

Dolchstoß

No. 269

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Dolchstoß 269 is a regrettably late Diplomacy zine from normally punctual Richard Sharp, Norton House, Whielden St, Amersham, Bucks, HP7 0HU, phone 01494-726148 (home and office) or 0845-127-5297 (fax) or 07770-578605 (mobile), e-mail I just don't know, for the moment you'd better use dolchstoss@rsharp.co.uk, which is working at the moment but *don't trust it!*

DEADLINE

for all games

Friday 14 September 2001

I realize that's a rather tight deadline, but it can't be helped: if I extended it by a week the next one would have to be even tighter (3 weeks) to avoid clashing with Oktoberfest and our likely holiday after that. I will accept late orders for my games received by the following Tuesday morning to give you the extra weekend, though of course I can't guarantee that John will in D 107.

EDITORIAL

Fury as Sharp E-Mail Crashes

I have decided to base my headline style on the *Daily Mail*, where the second word is always "as". I am not, however, going to go to the lengths of using "Diana" as the third word.

This issue is late, a relatively rare event, and I apologize. I've had a bad month. I could blame the delay on the succession of communication problems I've experienced, but it wouldn't be entirely true. The main problem has been work again. I can't really envisage this situation ever improving: if I'm not working a 65-hour week it will be because I'm abroad, spending the proceeds in a more enjoyable way than I can in Amersham.

Then Glyn Palmer and Geoff Tonks both invited themselves over on deadline weekend, which put paid to the slim prospects of my working on the zine when I should have. It also meant that after 11 weeks with too few bridge players we suddenly had too many. I feel it should go on record that I defeated Tonks 2-1 at chess, despite giving away a 4-pint handicap; admittedly he meanly lost the decider on time rather than to a savage mating attack, but I shall feel free to gloat anyway.

Oh yes, the e-mail blues. For various reasons that have nothing to do with my usual incompetence, both fax and e-mail have been unavailable for lengthy periods during the month. The dolchstoss.com address still isn't working. Apparently the company hosting it went bust, as companies do, though it should be back up shortly. Mind you, they were saying that a fortnight ago.

The problem with the e-mail shouldn't have affected the fax, though it initially seemed to. Then I had a message from e-fax, saying that there was a problem with British 0845 numbers. Great. The problem still seems to be continuing, and has caused me great inconvenience and expense, because I have to have some way of receiving faxes for work purposes. Eventually we bought a "cheap" plain paper fax, for £165. Too cheap, because it only accepts a tiny amount of paper at a time, and if it runs out during a message it helpfully loses the remainder of the message. I would advise you only to try to use this in dire emergencies: if you need to you can fax to my phone number, but ring me first.

Not only could you send a fax to my phone, you could also send an e-mail to my TV, though it wouldn't do you any good. I'm not going to tell you how to do it, for two good reasons. One is that I don't want your poxy orders cluttering up my TV screen, and the other is that I haven't the slightest idea how to do it myself. It really is bizarre that in order to get Sky installed we have to have a wire run the length of the house, from phone point to TV, to provide us with something we are never going to use.

Not that Sky itself has been the most dazzling success so far. In the ten days since it arrived, there have been four things I *really* wanted to watch, all on different channels. As we subscribed to the "full package", I am slightly disappointed to find that we can't actually receive any of those four channels. What does a non-full package get you, I wonder. Still, I enjoyed seeing *Badlands* again, and we were very pleasantly surprised to find that we enjoyed *Grand Prix*, despite having no interest whatever in the subject. The crashes were particularly spectacular—one into the harbour at Monaco and one over the banking at Monza. If they made the film today I suppose the crashes would be done with "special-effects" and have no realism whatever.

BRIDGE

We finally started playing again, after an 11-week layoff, and today I almost wished we hadn't. I've had some traumas in my time, but to go two down in 3NT (vulnerable, of course) on a combined 29-count, with at least 6 cards to 2 honours in every suit, must be the low point of my career to date.

♠ A K Q 5
♥ 8 7
♦ A J 9 7
♣ A 4 2



♠ 7 6 4
♥ K J 9 2
♦ Q 3
♣ K Q 10 6

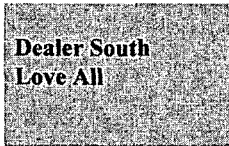
I opened a strong club as West, 1♥ from partner showed 6+ points and fewer than 3 controls, 1NT from me was 18-20, 2♣ Stayman, 2♠ natural. Now Bron introduced a diversion by bidding 3♣, which theoretically shows a mild slam try with 4 hearts and at least 5 clubs. With my good controls I gave it a look, as they say, but settled for the safe game. Ho bloody ho.

If Vic had understood the bidding he would no doubt have led a diamond (effectively the only unbid suit) but he hadn't been listening and led ♣7. I won ♣K in dummy—the fatal error as it turned out—and led ♦Q, covered by Dave's K and my A. Now I ran ♥8, losing to the 10, and a spade came back. I won and took another heart finesse, losing to the Q. Back comes another spade, and I am beginning to get bad feelings about this easy hand. I cashed the last top spade, and North showed out. I cashed ♣A and led another, Vic following. Surely, I thought (and said), not even Vic would lead from Jxxx through dummy's announced long suit? I went up with the Q, and South showed out. Fatalistically, I finessed ♦9. It lost, and Vic cashed his club and then put his partner in to score a spade and a heart. Yuk.

I thought I was unlucky: my line is about 97%, I make it. But if you win the first club in hand, then play on hearts, I think it's impossible to go down.

I don't get them all wrong. I enjoyed this one:

♠ A 4
♥ J 7 4
♦ K Q 10 8 6
♣ K 9 3



♠ J 9 7 3
♥ A 10 8 3
♦ 7 4 2
♣ Q 5

Dave opened 1♣ as South, I overcalled 1♦ and Bron raised to 2♦. Dave tried 2♥, and I soldiered on with 3♦, which everyone passed, Dave reluctantly. Vic led ♥6, to the 3, Q, J, and Dave exited with ♦A and another. A club to the Q lost to Dave's A, and a club came back. Now you can actually make this impossible-looking contract: ruff the last club, return to ♠A, draw Vic's last trump and cash the last two diamonds. South is known to be 2-4-2-5; if he throws his three winning clubs he is no doubt keeping ♠K and ♥Kx, so you play a spade to the J and he has to lead into dummy's hearts. Of course, when South has ♠KQ doubleton you can make it simply by ducking the second round of spades, but that's boring.

LETTER COLUMN

GEOFF CHALLINGER

West Bridgford

Well, the least I can do is reward your patience with a cheque. I almost see a sub to *Dolchstoss* as some contribution to a crumbling edifice, rather like forking out the "recommended contribution" to go round an old cathedral. I still get enjoyment out of most issues and may even occasionally glance at all this bridge crap.

Anyway here's some of my money. Zine production does benefit from damn good cashflow doesn't it, even if nothing else about it makes financial sense!

