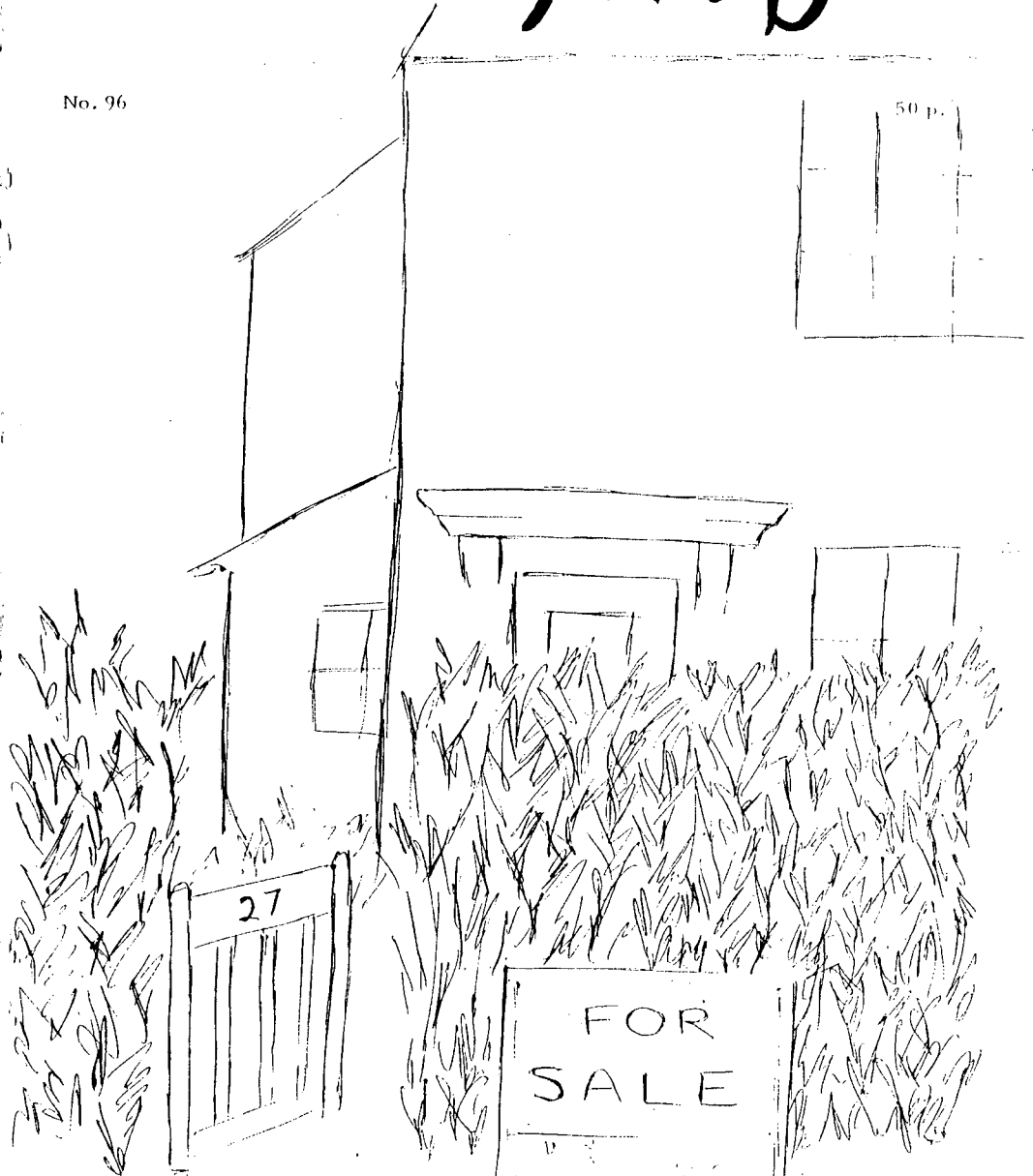


# Dolchstoß

No. 96

50 p.



One careful owner ... friendly  
neighbours ... mature garden ...  
well ventilated ... accept £80,000  
for quick sale ...

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\*

Almost at the end (or in your case just past the beginning) of the preantepenultimate double-figure-numbered Dolchstoss, produced by Richard Sharp, still at 27 Elm Close, Amersham, Bucks, HP6 5DD (but for how much longer? - and I'd just memorized the postcode, too). Home phone is 02403-6148 and has been causing all sorts of problems; office phone is 0753-887241 and causes no problems at all, touch wood.

