | 1 | - | 920  |      | D. Wade            | 1 | 1 | 100 |
|      | John Bycroft         | 1 | - | 920  |      | Paul Morton        | 1 | 1 | 100 |
| =40. | Karl Piper           | 2 | - | 900  |      |                    |   |   |     |
|      | Ian Tillson          | 2 | - | 900  |      |                    |   |   |     |
| =42. | Ralph Baker          | 2 | - | 700  |      |                    |   |   |     |
|      | George Davies        | 2 | 2 | 700  |      |                    |   |   |     |
| =44. | Paul Donley          | 1 | - | 600  |      |                    |   |   |     |
|      | Pete Mason           | 1 | - | 600  |      |                    |   |   |     |
|      | John Cavangh         | 1 | - | 600  |      |                    |   |   |     |
| 47.  | T. Ball              | 1 | 1 | 600  |      |                    |   |   |     |
| 48.  | Dave Fish            | 1 | - | 550  |      |                    |   |   |     |
| 49.  | J. Gibbons           | 1 | 1 | 550  |      |                    |   |   |     |
| =50. | Cathy Cunning (Ozog) | 1 | - | 500  |      |                    |   |   |     |
|      | R. Lewis             | 1 | - | 500  |      |                    |   |   |     |
|      | Nick Hoyle           | 1 | - | 500  |      |                    |   |   |     |
| 53.  | David Crawford       | 2 | - | 500  |      |                    |   |   |     |
| 54.  | A. Moore             | 1 | 1 | 500  |      |                    |   |   |     |
| 55.  | D. Tottley           | 2 | 2 | 500  |      |                    |   |   |     |
| =56. | Gil von Gavel        | 1 | - | 450  |      |                    |   |   |     |
|      | J. Miles             | 1 | - | 450  |      |                    |   |   |     |

Scoring System

1st - 2800  
 2nd - 600  
 3rd - 500  
 4th - 400  
 5th - 300  
 6th - 200  
 7th - 100  
 2-way draw - 2450  
 3-way draw - 1300  
 4-way draw - 1075  
 5-way draw - 920  
 6-way draw - 800  
 7-way draw - 700

Placeings have been judged by No. of units in play once a player has reached 18 units. Perhaps you could add to the score everytime a game is finished. I think it would make the lower places play more - also I think for every drop-out a player should lose 10% of their total for all games; that might reduce drop-outs.

((Cont'd over.....))

((Thanks James - please accept this issue free. In actual fact, this list is interesting not so much for its positional content, but more for the noted number of drop-outs. These in fact almost entirely consist of players attracted to Dib when I was custodian of the CGS (Central Gamestart Service). These players have since drifted away from the hobby never to be seen again. I don't think the result can solely be attributed to Dib as most, if not all, of these players were sent to other zines via CGS gamestarts. (In those days the CGS Custodian collected the whole 7 players and sent them to the next zine on his list - not like these new-fangled Kinzettian type ideas of not charging fee and the single player posted here and there to fill up the odd game!))

As for the positions: well, I must admit that I dislike the idea of drop-outs getting higher placings than the good, solid, reliable players that might finish a game 7th. Surely that can't be right? But then, I'm not doing the stats (I couldn't, I never get the time). So, James, I wouldn't be able to keep this list up to date, but you are welcome to try, for the odd free issue of Dib.)

~~~~~  
 COMPUTER GAMES COMPUTER GAMES COMPUTER GAMES COMPUTER GAMES CO  
 ~~~~~

The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy  
 by Michelle Morris

This is probably the one Infocom adventure that more people have heard about than any of the others. The game was written by Steve Meretzky in conjunction with Douglas Adams, the author of the original trilogy of four (!) Hitchhiker books. Adams wrote the text and devised most of the puzzles and Meretzky turned it all into a computer program. As a result the game has all the charm and wit of the original books/radio series/TV programmes etc. and is to the usual high standard set by the other Infocom games. O.K. So you saw the T.V. series, read the books etc. etc. why play the computer game? The answer is simple. The computer game is based on Adams original ideas but does not follow them slavishly. Familiarity with his other products may help you solve the puzzles in this game but I found that it also tended to confuse because the solution to a problem may differ from that given, for example, in the book.

The game begins with you, as Arthur Dent, lying in bed feeling rather the worse for wear after the party you attended the night before. Your first problem is to get out of bed and deal successfully with your terrible hangover. However today is not going to be your day as you may infer from the large yellow bulldozer approaching your house. Your next task is to stop it demolishing your house to make way for a by-pass. You will receive a visit from your old pal Ford Prefect and if you make it to the local tavern he will tell you the even more awful news that the Earth is about to be demolished! If you are lucky, you and he will survive this terrible catastrophe and your adventures really begin in earnest. One small tip: try to make one of your last acts on Earth an act of kindness to a dumb animal. You won't regret it!

Always supposing you won't make it to the Vogon spaceship you will encounter one of the trickiest problems ever set. That is you have to get a Babel Fish out of the dispenser and into your ear. Why I hear you cry? Babel fish are harmless to humanoids and in return for a nice warm home provide you with a neat translation service! Solving this problem requires several actions and finding them out will provide you with a frustrating half an hour or so. It hardly seems worth it when all that happens is that you are immediately captured by the Vogons and are thrown out into space after being forced to listen to some Vogon poetry. Before making your hasty departure do try to get the contents of the glass case.

It is a fact that you can live for only thirty seconds in a vacuum and it is extremely improbable that you will be rescued in that time. However your luck is changing and you are rescued by the fabulous Heart of Gold spaceship,