RS: True enough! And I rather like the idea of Dolchstoß being an old cathedral. It's certainly produced in a crumbling edifice, and I suppose the editor could be said to be one as well.

HARRY ANDRUSCHAK

Torrance, CA

Dolchstoss #268 has arrived. My apologies for not being active in your letter column, but I have been fighting a serious medical problem that required me to have an orchiectomy on 14 May. It worked in the sense that my PSA is down to 0.3 and I will not die of prostate cancer like Poul Anderson did a couple of days ago. However, I am now in the process of adjusting my life to my new condition, with the help of a slew of therapists and counselors, not to mention the AA fellowship.

But all this has convince me that the time has come to phase out of PBM permanently. Just cannot trust my health anymore.

RS: I'm really sorry to hear it, Harry. You've still got some credit left, and I'll keep sending the zine unless you tell me not to. Meanwhile, sincere best wishes for better times.

ALAN POWIS

Willenhall

Hopefully you should have received an e-mail asking you to put me on the waiting list for a game. I say "hopefully" because I was not too sure that the system was working correctly. A message appeared on the screen telling me that the function was not available, but the e-mail still appeared on the "e-mails sent" list. If it did not arrive do put me down on the waiting list.

We are waiting to exchange contracts and will be moving to Wellingborough, Northants, in the not too distant future. I will still be working in the Luton area and it will mean a fair round trip each day to and from work. The intention is to stay teaching in Luton for another 12 months then find a job closer to home. There should be plenty of choice in the Northants area for a science teacher. I must say that preparing this move is a major pain in the butt and I will not want to do this too often, if ever again.

RS: I didn't get your e-mail. See Editorial for the likely reason why.

So, after all this time I shall have to try to remember to delete Willenhall from my "user dictionary" (unless another reader decides to move there, of course).

We've been in postal communication for an alarming number of years, Alan, and I get the impression that you have had a more than usually varied selection of jobs. Weren't you a bookie in a previous existence? And a local councillor? And ...

How many years is it, anyway? Twenty-five? Good grief, it all makes me feel old, which is fair enough.

RICHARD WILLIAMS

Fareham

As you haven't responded to what the game end proposal in D 100 is, I have had to generalise in my vote. As for the moves, if both countries do convoy me to Syr and I get it, I wonder how many times England has been on three centres and got an army into Turkey, having never occupied a centre in Germany, Italy, Russia, Austria or the Balkans.

RS: Sadly, this entertaining situation didn't come about because Andy welsched on his part of the convoy arrangements. I do remember a game where Turkey's last centre was Bul and his last unit was F(Cly).

I don't understand this query about the draw proposal. You apparently knew what it was and voted on it the previous season; I say it's been proposed again, and now you don't know what it is?

GEOFF CHALLINGER

West Bridgford

I very nearly got around to sending in a top ten films thing, but realised that my tastes would not match - and so it transpired. I find that very highly-rated old films often turn out to be just a little bit dull. I can't see the fuss over *Casablanca*, *Citizen Kane* was a bit dull and the only western I enjoyed was *Blazing Saddles*.

Love and Death, Pulp Fiction, A Night at the Opera, Dressed to Kill, Aliens, Rear Window, The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie, Witness, Some Like It Hot and Seven spring to mind. Yes, some of them are lightweight, but none the worse for that. *Love and Death* remains my favourite film, purely because it still cracks me up and I've seen it at least a dozen times. As you can see, I like my thrillers ominous and threatening rather than gruesome. The Sam Peckinpah school of film-making leaves me cold. If you haven't seen *Seven* then that's worth the trip to the video shop if only to marvel at how such a deeply unpleasant and nasty story can be told in a way that isn't violent or gory.

RS: I doubt if we shall ever go to the cinema-together, Geoff! We hated Seven so much we went to bed half way through, while Blazing Saddles is one of the half-dozen films I've walked out of. As for Love and Death, I'd never heard of it, but on looking it up I find it's Woody Allen, so I won't be seeing that one either!

What I find rather surprising is that Geoff (and others), while finding the idea of interest, didn't contribute because they expected to be out of tune with the mainstream. Well, a) so what? and b) the mainstream turned out to flow in some unexpected channels anyway. At this rate I shall have to run the programme again with the late entrants included.

BRIAN FREW

Bolton

Regarding "computer faxes": not everyone knows that they can end a fax via their computer. If you want, I can send you the instructions on how to do it, so that other readers can do likewise.

RS: But surely there are as many sets of instructions as there are fax software packages? As a matter of fact, the fewer faxes I receive the happier I am, especially after the events of the past month.

JONATHAN PALFREY

Sitges

Microsoft Word is usable but I don't like it very much, and in my experience other technical writers rarely have a good word to say for it. It's for business people writing letters and short reports, it's slow and clumsy and unreliable with long or complex documents. Microsoft never really understood professional publishing. I've also had so much trouble using it to print envelopes that I've given up trying by now: I do it with FrameMaker, or hand-write them.

When I installed my English version of Word on Ana's computer (which has Windows 98 in Spanish) she started to get a horrible mix of English and Spanish cropping up in other places unrelated to Word. I'm currently still willing to use Windows but I'm increasingly unwilling to use Microsoft applications if I can possibly avoid doing so.

RS: The trouble is, you see, that none of my customer will now accept anything except Word or, in one case, something called Powerpoint. So Bill Gates has got his monopoly, at least as far as the translation industry is concerned. And a good thing too, in my view: it would be a nightmare if I had to buy, install and learn a dozen word processors to cope with individual foibles - yours, for instance!

I've never tried to print envelopes as such—I'm sure I wouldn't be able to cope! I still print labels the way I always have: produce a text file from the address database using a Basic programme, paste it into Word and run a macro to fit it to the labels. This is quick and seems to work very well.

DOMINIC SHARP

Old Basing

At last you are talking about computery things that I understand, namely Excel. Excel, whilst absolutely beautiful in many areas, is a bit crap with dates. However, I think that your problem can be solved by customising your date formats. Highlighting the relevant cell, select Format - Cells and then the Number tab on the Format Cells form. Then select Custom on the list (not Date which gives largely useless pre-customised formats). In the scroll-down list, you should see something like dd/mm/yyyy or something similar. If not, you can add it to the list by typing into the line below Type: on the form.

RS: After further discussion, and payment of the usual fee (Chicken jalfrezi on this occasion), Dominic's method worked, up to a point. But it seems, bizarrely, to be impossible to have a column in mm/yy format unless you have another column with the full date to be abbreviated. This, unfortunately, makes what I want to do impossible.

JONATHAN PALFREY

Sitges

On the subject of ANSI.SYS and your local guru's opinion that Windows no longer supports it: I see that Windows 98 comes with a copy of ANSI.SYS, and it would be odd to provide the file without any way of using it. On my system, it's in the C:\WINDOWS\COMMAND folder. I'm guessing that you use Windows 98.... We use Windows NT at work, so I can investigate that too if you like.