DEADLINES for next season's orders are as follows:

DS 20 - immediately (provisional orders only)

D 42 - 1st post on Tuesday 11th February 1986

D 53X - to Norman by Wednesday 19th February 1986

DS 8-19 inclusive - to me by Thursday 20th February 1986 (7.30 pm latest)

D 43V, 49V, 50 I, 51V, 54R and 55 to me by Friday 21st February 1986 (7.30 pm latest)

D 52 I to me by Friday March 21st 1986

\*

That's the lot, except for:

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## DREADITORIAL

Rumours are flying round the City of London that publishing giant Dolchstoss Inc. may be relocating to more spacious premises. Questioned today in his poky Amersham hovel, the conglomerate's proprietor, eccentric millionaire Richard Sharp (73), dismissed the story as 'idle gossip, probably leaked by some Civil Service drudge in the hope of lining his pocket' ...

Which means of course that it's true, and I have indeed been persuaded to vacate the shack in which I have festered for 16 years come next Palmermas. It is, of course, true that it isn't nearly big enough. It is also true that places which are big enough cost, in this area, about £25,000 more than we shall get for this, even when Bron has finished tarting it up. There is absolutely no question of leaving the area, for the sufficient reason that I happen to like it here. So there seems to be only one solution, and anyone with investments in the Halifax Building Society is recommended to transfer them to something safe, like G. F. W. Palmer (Haulage) Ltd. or Westland.

It seems ludicrous that someone like me, often reduced to hovering wistfully at the bar of the Emperor and looking thirsty, should contemplate with something like equanimity the prospect of spending £95,000 on a house. Still, 75% of the population live in houses they can't afford (the other 25% living in houses the local authority can't afford) so why should I miss out?

I have of course made it a strict condition that there will be a spacious room reserved for Dolchstoss. And I shall not, as some shorter editors do, make this move an excuse for late publication. But oh, how the thought of the chaos preys on my mind. All the orders sent to the wrong address, all the redirected letters from people who get TGOD out of the library (serve them right, the cheapskates), all the noise Bron will make trying to move the piano while I'm adjudicating D 51 V. And, of course, the new residents of 27 Elm Close will rapidly be driven insane by midnight phonecalls about Bulgaria, wild eyed giants announcing they've come to stay for Easter, and postmen knocking at dawn with armfuls of summonses and Gauloises tobacco.

Still, look on the bright side - we haven't sold it yet. (In fact we haven't tried yet.) Maybe it will all come to nowt. Meanwhile, if you happen to know of a house (5 bed, 3 recep, 5 minutes' walk from Emperor of India, £25,000 o.n.o.), give us a bell.

### Over for another year ...

We've had an amazing Christmas period, with one or other of us being trivially ill every day for a month - colds, stomach bugs, dental abscesses, cysts, hangovers, you name it. I had a cold on Christmas Day, as usual, and a stomach bug on New Year's Eve that eventually claimed everyone, even being passed by the kids to my ex-wife and all through her family. Bron's troubles, exacerbated by an attempt to poison her with a new antibiotic, culminated in a very brief stay in hospital; she's still far from well, and I've got another bloody cold coming ...

Still, it might be worse. We went down to Abergavenny a fortnight ago to teach a bridge course that turned out to be very satisfactory - quite a high standard for once, and we were able to teach a few subjects we can't try on most classes. The quiz league is going well, with 3 wins for us since Christmas while both our main challengers have lost one, so that we can now theoretically afford a loss, though we don't intend to have one. And of course even Christmas had its high spots: really good food and wine, including good Stilton with good Port, a rare luxury; a fine crop of presents, including the Times Atlas and a do-it-yourself Chinese Restaurant pack, with which I have already had a remarkable success. And of course Christmas Eve was fun, attended this year by all the regulars except Birks. And a letter came from Jeremy Flint announcing that he'd persuaded Allen & Unwin (a) that they didn't really want to republish Competitive Bidding but (b) that since they'd signed a contract saying they did they ought to pay us anyway. And they have! And Jeremy's now placed the book again elsewhere!!

## Around the Hobby

Is it my imagination, or are we slowing down? Most of the zines I receive seem to be less and less frequent. Take Greatest Hits, for example - only 16 issues in the last two years. Or Mercurius Aulicus - only 6 in the last sixteen months. Or Ode - only 6 in the last 9 months. I thought it would be interesting to see how long, on average, it takes to play a season nowadays, so here's a minisurvey based simply on the games I'm playing in, as those are the ones I have records for. The figure quoted in each case is the average days per season, starting from the announced Spring 1901 deadline (i.e. ignoring pre-S01 negotiating time) and ending with the latest published deadline:

1. C'est Magnifique, 25.37; 2. Bruce, 29.75; 3. Thing on the Mat, 33.50; 4. Mad Policy, 33.84; 5. Dolchstoss, 35.00; 6. Diplomacy Quarterly/Daily Mole, 41.27; 7. Gallinaufry, 42.27; 8. Ode, 46.67; 9. Mercurius Aulicus, 59.50; 10. SAU/G, 92.17.

And you could add some waiting time to a couple of those: the Daily Mole game, a single game taking half an hour to adjudicate and type up, is 8 weeks late, and Ode is over 2 weeks late (allowing 1 week for turnaround in each case).