Microsoft seems to have given up providing any documentation on these old DOS things, but if you remember how to use ANSI.SYS from before then I imagine the method hasn't changed.

I'm planning to move to Windows XP soon after it's released, as it looks like a worthwhile improvement and will also join together the two strands of Windows at last (the latest versions of which are currently Windows Me and Windows 2000). I haven't upgraded to Windows Me as it seems to offer little extra; in the past I've thought about using Windows NT or 2000 at home, but never done so, because some software (mostly games) doesn't work under those systems, and because it's seemed like an unnecessary expense.

But I'm keen to get Windows XP, mainly because it seems to offer much better support for image files. It will apparently be possible to look at thumbnails and play slideshows using only the operating system's facilities, and it will be possible to store extra information about each file - not just the filename, size, and last modification date, but whatever else you like. So, for each photo I could store in which country it was taken, who appears in it, the date it was taken, etc. And I could search for that information and sort by that information. Very handy to have all that built into the operating system. If it all works, I'll give Microsoft credit for doing something useful for once.

On the subject of Internet connections, I finally looked at the Telefónica Web site, and found that they offer an ADSL service, at three different speeds and cost levels. The cheapest is several times faster than a conventional modem, it's always on so you never have to wait for a connection, and you can use the same phone line for voice at the same time. It costs a flat rate of about £28 a month, which is not cheap but at least affordable. Quite interesting.

For writing CDs I use Easy CD Creator from Roxio (formerly Adaptec), which seems to be the market leader, though your Nero Burning program is also quite popular (Ana's father uses it). I back up to ordinary write-once CDs myself: they're cheap, and I then have the added security of keeping every backup, rather than overwriting them. I back up all my personal data files every month or two; I don't bother to back up software because I can just reinstall it from the original CD that it came on in the event of any disaster.

Every day, I back up to Zip disk any personal data files that have changed or been added since the last CD backup.

I've never used spreadsheets. If I want to perform certain calculations repeatedly, I write a little program to do it. A programming language is a more general-purpose tool than a spreadsheet. I can see that spreadsheets can be useful for some people's requirements, but I don't think they are for mine. Mind you, I have occasionally used the spreadsheet-like facilities in Word for adding up columns of figures in a document.

RS: Yes, I do have a copy of ansi.sys supplied with the machine, and like you I can't see why they would supply something that can't be used, but ...

I know how it worked on my old machine: there was a line in config.sys that read "devicehigh /L: 1,9072 = c:\windows\command\ansi.sys". I've tried putting that on the new computer, but it doesn't seem to work. I could easily be putting it in the wrong place, of course: config.sys is a much larger file on this computer than it used to be, with numerous sections, and I don't understand it at all.

My local man was pretty positive that it won't run, but he admits to not knowing a lot about DOS, so I guess he could be wrong. Anyone know the trick, if there is one?

Incidentally, I'm using Windows ME, which I think is pretty similar to 98, isn't it?

I'm getting on a bit better with the backup problem now. Backing up data files to CD is certainly convenient once you can do it: the big advantage is it's so fast getting something back if you need it. My only remaining problem is that I don't know how to clear a CD when I don't want the data on it any more: "format" doesn't work, so if you accidentally get too much data on one CD, it might just as well be a once-only one, because you can't use it again anyway!

GEOFF CHALLINGER
West Bridgford

If you ever get aggro from the Revenue concerning self-employed status then call me. It's the area where I can probably best help you on *Who Wants to be a Millionaire*, although I think it's unlikely I'll be getting a call from Chris Tarrant about the implications of Hall v. Lorimer and how it is distinguished from Fall v. Hitchen. Suffice it to say that although local Revenue offices are often swayed by your having more than one customer, they shouldn't be. We have clients who have been working under a contract 52 weeks a year dancing in *Cats* (say). You wouldn't think this arrangement gave one much scope for independent action really, but the terms of the contract work out as self-employed.

The question is, are you committed to obeying orders in the work you take? If your "employer" says you have to translate this by next Thursday, can you say, "Sod that, I'm off to the Vendée, mate" with no serious problems? If so then you have sufficient freedom of action to avoid phrases like "master/servant relationship" being bandied about. Having a dozen customers when 11 of them are just a smokescreen for one big one just hide the problem from slower-witted Inspectors. Still I'm sure your main "employer" are only too happy to phrase things for you so as to avoid having to pay their employer NI anyway.

Tony Sait has quite good customer-payment speeds. 6 months is a little bit long but fine if it's an exception and the idea of hassling an accounts department and getting paid the following month is positively Nirvana.

Mind you I can empathise with the strangeness of cashflow. We've grown sufficiently that when I swan off there are other people working and sending out bills but once upon a time you could never quite relate the amount of effort you were putting in with the amount of money that arrived, because individual payment speeds made for too much unpredictability. So you worked like a Trojan and nothing happened and then you sat around watching the Test match and money comes in. Crazy.

RS: That's an interesting point about your hypothetical dancer: I'd never thought of that. My position is quite different in that 90% of my work is wanted back within a week or less, but of course there must be many people who habitually work on long contracts.

I have complete freedom of action, really. The only restriction on me is the perfectly normal and obvious one, that once I've accepted a job I'm committed to doing it. No one can ever tell me to do a job, only offer it: after all, it quite often happens that I reject a job for some reason (too technical, too financial or even too boring, though I don't put it quite like that!

I have a sort of gentlemen's agreement about holidays: I give them plenty of notice when I'm going and I complete any work I've got in hand. A few years ago, when I was working in the office most of the time, my "application for leave" was turned down. I said to the MD, "Look, sorry about this, but I wasn't actually asking you, I was telling you." She thought about it for a moment and then said, "Yes, I suppose you can just bugger off whenever you like, really."

That's exactly right about cashflow: it's quite disconcerting. I worked immensely hard in May and the first half of June, and received bugger all. Then I went breezing around Europe for three and a half weeks and came back to find a bulging bank account (which was just as well by that stage).

RICHARD WILLIAMS

Fareham

As for the shambles that is England's cricket team, I realise they have had a few injuries and Australia are extremely good, but why do selectors continually choose total dross? Are they aware they can choose bowlers that don't play for Yorkshire and batsmen who don't play for Surrey? Would Ian Ward have played for England if he had played for any country other than Surrey? How must Robin Smith feel, when the England middle order who can't average 25 keep being given chance after chance, yet he was dumped 6 years ago with an average close to 44 because he couldn't play Shane Warne. If Smith played for Surrey he would have almost been a permanent fixture in the side. I am not saying he should be in now. But surely the two best England batsmen in the country at the moment are Fulton of Kent and Montgomerie of Sussex. Whether they are good enough for England, I don't know, but they are scoring runs. They also can't be any worse than the players who keep being chosen and failing. What has been proven is that two-league cricket has made no difference to the standard at all.