Ignoring SAU/G, which isn't part of the British hobby, this means that the (or rather my) average season has been 36 days, and the average game lasts two years. I suppose it's not too bad, really.

Even faster than any of the above has been Richard Downes's Back to the Dark Ages, which recently achieved the rather horrifying feat of 27 issues in a year, though I hear it's now run into printer problems and is late. Despite his late start, Richard reckons to be the third of the present sub-centenarians to get to issue 100, following Dolchstoss and Ode, and at current rates of progress he might even catch Ode (latest issue 71).

I don't know what conclusions you want to draw from all that (perhaps 'don't pick GMs who have recently married, are about to be married, are printed by Martin Lefevre or are Pete Calcraft'). Certainly CMag, Bruce and MP deliver the service they promise, and Thing doesn't promise anything but delivers it anyway. In my experience the quality of the opposition has been horrific in CMag and Thing, good in Bruce and MP - yes, it's quite true that the same can be said of my own results, but it's not sour grapes, honest. I like playing against good players, not nasty little boys who changes sides every season, never tell the truth when a lie will do, and eventually drop out.

The stats rescue job continues to go well: Eddie Duralski has produced some game openings stuff (see elsewhere this issue), and another TFT is finished, this being No.47, which those who want it should find enclosed with this issue. I'm afraid the TFT mailing list is still somewhat haphazard, and if you haven't had any of the three I've done and feel you should have, let me know. I can always print more. No.48 will be ready in a week or so, and that and 49 should be out by next issue.

I haven't done much on the ratings since Christmas, apart from updating them as I go in TFT. Here, just to keep you interested, are the latest ratings for those readers of D who feature in TFT 47. They're in random order, best I can do without taking time off: Mike Close 242.6; Dave Tant 152.4; Keith Black 190.8; John Marsden 221.5; Sellick Davies 46.7; Shaun Derrick 119.7; John Piggott 132.2; Les Tassell 227.7; Andy Davidson 138.8; John Colledge 110.8; Colin Walsh 70.9; Barry McManus 99.1; Dave Allen 58.8; Jim Roberts 166.4; James O'Fee 242.5; Chris Tringham 143.0; Keith Jewers 153.0; Niall Litton 211.8; Pete Doubleday 170.9; Dave Crichton 148.4.

The issue covers 33 games from the gamestart period 1977-81. I have so far TFT'd 90 games, which sounds like quite a lot but is a mere dent in the backlog. I'm close to finishing the 1981 gamestarts, but most of the games started in 1982 and 1983 have now finished too! I'll get up to date eventually, and then we shall see some changes in the ratings: Paul McGivern's win in D 39W, for example, at present stands to gain him 491.25 rating points, comfortably the highest ever ...

Happy New Year Crunch

It is customary in the best circles to welcome the New Year with Champagne - I do it myself, of course - and here is a cautionary tale. In the early hours of New Year's Day a familiar figure at the Emperor, Paul Gough, a.k.a. Paul the Gin, was happily perched on a bar stool attempting to open his third bottle of the good stuff. Far be it from me to say that he was not fully in control of his faculties, but the cork got the better of him and smacked him smartly in the left eye. This caused him to release his grip on the bottle. Realizing this, he made a heroic dive to save it, fell off the stool and broke his arm. As those who have visited the Emperor will imagine, this sad story was received in sympathetic silence by all who heard it....

\*

Easter

An early one this year - no chance we'll have moved by then. Business as usual, therefore - if you've been before you can come again, please contact us. Next year, maybe, we can issue a more open invitation, but at the moment the house gets full to explosion point just with the regulars.

\*

Superbourse

I thought I'd just mention that there is a waiting list for Superbourse open in G'est Magnifique, and three of us are waiting for a bit more sucker money to make the game worth starting. You can get CMag for 25-30 p. or thereabouts from Peter Sullivan, 36 Bushey Hall Road, Bushey, Watford, Herts, WD2 2ED.

\*

Talking of Variants

It seems likely that D 43V and/or D 49V will be ending before much longer, and when one does I shall be willing to run a new zine variant to take its place. The possibilities which most appeal to me are: (1) Third Age II, which I should like to play in myself, so volunteer GMs are invited to apply (I can supply rules and map, I think); (2) a second game of Dipsomacy when the present one finishes; (3) something else, but I'm not likely to consider anything except regular-board and Tolkien variants. I'm not going to start another Superbourse until the present one ends, if it ever does: I think it's the best variant I've come up with (subject to a couple of minor rule changes), but it does take a long time to GM, and one game at a time is plenty.