RS: Written before the "miracle of Headingley", of course. I couldn't help noticing that on the day the team for Headingley was announced, Hick and Crawley scored 500 between them in county games ... and both of them can play Warne, which Smith admittedly can't. As it turned out, Warne wasn't much of a factor at Headingley, though it was obvious that he would be at the Oval.

Now that Butcher has played a blinder, and even Ramprakash has made a century on a plumb wicket, the middle order doesn't look quite so fragile, though Ramprakash blotted his copybook by getting himself out in foolish fashion just when the job had so nearly been done.

Fulton is having a good season, but last year he averaged only 23 for Kent. Montgomerie seems to have improved since being relieved of the burden of playing in my fantasy XI. But I don't see either of them as being the answer: they are both 30, and anyone good enough for Test cricket usually shows it long before that age.

ADRIEN BAIRD

London E 17

So on D268, page 5 we learn "...[none of] the ... Belgians ... stay at home (equally understandable) ...". Well, it is understandable but I doubt whether you understand it, given the context of the statement. The point is, my dear Sharp, as I constantly have to remind you, is that Europe's best food is to be found in Belgium. If Belgian chefs go on holiday, the whole country follows them. It's that simple. Indeed, this was a point that I discussed with your departed father, who was keen to ensure his visits to the country he recognised as having unparalleled gastronomic excellence did not coincide with this annual exodus.

Let us have no more of this unsubstantiated nonsense from you.

RS: Go on with you, you old Walloon. The picture of a horde of Belgian chefs galloping off to the Riviera, pursued by the rest of the population, is an attractive one, but a touch

fanciful. As for my father, I think he was just being characteristically courteous—I don't recall that he ever visited Belgium except as a place to go through to get to Germany!

At least my holiday reports are appreciated somewhere, even if only within the family:

MARY SHARP

Richmond

(b) the good health and (c) a suitably affluent companion to be able to do similar travels.

Have really enjoyed reading about your holiday and am deeply envious. I hope that when I retire I will have (a) the money,

RS: *Yes, an affluent companion would be a great help!*

JONATHAN PALFREY

Sitges

Swiss wine. When I was in Switzerland I noticed that the local wine seemed quite decent, but it never seems to be on sale in any other country: apparently the Swiss drink all of it.

Thanks for your holiday report. You don't seem to mention

We're planning to spend next week in Valladolid. I've been there a few times already and have no particular desire to visit again, but Ana grew up there and likes to go back occasionally. By an odd coincidence, it's the home town of the leaders of both of the main Spanish political parties. As usual, we can get cheap hotel accommodation thanks to the influence of Ana's father.

RS: *Swiss wine has the reputation of not travelling, but what really doesn't travel is the price! Why would a Frenchman, say, pay a minimum of £5 for a bottle of admittedly decent red, when he can get an equivalent national one for half that? The only place I've ever drunk Swiss wine outside Switzerland was the Swiss Centre in Leicester Square, where they didn't sell anything else. Is that still in business, I wonder?*

BRIAN FREW

Bolton

Regarding Jonathan's mention of sailing: I'm sold on it! We went up to Mallaig to visit some very old friends during the holidays, and they took us sailing on their catamaran over to Skye. We visited what is billed as the "remotest pub in Britain" (i.e. there is no road to it). The girls and I thoroughly enjoyed it, but unfortunately I don't think my wife thinks I need another hobby!

RS: *Curiously, there used to be a pub very near here with no road: it could be reached by a footpath from Shardeloes (Amersham's former manor house), and existed mainly to serve the large staff there. When Shardeloes was sold and converted to luxury flats, the pub closed.*

DOMINIC SHARP

Old Basing

You might want to warn *Dolchstoss's* readership about the nastinesses of Sky Digital. I don't like the way that they operate and it grieves me to give them £30 every month but until Blair takes Murdoch on, we are stuck with it.

RS: *Yes, it grieves me too. But I don't hold out any hope of improvement: I can't immediately think of a single useful thing this government has done since it first came to power, and I don't see why it should start now.*

D 97 (1998-BB)

Spring 1920

DR: 1518.44

AND THAT'S THE END OF THAT

I Think

GERMANY (Richard II Williams) F(NAO) & F(IRI) & F(ENG) S F(Bre)-MAO
A(Gas)-Spa A(Bur)-Mar A(Ruh) S A(Kie)-Mun F(BAL) S A(Liv) S A(StP)-Mos
A(Mun)-Boh A(Pru) S A(Sil)-War

RUSSIA (Les Greener) A(Sev) S A(Mos) & A(Gal) & A(Ukr) S A(War) A(Boh) stands

AUSTRIA (Peter Dunnett) F(Ank)-BLA A(Con)-Bul A(Gre)-Bul A(Ser)-Bul

ITALY (Neil Dixon) A(Pie) MS A(Mar) A(Ven) S A(Tyr) & A(Vie) S RUSSIAN A(Boh)
F(NAI) S F(MAO)-WES F(Spa)(sc) S FRENCH F(Por)

FRANCE (Paul McGivern) F(Por) S *ITALIAN* F(MAO)

Retreats:

Bedbug Island: We had four unconditional votes for the draw, and one conditional upon Italian F(MAO) successfully "retreating". Well, Neil didn't exactly retreat from MAO, he withdrew, which I think is too subtle a difference to keep the game going! And so I declare this long-running event at an end.

Final statements for next time, please. And if you can produce them in any form that saves me retyping them (typed letter in a large, clear font, or e-mail in any font you like), that will vastly improve the chances of them being published next time and me extracting a half of bitter out of Peter!

Moscow-World: Russian Minister for Geography has indeed been sacked and banished to the depths of Alaska (or should that be Siberia?)