\* \* \* \* \*

DS 20 (1986-??) Gamestart

- ENGLAND Guy Kent, 49A Windmill Rd, Hampton Hill, Middlesex
- GERMANY Jon Beaumont, 22 Guildford Grove, Greenwich, London SE 10
- RUSSIA Kevin Hawthorn, 21 Thurlestone Parade, Shepperton, Middx
- TURKEY Nicholas Whyte, Deanshill, College Hill, Armagh, N.Ireland
- AUSTRIA Mark Telford, 33 Addycombe Terrace, Heaton, Newcastle, NE6 5NB
- ITALY Richard Windus, 16 Grailands, Bishops Stortford, Herts
- FRANCE Jason Finch, 16 Oak Hill, Woodford Green, Essex

Everyone wanted G, so most of you got 2nd or 3rd choices. Provisional orders to me at once, please, from everyone, including the following credit top-ups: Guy, at least £3; Nicholas at least £6; others OK now, thank you. The first reserve for this game is Paul Humphreys (address back page), who will be brought in to replace anyone I haven't heard from within one week of mailing. Game rating will be 700, by the way, although Nicholas certainly and Kevin probably have past finishes not yet TFT'd.

I wish you all an entertaining game, not too much Mad McGoon press, and above all no drop-outs.

Don't forget those provisional orders - send them now!

BRIDGE

Two hands occupied my thoughts quite a bit over the weekend. One occurred in the Daily Telegraph Christmas competition, which I used to find a reliable source of playing cards (and occasional income) a few years back. This year I only managed 266 out of 300, not enough even for a minor prize, 30 of the 34 I dropped going on this: you hold (very approximately, because I've lost the paper):

AKQ6 74 Q K97653

You open 1C, left-hand opponent bids 2H, and your partner bids 4C. RHO bids 4D, and you make the good bid of 4S. This goes back to RHO, who now bids 5D, the final contract. You lead a top spade, and dummy puts down:

87 AJ109832 A7 Q4

or words to that effect. You cash another spade, partner following with the 3 and 2. What now?

My first thought was that this is a familiar hand: you play a third spade, forcing dummy to ruff, in case your partner has Jxx of trumps. But, on reflection, can that be right? Declarer certainly has exactly 3 spades (partner's peter shows an even number, which must be 4 since he passed 4S), and only 1 club if that. For your first thoughts to be right, then, declarer will have to hold 3 hearts and no clubs, or 2 hearts and the Ace of clubs. Surely he would have tried to give his partner the option of playing in hearts with that sort of holding? Personally, holding, say, Jxx, xxx, K10xxxx, void, I would have bid 4H over 4C, not shown those ratty diamonds at all. Anyway, the long and short of it was that I decided declarer must be 3-0-9-1, or similar, so I switched to a club. Wrong. Ah well, always next year ...

The other hand was one I got wrong in the Emperor on Saturday morning. I was annoyed with myself at the time, but on further analysis I feel I was rather unlucky. This was it:

RS	BS
Q75	AJ93
AJ10865	93
-	AQJ8754
AK102	-

It's a fascinating hand. Roger Evans (South) opened a weak 1NT at favourable vulnerability, and I bid 4H, which I suppose some would consider a bit pushy. Bron now bid 6H, and while you can make a case for 6D I wouldn't argue with this bid.

Roger now had a long think, and eventually doubled, thus marking himself with 4 trumps. I doubt if he was very proud of this bid afterwards, despite the outcome, because declarer will surely go down if left to himself but may scramble home with the tip-off from the double, which thus risks 1810 to gain 100, hardly good odds.

June led D9, which with this pair could be from almost any weak holding - 9, 9x, 9xx or even 109xx. My line works if diamonds are 3-3, as is likely, or if Roger has K10 alone: win with the ace, throwing a club (not a spade), DQ covered and ruffed, AK of clubs discarding spades, ruff a club, run the 9 of hearts. Then play diamonds: if Roger ruffs at any stage you can overruff; if he doesn't, your first discard is SQ and you continue until you have to ruff, at which point you exit with HJ and make the last 2 tricks. Even if Roger's diamonds were originally Kx you will still make if he is precisely 4-4-2-3, so this line seems pretty good. Alas, he was 3-4-2-4, and to get home against this distribution you must lead a small diamond from dummy at trick 2, surely against the odds.

An Emperor joke to finish with. Late in the evening, after a night of garbage cards, I dealt myself xxx, xxxxx, xxxx, x (actually I think there was a jack somewhere, but it felt like a yarborough). Opponents were vulnerable, as usual, so I opened the natural 1S. Long think and pass on my left, pass (!) from partner, double on my right. It seems natural to bid 2S now, so I did. The double on my left rattled the glasses behind the bar, and all passed, giving me the rare pleasure of losing 1400 not vulnerable (they had 100 honours). 6S the other way is cold, but I have a nasty feeling they might have reached 6NT, which requires a squeeze ...

CHESS

Brian Clark

Whenever Anatoly Karpov has the white pieces in a game of chess he almost certainly will play 1. P - K4 as his opening move. WHY? Why does he not introduce an element of surprise from time to time by playing 1. P - Q4 or 1. P - QB4? Why does he eliminate the need by his opponents to carry out the time consuming work of preparation to meet anything other than his regular 1. P - K4? How was he able to become such a successful World Champion?