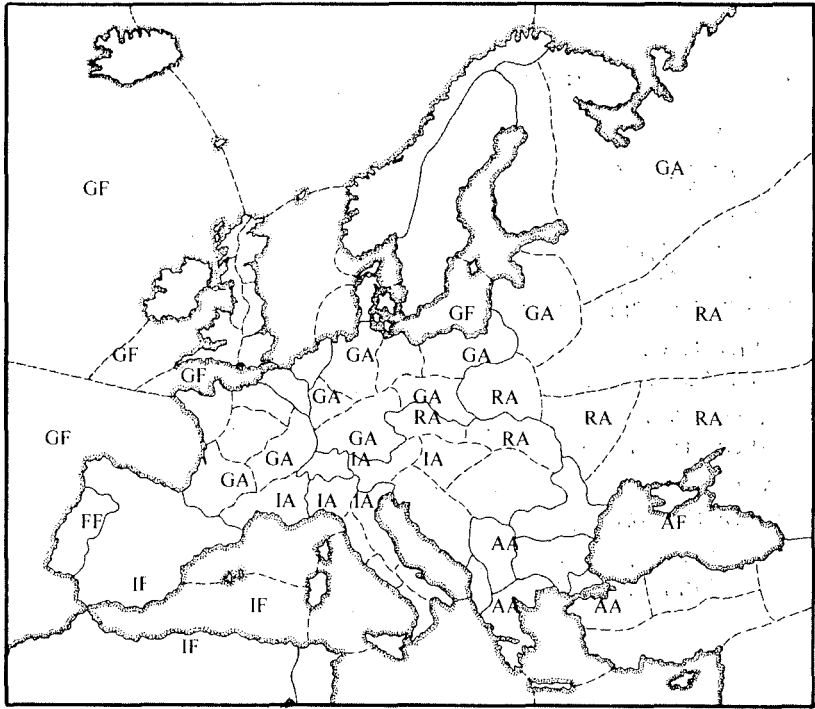
Shock as England Wins Test Match

OK, all right, I seem to have been wrong about Butcher, it was a fine innings. I hope due credit is also given to Gilchrist for his splendid declaration. It all went wrong for him, but it was the way cricket should be played: if you give yourself the maximum chance of winning, you will win a lot and lose a few. I believe the Australians have now gone 22 Tests without a draw, and that is hugely to their credit. Now for the Oval, where England have occasionally won great games in the past and Australia will certainly be keen to win this time. I hope they achieve their 23rd consecutive non-draw and that it's a good game of cricket.

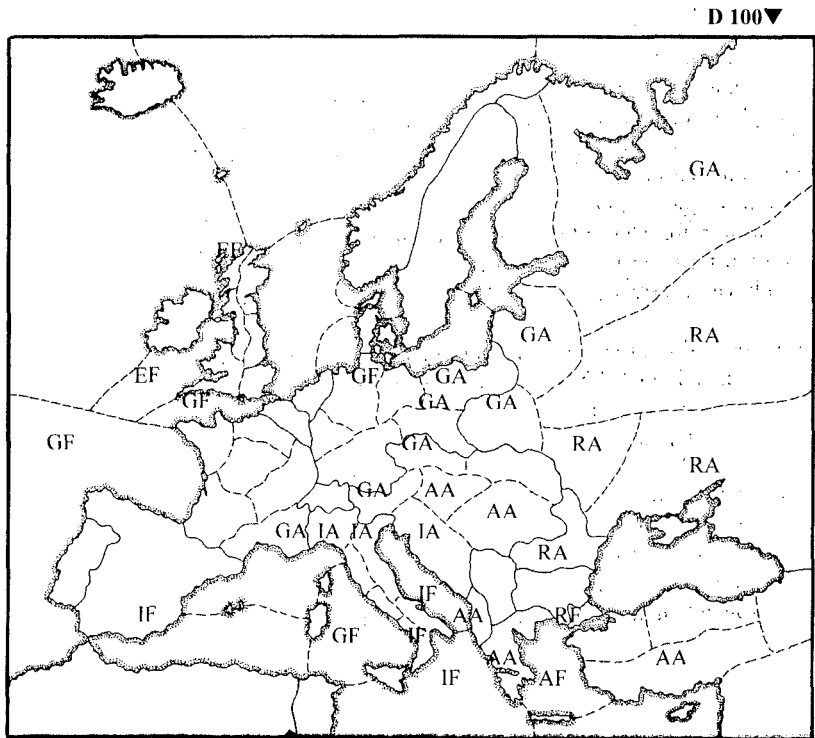
I expect all cricket enthusiasts saw Bradman's "dream XI" in *The Times*. I've lost the paper now, but I think it was B. Richards, Morris, Bradman (well, what was he supposed to do, drop himself?), Tendulkar, Sobers, Tallon, Lindwall, Lillee, Bedser, O'Reilly and Grimmett, with Wally Hammond as twelfth man.

This has a few names in common with my own dream team, which when I last published it went B. Richards, Hobbs, Bradman, Pollock, Sobers, Miller, Evans, Laker, Lock, Lindwall, Lillee, an alliterative attack if ever there was one. I was particularly pleased to see the ultimate cricket authority agreeing with this humble one that Barry Richards was one of the best two openers ever, despite only being allowed by the loony left to play four Test matches.

The only trouble with Sir Donald's team, it seems to me, is that Sobers is never going to get a bowl, which seems a waste.



D 97▲



D 100▼

D 100

(1998-BV)

Spring 1916

DR: 2395.83

ALBANIAN REFUGEES LEFT TO THEIR FATE

Italian Navy Blamed

ENGLAND (Richard Williams) F(Cly) & F(IRI) stand A(Alb)-Syr*

GERMANY (Geoff Tonks) F(BAL)-Kie A(Liv) & A(Pru) S A(Gal)-War A(StP)-Mos
A(Sil) S A(Boh)-Gal A(Gas)-Mar A(Tyr)-Vie F(ENG) S F(Bre)-MAO
F(ION)* C ENGLISH A(Alb)-Syr

RUSSIA (Brian Frew) A(Sev) S A(Mos) S ENGLISH F(IRI)-Mun A(Ukr)-Rum
A(War)-Ukr F(Bul)(sc) S AUSTRIAN F(AEG)

AUSTRIA (Steve Jones) A(Gre) S A(Ser)-Alb A(Bud) S A(Vie)-Gal A(Smy) stands
F(AEG) S ITALIAN F(EAS)-ION

ITALY (Andy Holborn) A(Apu)-Ven F(Nap)-Apu F(ADS)-Apu F(Spa)(sc) stands
A(Tri) S AUSTRIAN A(Vie) F(EAS)-ION A(Ven)-Pie

Retreats: ENGLISH A(Alb) annihilated
GERMAN F(ION)-TYS

*

Bedbug Island: The 5-way draw proposal was defeated—4 in favour, 1 against. It has been repropoed, same conditions. For the benefit of Confused of Fareham, it is still a 5-way draw we are voting on.

NONSHOCK AS ENGLAND LOSE TEST

I've just watched the last ball of the Ashes series, fittingly bowled by McGrath, who has dominated the series throughout. And yet, fine bowler as he certainly is, you can't help feeling that Test batsmen ought to be able to play him. Once again, the England batting folded up pitifully in the second innings, with some of the tail, notably Gough, displaying far more guts than the middle order, and not noticeably inferior technique.

I knew Warne was going to be a problem at the Oval, and if I knew one would expect the England selectors to. The only two batsmen in England who can cope with Warne when he's bowling on top form are Crawley and Hick, and both should have played at the Oval (admittedly they probably can't cope with McGrath, but then nor can anyone else except the reincarnation of Butcher).

Atherton had a miserable series, out of form and out of luck, given out at least three times when he wasn't, and bowled by one of Warne's unplayable specials at the Oval. Trescothick batted well, though tending to get himself out just when you thought he was going to play a really big innings. Ufzaal, Ramprakash, Ward, etc., are just cannon-fodder to people like McGrath and Warne, and I would have added Butcher to that if I hadn't witnessed the apotheosis at Headingley, which I must admit staggered me. Stewart is still worth his place as a good keeper who can bat a bit. The bowlers are probably as good as we have, just not as good as Australia's: Caddick and Gough bowl too many loose ones, McGrath bowls almost none, and it makes a huge difference. Ormonde, another veteran of my fantasy XI, looked useful, and could well develop into an all rounder. But oh, for someone young with the real talent ... it's been a long, long time.