When White opens with 1. P - K4 then Black can choose between 1. ... P - K4 which allows White to move the game into a Bishop's Opening; Centre Game; Danish Gambit; Four Knight's Game; Giuoco Piano; King's Gambit; Ruy Lopez; Scotch Opening; or Vienna Game, or Black can play a move other than 1. ... P - K4 and make the game Alekhine's Defence; Centre Counter Game; Caro-Kann; French; Nimzowitsch; Pirc; or Sicilian Defence.

Obviously Karpov knows all the 'book' lines and can ensure that he follows only those which lead to a favourable position for White. He will also keep up to date with new attempts to improve lines for Black in the latest Grandmaster games, as well as carrying out his own analysis to find further improvements for White.

It follows that if your opponent deviates from what you KNOW to be the correct move then you should be able to capitalize on his weaker move.

We know that Karpov's fellow Grandmasters are probably as well prepared to meet 1. P - K4 as Karpov is to play it - so how is he able to maintain such an impressive record with it? The answer must be that Karpov is comfortable in positions which arise from 1. P - K4, or, to put it another way, these positions suit his style of play. More about this next time.

In a recent game at the Hastings Congress Stuart Conquest played a magnificent King's Indian Defence (Yugoslav Variation) showing how he fully understood the possibilities open to Black after his sacrifices in the opening. This game is an excellent example of the following through into the middle and end game of an idea (or should I say plan) which was brought about by a specific choice of opening play.

FORMANEK    CONQUEST

- |            |         |            |          |             |          |
|------------|---------|------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| 1. P - Q4  | N - KB3 | 11. P - K3 | P - B5   | 21. R - Q1  | N X B    |
| 2. P - QB4 | P - QB4 | 12. N - R3 | N - N5   | 22. K X N   | B - N6   |
| 3. P - Q5  | P - QN4 | 13. N X P  | B - QR3  | 23. R - KB1 | Q - N2   |
| 4. P X P   | P - QR3 | 14. Q X N  | B X N    | 24. Q - B5  | P - B4   |
| 5. P X P   | P - N3  | 15. R - B2 | N - Q6   | 25. R - Q1  | B X R    |
| 6. P - KN3 | P - Q3  | 16. R - Q2 | Q - N3   | 26. Q X B   | R - B4   |
| 7. B - N2  | B - N2  | 17. Q - B3 | KR - QB1 | 27. P - K4  | P X P    |
| 8. N - KR3 | O - O   | 18. N - B2 | N - KB   | 28. B - K3  | R X P    |
| 9. O - O   | N X RP  | 19. Q - K4 | R X P    | 29. Q - R4  | R - QN4  |
| 10. P - B4 | N - KN5 | 20. R X R  | B X R    |             | Resigns. |

The next game is also a King's Indian Defence played at Hastings in 1934. The closed pawn formation in the centre gives Black the opportunity of a devastating king-side attack.

MICHEL    FLOHR

- |            |         |             |          |             |          |
|------------|---------|-------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| 1. P - Q4  | N - KB3 | 9. Q - B2   | N - R4   | 17. P - KN4 | P - R4   |
| 2. P - QB4 | P - KN3 | 10. P - KN3 | N - B4   | 18. P X P   | Q - N4   |
| 3. N - QB3 | B - N2  | 11. N - K1  | B - R6   | 19. B - B1  | Q X P    |
| 4. P - K4  | P - Q3  | 12. N - N2  | N - B3   | 20. Q - B2  | B - B3   |
| 5. N - B3  | O - O   | 13. R - K1  | N/3 - Q2 | 21. B - K2  | K - N2   |
| 6. B - K2  | QN - Q2 | 14. B - K3  | P - B4   | 22. K - R1  | R - R1   |
| 7. O - O   | P - K4  | 15. P - B3  | P - B5   | 23. R - KN1 | R - KR3  |
| 8. P - Q5  | P - QR4 | 16. B X N   | N X B    | 24. B - B1  | QR - R1  |
|            |         |             |          |             | Resigns. |

## OPENINGS MINI-SURVEY FOR 1985

Latest move in the continuing struggle to get the stats up to date is the appearance of a smallish-scale openings survey, published by Eddie Duralski in Mellow Yellow. Eddie's produced a listing showing the openings played in 73 gamestarts in 1985, and for comparison the frequencies of the same openings in the first 206 and last 209 games recorded by Pete Calcraft. Adding 4 more 1985 games for which Eddie didn't have the data available (EO, ER, EX and EY) we come up with the following picture:

### Austria

The Trieste Variation of the Balkan Gambit has lost more ground, and we now have a virtual three-way dead heat between the Trieste and Galician Variations and the Southern Hedgehog. On the 77 games included, in fact, the Galician Variation is the new market leader with 18, the other two being on 17 each. The only other opening to make any showing in '85 was the Budapest Variation on 10.4% (8 cases), and the only new opening in the period was Parkin's Mistake, unlikely to be repeated. The long-term trend is away from the Trieste and Budapest Variations towards the Galician and the Hedgehog; the short-term is away from the Trieste and Hedgehog towards the Budapest and Galician. The True Hedgehog, incidentally, has not been played in 1985.