D 104

(1999-BU)

Autumn 1909

DR:1369.69

SCHIZOPHRENIA SINKS GERMAN FLEET

Serious Consequences Feared

ENGLAND (Roger Collins) F(ENG) S F(MAO)-Bre F(Por)-Spa(nc)

GERMANY (Howard Galloway) F(BAL) S F(Ber) F(NWG) stands unordered F(NTH)-Nor
F(NTH)-Bel A(Nor)-Swe A(Kie) S A(Mun) A(Hol)-Ruh

RUSSIA (Wayne Read) A(Vie) & A(Boh) S A(Tri)-Tyr A(Ser) S A(Bud)-Tri A(Sil)-Mun
F(AEG) S F(Gre)-ION A(Liv)-StP A(Pru)-Ber A(Fin)-Nor A(Sev)-Arm
F(BLA)-Con

TURKEY (Anarchy) F(Ank) stands unordered

ITALY (Mark Brown) F(ADS) S F(ION) A(Tyr)* S A(Ven) A(Mar)-Spa F(Spa)(sc)-WES

FRANCE (David Barnes) A(Bre) MS A(Gas) A(Bur)-Bel

Retreats: ITALIAN A(Tyr)-Pie

*

Gains and losses:

ENGLAND Lon, Lpl, Por = 3 No change

GERMANY Ber, Mun, Kie, Den, Swe, Nor, Hol, Edi = 7 GM removes F(NTH)

RUSSIA Mos, War, Sev, Rum, Bud, Smy, Bul, Con, Ser, Gre, Vie, Tri, StP + Nor = 14 Builds
F(Sev)

TURKEY Ank = 1 No change

ITALY Rom, Nap, Ven, Tun, Mar, Spa = 6 No change

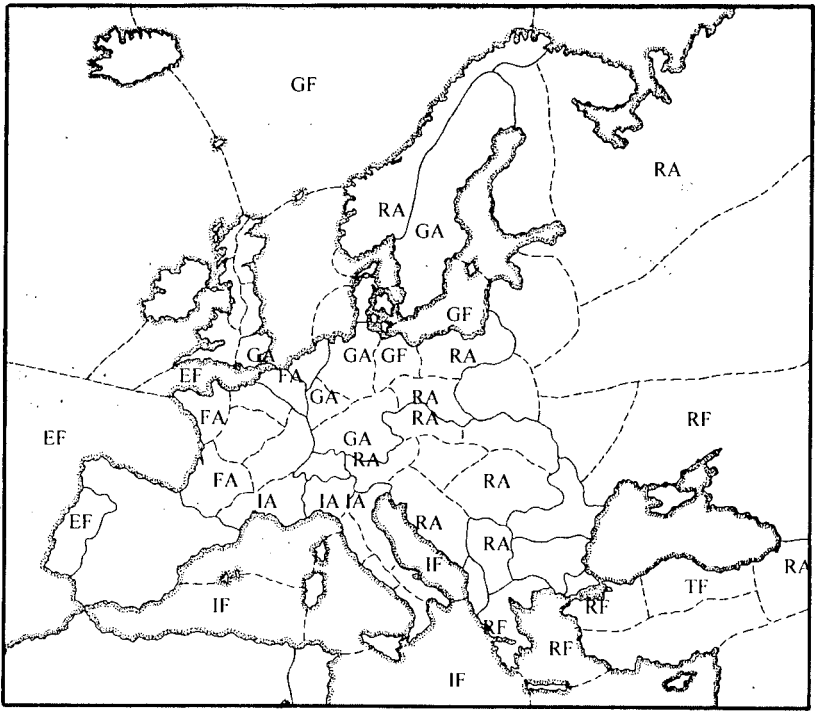
FRANCE Par, Bel, Bre = 3 No change

THE STATSMAN COMETH NOT

My impassioned-(ish) plea last issue for someone to relieve me of the stats brought a less than overwhelming response. Actually, it brought no response at all. Seems a pity, after 30 years of effort by various people, but I just can't fit it in any more. Indeed, I haven't even transferred the files from the old computer, just to make quite sure I'm not tempted. That's why there are no Boardman numbers for recent games, and why the ratings above the games never change any more, and maybe never will again (though I could probably be persuaded to keep the ratings going if someone else was providing the material).

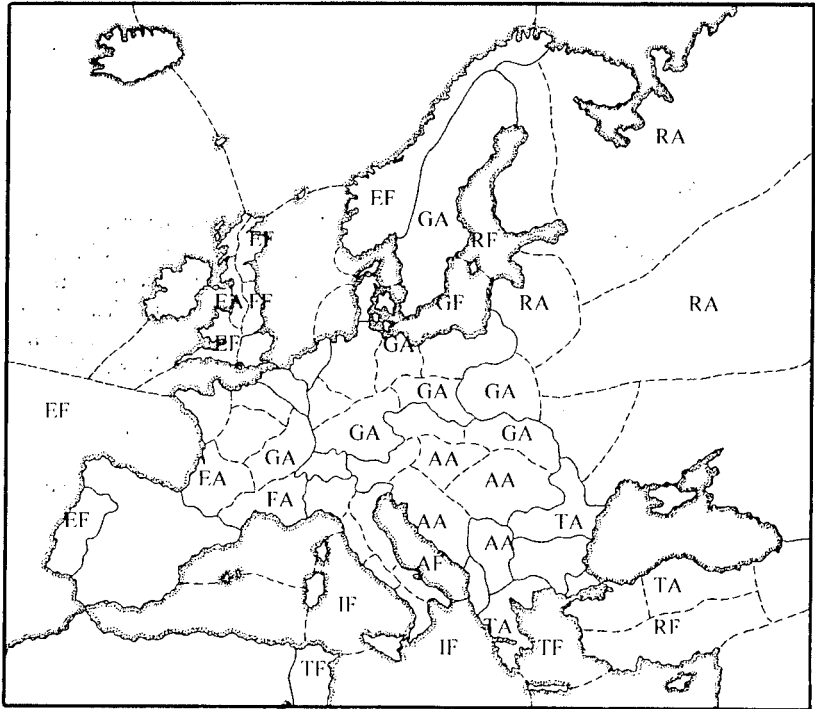
It isn't actually a lot of work nowadays, though it used to be. My problem is more one of organization than of time: since I began working at home full time, the study has shrunk alarmingly, with three in-trays instead of one, dictionaries everywhere ... keeping track of incoming zines is just a stack of paper too far.

Well, not a lot I can do about it.



D 104▲

D 105▼



D 105

(2000-BL)

Autumn 1905

DR:1256.35

TSAR MURDERED IN HIS SLEEP

Plenty of Suspects

ENGLAND (John Marsden) F(Wal)-Lon A(Bre)-Gas F(MAO)-Spa(sc)
F(Por)-Spa(nc) F(NTH)-Edi F(Nor) S GERMAN A(Swe)

GERMANY (Roger Collins) A(Mun) stands A(Sil) & A(Gal) S A(Pru)-War. A(Bur)-Mar
F(BAL)-Liv A(Swe) stands

RUSSIA (Mike Dean) NMR! F(GOB), A(StP), A(Mos), A(War)*, A(Liv), F(Smy) &
A(Rum)* stand unordered

TURKEY (Tony Sait) F(AEG)-Smy F(Tun) S *ITALIAN* F(ION)-TYS A(Bul)-Rum
A(Gre) S AUSTRIAN A(Tri)-Ser

AUSTRIA (Guy Kent) F(ADS) stands A(Vie) S A(Bud) S TURKISH A(Bul)-Rum
A(Tri)-Ser

ITALY (Brian Barber) F(ION)-Tun F(Rom)-TYS

FRANCE (Graham Smith) F(Yor)-Lon A(Mar) stands

Retreats: RUSSIAN A(War) disbanded by GM
RUSSIAN A(Rum) ditto

*

Gains and losses:

ENGLAND Lpl, Edi, Bel, Nor, Bre, Spa + Por = 7 Builds A(Lpl)

GERMANY Ber, Mun, Kie, Den, Hol, Swe, Par + War = 8 Builds A(Ber)

RUSSIA StP, Mos, ~~War~~, Sev, ~~Rum~~, Con, ~~Bud~~, Smy = 5 No change

TURKEY Ank, Gre, Bul, Tun + Rum = 5 Builds A(Ank)

AUSTRIA Vie, Tri, Ser, Ven + Bud = 5 Builds A(Tri)

ITALY Rom, Nap = 2 No change

FRANCE Mar, ~~Por~~, Lon = 2 No change

*

Turkey - GM: I KNOW I must take the adjudication not the map, and I KNOW there isn't really an English fleet in North Africa, but having its ghostly shadow there for two consecutive seasons is very unnerving for us religious, superstitious Turkish types. Could Allah please intervene, with a higher power, the great GM, to have it erased. Please.

Rome: Stay back, I might get nasty!

Turkey-P.C.P. (Political Correctness Police): I am not, as perhaps indicated above, suggesting there is a higher power than Allah. This is merely a weak attempt at humour suggesting the GM has supernatural powers. Please do not pronounce a Fatwah upon me.

Turkey - Austria: Let's hope WE can work together even though other less trustworthy types keep on their nefarious ways.

Turkey-Russia: Curious silence considering you have made a major stabbing...

D 106 (2001-??) *Autumn 1901* **DR:1256.35**

TURKEY TAKES BLACK SEA ... BRIEFLY

Everyone Defends Against Italy ... Unnecessarily

- ENGLAND (Simon Macbeth) F(NTH) C & F(NWG) S A(Edi)-Nor
- GERMANY (Mike Dean) F(Den)-Swe A(Ruh) S A(Kie)-Hol
- RUSSIA (Richard Scholefield) F(GOB)-Swe A(StP)-Nor A(Ukr) S F(Sev)-Rum
- TURKEY (Tony Reeves) F(Ank)-BLA A(Bul)-Rum A(Con)-Bul
- AUSTRIA (Tony Sait) A(Ser) S F(Alb)-Gre A(Tri) stands
- ITALY (Howard Galloway) F(ION)-Tun A(Ven) & A(Pie) stand
- FRANCE (Guy Kent) F(MAO)-Por A(Gas)-Spa A(Bur)-Mar

Retreats: none

*

Gains and losses:

- ENGLAND Lon, Lpl, Edi + Nor = 4 Builds F(Lon)
- GERMANY Ber, Mun, Kie + Den, Hol = 5 Builds F(Kie), A(Mun)
- RUSSIA StP, Mos, War, Sev + Rum = 5 Builds F(Sev)
- TURKEY Con, Ank, Smy + Bul = 4 Builds A(Ank)
- AUSTRIA Vie, Tri, Bud + Ser, Gre = 5 Builds A(Bud), A(Vie)
- ITALY Rom, Nap, Ven + Tun = 4 Builds F(Nap)
- FRANCE Par, Mar, Bre + Spa, Por = 5 Builds A(Par), F(Bre)

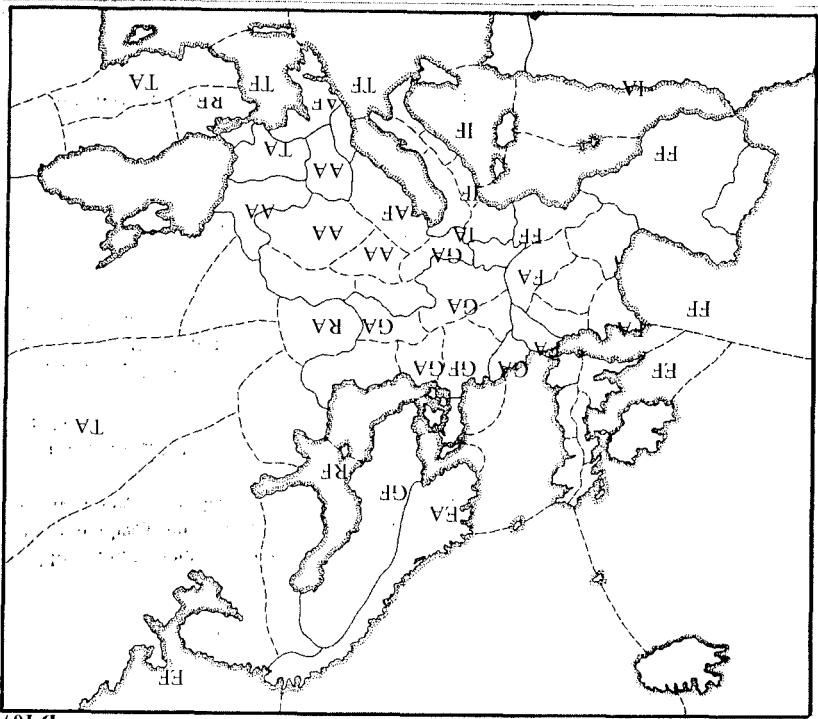
*

Berlin to All: My apologies for the silence recently. My only excuse is that I have been busy at work, moving house, and without e-mail for the last 3 weeks. I have heard of letters - but I have more or less forgotten how to write them. Apologies to all. I will try and participate more in European affairs from now onwards.