### England

No new trends here, except that the Southern Opening (21 cases) has gained more adherents at the expense of the Edinburgh Variation (16). The two versions of the Northern Opening were neck and neck in 1974, but the Yorkshire is now nearly twice as often played. Otherwise, England's choices are as limited as ever; the French Attack is less popular than it was, and nothing else but these four is really played at all.

### France

With 22 openings played in the 77 games, versatility remains the key feature. To put it another way, no one knows what the hell to do. There are now only two French openings with frequencies over 10% - the Maginot and the Burgundy Opening - since the Picardy Opening, which was challenging for the lead in 1974, has almost vanished, down at #8th. The Vineyard, beloved of Tonks, has made only slight gains, which is perhaps surprising, and if there is a trend it seems to be towards experiment.

### Germany

The Danish versions of the Anschluss and Blitzkrieg come equal first in 1985, a new milestone in the decline of the Danish Blitzkrieg, which was played in over half the first 206 games. The two fashionable minority choices in 1985, both doing well, were the Tyrolia Opening and the Ruhr Variation of the Anschluss. In fact the Tyrolia Opening (Den, Kie, Tyr) was the big surprise of the survey to me, played as many as 8 times. There must have been an article on it somewhere, I imagine. Interestingly, Austria and Italy are both opening to Tyr less than they used to, so is Germany playing this opening in the expectation of succeeding? And if so, why?

### Italy

No significant changes at all here: 4 popular openings and a mass of one-offs, just like last time. The only new opening is a misorder for F(Nap), likely to be terminal. Italy's openings, more than those of any other country, defy analysis, because so many of them are, or may be, identical, but one can see that the Hedgehog has had its uses: Ven-Tri, Rom-Ven is almost extinct, except with Paul McGivern's Nap-TYS, which is now more popular than Nap-ION in this context. Curious, really - if Austria keeps swinging to the Galician Variation, Italy's ancient dive-in-and-hope approach will surely be due for a revival... For the record, the Tyrolia Attack still ranks first, followed by the Key Lepanto.

### Russia

Some genius has opened Sev-Arm, but nothing else is new. Over the years there has been a massive swing, now slowing slightly, away from Sev-Rum towards Sev-BLA.

The Southern Defence, always Russia's most popular choice, is still creeping up towards 50%, and the Octopus and Squid are second and third. Don Turnbull's notorious article in 1972 seems to have run out of steam at last, and no one moved anything to Livonia in 1985.

### Turkey

No doubt what the most popular opening on the board is: 63% of Turks in 1985 opened Con-Bul, Ank-BLA, Smy-Con. Doesn't leave much. The old-fashioned attack on Russia is still second, but now on only 18.2%. The Turkish Opening of the future is of course the Soaksbane (Con-Bul, Ank-Con, Smy-Arm), but only one person apart from myself was alive to its possibilities in 1985.

\*

So much for that. Not a great deal to say, except well done Eddie for getting something into print at last - it's been a long time since the last survey. But smacked wrist for ranking the Hedgehog 3rd behind the Trieste Variation - a margin of 0.1% is difficult to achieve with a sample of 73! Wonder how many editors will fall for this.

As one of the few people who care, I am definitely opposed to Eddie's proposal to change the numbering for the next openings survey. At present, the notation 1-1-1 means that the opening is the same as was played in the first recorded postal game; Eddie intends to change the system so that it means the three most popular choices. I can see a small gain (you can see at a glance that a chap who opens 9-4-7 is a bit odd), but there's a much bigger loss, in that it will not be possible to compare the survey at a glance with the earlier ones. I'd say leave it as it is, with all its imperfections.

\*

Finally, on the subject of openings, here are some tips for future stardom - openings which are played very little at present but might suit you if, like me, you like a bit of variety.

For Austria, how about Tri-Alb, Vic-Tri, Bud-Rum? I played this in Bruce 1 and came to no harm, though no one's played it since. It's suicidally dangerous, of course, but if it works you've a good chance of gaining 3, so you can afford to lose 1.

For England, try the Splits - Edi-NWG, Lon-ENG and of course Lpl-Edi. This is a way of getting Germany to love you, and he can't actually steal NTH in A01 because you simply throw him out again. Andy Holborn did this in MA Inchbrakie, but of course he was lucky to have a totally reliable, trustworthy, honest Germany ...

For France, it may seem unimaginative (not to say derivative) to tip the Vineyard, Bre-MAO, Par-Gas, Mar-Bur, but it's certainly an excellent opening and still rarely seen (4 times in 1985). Any opening which gives France a good shot at two builds but leaves F(MAO) in position must be good - even Tonks can't be wrong all the time.

For Germany, the Ruhr Variation of the Anschluss has more going for it than its popularity would suggest (this is Kie-Den, Mun-Ruh, Ber-Mun). It combines the advantages of keeping A(Mun) with the greater flexibility of A(Ruh) rather than A(Kie), and is no doubt the best version of the Anschluss when a Bur standoff isn't required.

For Russia, I have already suggested that A(War)-Sil may be the next trend, combined of course with the standard GOB, Ukr and BLA.

For Turkey, I am sold on the rare Sharp's Opening (well, it's about time and I was responsible for both the 1985 occurrences and, indirectly, the single 1984 one, where I persuaded Steve Jones to play it. This is Con-Bul, Ank-Con, Smy-Arm, the idea being that you swap Con for Sev and let the Russian fleet out to play. In MA Lisle it got me two builds, and I could have had three if I hadn't feared to look ostentatious ...

For Italy, which I've dyslexically omitted, I'll go along with McGivern's Opening up to a point, but how about the rarely (if ever - my DQ's in the office) played TYS, Ven and Tyr? Against the Hedgehog, this again leaves you with the convoy to Tun, plus A(Tyr), which has innumerable options open. I think I might give this a try on my next outing as Italy, which is likely to be the next gamestart I have.

### Christmas Quiz Answers and Report

Answers first. For each question, I give first my intended answer, then others I have so far (21/1) accepted, with reduced marks where applicable.

1. (a) Doubting-Castle (in Pilgrim's Progress); (b) Le Clos-Luce, in Amboise, but here we have a real headache as several good reference books say it was Cloux, near Amboise. I've given 3 for either, therefore, and 2 for Amboise only; (c) Blandings (!) but I'm also allowing Windsor (2), an excellent answer; (d) Wewelsburg; (e) Pontefract or Pomfret; (f) Castel Sant'Angelo (in Puccini's Tosca); (g) Cair Paravel (in the Narnia books); (h) Walmer.

2. (a) Lev Yashin, Russian goalkeeper; (b) Daniel Cohn-Bendit, ageing student terrorist; (c) a racehorse (in a Sherlock Holmes story, which you needed to say to get 3); (d) yes, I know, a typing error - it should have been Bluemantle, a Pursuivant (I allowed 2 for 'herald', and a generous 1 to the competitor who said of course he knew Bluemantle but had never heard of Bluemantle); (e) the Nazi/S.A. headquarters in Munich; (f) Jack Nicklaus; (g) an icfield on the North Face of the Eiger; (h) well done everyone, full marks, there was no (h); (i) a brewery; (j) a distinguished bridge player and writer.

3. (a) Hodge; (b) Gibber; (c) Nigger, and I suppose he'd get 10 years instead of a VC today; (d) Nana (several misspellings penalised); (e) Boy or Boye; (f) Yellow Dog Dingo (in the Just So Stories); (g) a bear (Shardik); (h) a rabbit (rueful in Victor Mollo); (i) a horse (Rocinante); (j) a beaver - but more problems here. The beaver was the first quadruped to appear on a stamp listed in standard catalogues (Canada, 1851), but Steve Jones has completely shot me down by unearthing an 1846 provisional issued in St Louis which had a bear on it; and of course we have claims for the double-headed eagle and even Queen Victoria. So: 5 marks for the bear, 3 for the beaver, +1 if you named the eagle and/or H. M. as well.

4. Oh, God, now the real problems start! (a) Bernkastel is a centre of production for Moselle wines, the others for hocks. Full marks also for Rüdeshheim (in Rheinhessen, others in the Palatinate). Bonus for both. I charitably didn't deduct a mark for saying that the towns are wines, as several people did (the wines are Bernkasteler, etc). (b) the intended answer was Cambridge, because there is no Cambridge College, Oxford. I allowed 4 for 'Exeter doesn't take -shire after it' or for 'Hertford town, others cities'. I did not allow 'Hertford no cathedral', as Cambridge hasn't either. (c) an amazing number of people think St Louis has never held the Olympics (1904), and they're lucky to get 2 marks because it is the right answer - it's the only one that's held only one Olympiad. It's also the only one which isn't the name of a town in Texas (4). I allowed full marks (or a bonus) for Los Angeles being the only one not to have staged one of the first 5 modern Olympiads. In case you didn't know, there was an unnumbered but official Olympiad in Athens in 1906, to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the 1896 one. (d) The 'Lark' is a Haydn string quartet, the others being symphonies by the same composer. I allowed 3 for 'bear only quadruped', though I thought it was a bit feeble! (e) Neapolitan is a bridge bidding system, the others being chess openings. (f) May was the only one of these England cricket captains to be born in Britain. I also gave full marks for Cowdrey (Oxford, others Cambridge), a perfectly good answer that hadn't occurred to me. 4 for Cowdrey never being captain in Australia, and 3 for Brown never scoring a century for England.