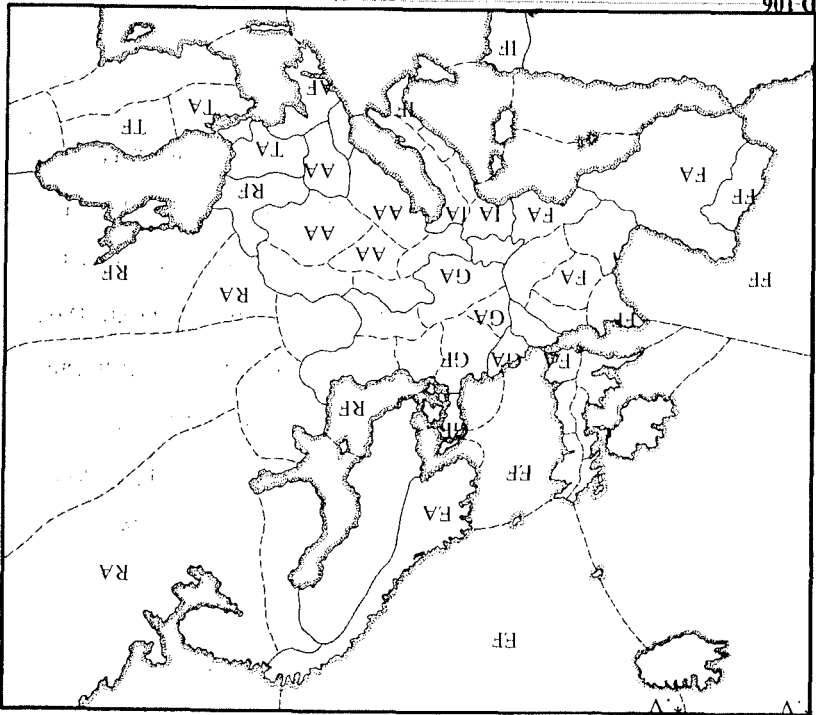
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Waiting List

D 108: Dave Clynes (G-F-E-I-A-R-T), Rosie Roberts (*I-R-A-G-F-E-T*), Tony Sait (F-G-E-R-I-T-A), John Bramwell (F-G-R-A-I-E-T), Alan Powis (*E-F-G-R-T-A-I*), Guy Kent (T-R-G-E-I-A-F), and I think probably Sam Lowe, which would make the necessary quorum. Preference lists in italics are "autopreference", based on your previous games. If Sam would like to confirm participation and send a preference list, I will start this one next issue. If Sam would prefer to wait a bit, of course, we need another volunteer. Preference lists may be changed by next deadline, naturally.



D 107



D 106

D107 (2001B?) Autumn 1902

A lot of standing around

ENGLAND (Jeremy Tullett) F(ENG)-IRI, F(BAR) S A(Nor)-StP, F(NTH)-Nor.

GERMANY (Sellick Davies) F(Kie)-BAL, A(Tyr)-Mun, F(Den)-Swe, A(Hol)-Bel, A(Sil)-War.

RUSSIA (Richard Sharp) F(GOB) S A(Fin)-Swe, A(Ukr)-War, F(Con) S Turkish A(Bul).

TURKEY (Pete Birks) A(Mos) S Russian A(Ukr)-War, F(EMS)-AEG, F(ION) & A(Bul) st.

AUSTRIA (Edwin Godfrey) A(Bud) S A(Gal)-Rum, A(Ser) S F(Gre) st.

ITALY (Paul McGivern) F(TYS) S F(Tus)-GOL, A(Pie)-Ven, A(Naf) st.

FRANCE (David Barnes) F(MAO) C A(Por)-Bre, F(Spa sc) S F(Mar)-GOL, A(Bur)-Mar,
A(Bel) st.

Winter 1902

ENGLAND	Lon, Lpl, Edi, Nor = 4 No change
GERMANY	Ber, Mun, Kie, Den, Hol +Swe = 6 Builds A(Ber)
RUSSIA	StP, Mos, War, Con = 3 Removes A(Fin)
TURKEY	Ank, Smy, Bul, Sev +Mos = 5 Builds A(Smy)
AUSTRIA	Vie, Bud, Tri, Ser +Run, Gre = 6 Builds F(Tri), A(Vie)
ITALY	Rom, Nap, Ven, Tun = 4 No change
FRANCE	Par, Bre, Mar, Spa, Por, Bel = 6 No change

Press

England-All: Computers... owing to some severe problems with my home computer, access to my btinternet account has been very difficult to achieve. If you've sent me an e-mail and I've not replied, this is why. I expect normal service to be resumed this (deadline) weekend.

Rambler: Looks like Richard's has severe problems too; I'll have to post this to him. Shame about the space at the bottom.....

Adjudicated and typed by:

John Marsden, 91 Westwood Avenue, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR33 9RS - 01502 564604
jandmarsden@iclway.co.uk

Bedbug Island (Dept of Errors and Omissions)

At least I know how to fill the space on this occasion. I don't like to meddle with John's adjudication (actually, I'd love to, but I'd better not), so I'm printing it as it stands. But my order A(Fin)-Swe should read A(Fin)-StP, which is why the English order to StP is correctly shown as failing and the German one to Swe as succeeding. Honest.

BACKSIDE

Welcome to:

No one

*

Goodbye to:

No one

*

Sub warnings:

Your sub ran/runs out: before last issue - no one; last issue - no one; this issue - Jeremy Tullett; next issue - Rosie Roberts, Sean McGonigle, Graham Smith, Dave Crichton, Edwin Godfrey, David Barnes

*

Renewals received - ta - from:

Mike Dean, Alan Powis, Mark Brown, Geoff Challinger, Sam Lowe

*

COAs:

None

This issue is going to 75 subscribers, 12 traders and 6 involved hangers-on. Of these 93 people, 33 are playing Diplomacy. There are 9 living in Surrey, 8 in Lancs, 6 in Bucks, 6 in Essex, 5 in Herts, 5 in Yorks, 4 in London, 4 in Scotland, 4 in Staffs, 3 in Beds, 3 in Hants, 3 in Sussex, 3 in Wales, 2 in Australia, 2 in Berks, 2 in Cambs, 2 in Derbys, 2 in Devon, 2 in Germany, 2 in Middx, 2 in Notts, 2 in the USA, 1 in Cornwall, 1 in Cumberland, 1 in Durham, 1 in Hong Kong, 1 in Leics, 1 in Northumberland, 1 in Oxon, 1 in Portugal, 1 in S.Africa, 1 in Salop, 1 in Singapore, 1 in Somerset, 1 in Spain, 1 in Suffolk, and 1 in Warwicks. Of the 93 total, 71 have confessed their ages: there are 0 in their teens, 2 in their 20s, 11 in their 30s, 35 in their 40s, 16 in their 50s and 6 in their 60s. The average was 47 years, 3 months and 27 days on the first of this month.

Lessons from Europe on how to postpone paying bills almost indefinitely. (1) Agree to pay at 60 days. (2) Send out a job with the wrong reference number on it. (3) Receive job back on time with invoice trustingly quoting wrong reference number. (4) Wait 60 days. (5) Send letter pointing out reference number is wrong so invoice cannot be paid, and explaining that the 60-day period will be counted from the date of receipt of the *correct* invoice. (6) Wait 60 days ...

I wish I'd thought of that.