For your guidance, now and in future years, Sharp's Rules governing odd-man-out questions are as follows: the others (non-odd) will normally form a very small if not exclusive group (sizable hock-producing towns, Oxford colleges named for cities/towns, double Olympic cities, Haydn symphonies nicknamed for living creatures, chess openings named for countries, England cricket captains born abroad), while the 'odd man' will lack an important positive attribute not shared by the others, and indeed will ideally be opposite or highly distinct from them in that respect. The answers given lower marks, while correct in a sense, fail to meet these criteria. I try very hard to make them watertight, but not hard enough!

5. And if the last one was a problem ... serves me right, I had misgivings about this question. In my view, to demonstrate that a thing is unique you need to be able to say 'it is the only one which ...'. You were barred from using numbers, and therefore I felt that 'most', 'fewest', etc. were unworthy evasions, though I did give some marks for these answers. The full-marks answers are as follows: (a) only province from which retreat is never possible; (b) only playing space which cannot be legally named in a 1901 order; (c) only land province where a Spring 01 standoff between opposing fleets can occur; (d) only province from which a fleet cannot be supported; (e) only coastal supply centre which cannot be reached by a fleet in 1901; (f) only landlocked neutral supply centre; (g) only province which can be circumnavigated.
6. Sanity returns. (a) Groucho Marx, not sure which film; (b) Lee Marvin in Cat Ballou; (c) Sammy Davis Jr in Porgy and Bess; (d) Jackie Gleason in The Hustler; (e) Charles Bronson or Dino Mele in Once Upon a Time in the West; Laurence Olivier in the Entertainer (that was (f), sorry); (g) Peter Ustinov in Topkapi; (h) Van Heflin or Brandon de Wilde in Shane; (i) Audrey Hepburn in Breakfast at Tiffany's; (j) Frank Sinatra in Guys and Dolls. Consolation 1 for wrong character in right film.
7. (a) Benvenuto Cellini; (b) C. B. Fry; (c) Andre Chenier; (d) Dick Francis; (e) Granados; (f) Ludwig II of Bavaria; (g) Cervantes.
8. A was Wilfred Rhodes, B Les Ames and C Brian Close. Pretty amazing when you recall that Grace was born over a century before Botham! The Doctor played his last test at Nottingham in 1899, a few days before his 51st birthday, and the 21-year-old Rhodes made his test debut in the same match. Rhodes's test career lasted an incredible 30 years, his last series in the West Indies in 1929 being Ames's first. Kent had to wait for Godfrey Evans to grow up before letting Ames retire, and he was still in county cricket after the war, when he played against the 17-year-old Close, who many years later led a team (Somerset, I assume?) including Botham. Taken from the superb cricket quiz in the Spectator, and apparently repeated on Test Match Special, which I didn't know.
9. (a) Pilgrim's Progress, John Bunyan; (b) Pride and Prejudice, Jane Austen; (c) The Suicide Club or New Arabian Nights, Robert Louis Stevenson - very difficult, but it's been televised and Prince Florizel is a totally memorable character; (d) Le Grand Meaulnes, Alain-Fournier, one of my very favourite books; (e) The Thin Man, Dashiell Hammett; (f) The Grapes of Wrath, John Steinbeck; (g) On the Beach, Nevil Shute (must rest him next year); (i) The Voyage of the Dawn Treader, C.S. Lewis; (h) Cider with Rosie, Laurie Lee; (j) Starship Trooper, Robert Heinlein - not my sort of book, of course, but someone left a copy lying around here!

## Report

A very large entry, with 27 people attempting at least some part of the quiz. Surprising absentees are last year's winner, Adrien Baird, and also Birks, who announces in GH that he has been obtaining assistance from his local record shop but evidently forgot to post the fruits of his labours. In the hope of building up a bit of suspense, I'll take the questions one at a time, giving positions after each complete question. The entrants, who will be referred to by initials in the report, are (in no special order): Dave Tant, John Webley, Rosie Roberts, Keith Loveys, Stuart Dagger, Steve Jones, Barbi Burke, Richard Scott (RSc), Greg Hawes, Edwin Godfrey, James O'Fee, Ian Hardy, Norman Williams, Malcolm Smith, Pete Doubleday, Chris Roche, Jason Finch, Robert Sharpe (RSh), Dave Allen, Simon Franklin, Steve Godfrey, John Sharpe, Andy Holborn, Roger Evans, Ewan McNay and Alan Richards.

1. A great start for SJ with a clean sweep. KL failed only on (b), and BB/on (d). The easiest parts were (a) and (h), with 18 right answers for each; easily the hardest was (d), which only KL and SJ got right. Scores: SJ 24; RB, JF, KL 21; JW 19; AH, GH 15; RSc, PD 14; SD, AR 13; DT, RR, SF, RE, EM 12; JS 9; RSh 8; EG, IH, NW 6; JO,