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MANORCON

The hobby's largest convention takes place from Friday 21 to Monday 24 July 1995 at Lake Hall, The Vale, Church Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 3SX.
Phone (0121) 454 0678.

Details and advance registrations from Peter Sullivan, 55 Brunton Street, DARLINGTON, County Durham, DL1 4EN (e-mail: info@manorcon.demon.co.uk). Registration is £6 for one day, or £12 for the full 4 days. Rooms cost £19 per person per night in a shared room, or £20 in a single room, and cheques should be made payable to the 'Universities Diplomacy Tournament'.

The approximate timetable is as follows:

Diplomacy at 5pm Friday, 9.15 am Saturday (also the Team Tournament), and 9.30 on Sunday.

Second-Hand Games sale at 9 pm on Friday and 11 am on Saturday. Pop Quiz on Saturday at 11 pm.

United Cup tournament at 4 pm on Saturday, bridge tournament at 2 pm on Sunday.

In addition, the following tournaments will run through the weekend: 1830, croquet, Intimate Diplomacy, Railway Rivals, Outposts, and Acquire.

Ryk Downes will be running an event on Sunday using the new Gibson's Games version of Alan Parr's United, and Francis Tresham will be present and will have copies of old and new 18xx games for purchase and/or playtesting.

THE HOBBY SERVICES GROUP

John Dodds has produced the first edition of the 'Hobby Services Newsletter', containing an update on each of the hobby services from the various organizers. The idea is that this should form the basis for discussion at Manorcon amongst interested parties. Anyone who wants a copy should contact John or myself at the addresses above.

MASTERCON

Shaun Derrick (313 Woodway Lane, Walsgrave, Coventry CV2 2AP) has announced that Mastercon will be back at the Kings Head in Cirencester from 23-25 February 1996. Rooms with £23.80 pppn in a shared room or £26 in a single room. Convention fee £8. The event will feature a 3 round Diplomacy tournament, skittles, ID etc.

NEW ZINE

Name: *One Mans Rubbish.*

Editor: Mark Stretch, 2 Over Mill Drive, Selly Park, Birmingham B29 7JL

Cost: £1 pound inc postage

Frequency: 4 weekly, turnaround under a week.

Format: 18 pages A4, normal text, photocopied.

Games: Std Dip, variants (to be decided). United, RR, Breaking away, various-all-reader games.

Also includes: a bit on motor racing, a short letter col. graph analysis and a re-print of an early U-Bend dippy article, a bunch of rules and house rules.

Neil Duncan, who supplied this information, says that it looks very promising.

FURRYCON

We now have detailed facts on figures on the event, revealing that they had a very healthy 220 people registered, of whom 147 played at least one game that was included in the Clive Mewse Memorial event, the top five in which were as follows:

- 1 Gerald Udowiczenko
- 2 Peter Murray
- 3 Steve Jones
- 4 Chris Boote
- 5 Marcus Pratt

The Intergame top three, who qualify for the international event at Essen in Germany, were:

- 1 The Four Tops
(Bill Michell, Chris Grice, Alan Harvey, Mark Wright)
- 2 Those Obnoxious Gamers
- 3 The Three Chandeliers

Next year SFCP will be organizing The Great British Games Festival from 25-27 May at the Old Ship Hotel, and Furrycon will be part of this enlarged event, running from 24-27 May. We will publish more details when we have them, or you could write to SFC Press at 42 Wynndale Road, London E18 1DX (Phone/fax 0171 358 1613).

BITS AND PIECES

Realpolitik has folded at issue 100, as promised.

MANORCON 13

Will take place at Lake Hall, Birmingham University from Friday 21 to Monday 24 July.

Events include the Team and Individual Diplomacy Championships, plus United, Railway Rivals, Rostherne Games, Hartland games, Acquire, 1830, Outposts, bridge, croquet and Intimate Diplomacy tournaments, a pop quiz, and more besides.

Registration is £6 for one day, or £12 for the whole four days. Rooms cost £19 per person per night in a shared room, or £20 in a single room, and cheques should be made payable to the 'Universities Diplomacy Tournament'. More details from Peter Sullivan, 55 Brunton Street, Darlington, County Durham DL1 4EN (email: info@manorcon.demon.co.uk)

SFCP GAMES WEEKEND

S F C Press will be running a weekend in partnership with the Crown Hotel in Harrogate over the August Bank Holiday weekend.

The aim is to introduce people to the variety and excellence of modern board games. Our target audience is people who play the occasional game and would like the opportunity to find out about more games in pleasant, friendly surroundings. If you know anyone who might be interested, please let them know. Contact: S F C Press, 42 Wyndale Rd, London E18 1DX, Tel: 0171-358 1613, E-Mail: pevans@sfcpc.co.uk or theo@sfcpc.co.uk.

TRINGCON

Alan Parr is holding another of his popular one-day games events in Tring, this time on Saturday 30 September. Lunch will be provided, as well as tea and coffee and over one hundred games, for a cost of around £8. To secure your place, send a £2 deposit to Alan Parr, 6 Longfield Gardens, Tring, Herts, HP23 4DN.

MidCon

Friday November 10 - Sunday November 12 at Birmingham's Royal Angus Thistle Hotel, a modern city centre hotel with an adjoining NCP car park. Features the National Diplomacy Championship finals and a variety of other events together with the opportunity to play games in a pleasant and relaxed environment.

Room rates are £27 per person per night (sharing) or £34 (single). Registration is £8 until 31 August, after which it will rise to £10. Cheques payable to 'Midcon'.

More details from Brian Williams, 30 Rydding Lane, Millfields Estate, West Bromwich, B71 2HA.

Information on the National Diplomacy Championship qualifying events from Stephen Agar, 79 Florence Road, Brighton BN1 6DL.

BAYCON

Baycon 1996 will be at the Exeter Court Hotel, Kennford, Devon from Thursday 11 to Sunday 14 April. Convention Fee is £10, rooms £24 pounds pppn if sharing and £37 pppn single. More details can be obtained from Glen Bird, 115 Greenpark Road, Plymstock, Plymouth, Devon PL9 9LL.

HOBBYMEETS

BRISTOL: The Knowle (Back Bar), Leighton Road, off Priory Road, off Wells Road. 1st Friday of the month. Paul Norris (0117 942 7061) or Richard Egan (0017 977 4460)

FAREHAM: Richard Williams (01329 236125) organizes a get-together at his house, on the 2nd Sunday of even-numbered months from 10 am.

HERTFORDSHIRE: Semi-regular meetings on Monday and Friday evenings in St Albans (Steve Kingsbury 0727 844475) and Sawbridgeworth (Mike Taylor 0279 724687).

LONDON (1): The Royal George, Eversholt Street, near Euston station, 3rd Wednesday of the month. Contact Vic Hall (0171 326 0125) or Mike Allaway (0181 863 6413) for details.

LONDON (2): The Small Furry Swiggers meet at the Royal Oak in Regency Street, Westminster every Wednesday from 6.30. £2.

LONDON (3): The Small Furry Creatures Press are holding days of games - and magazine production - in the basement of the Barley Mow pub on Horseferry Rd, London SW1 from 11 am to 11 pm on one Saturday a month. If you arrive after 1 pm you'll be asked to pay a table fee of £3.

The **NOTTINGHAM & DERBY Board Games Club** meets every Thursday from 7-10.30 pm. Mick Haytack on 0332 511898.

OXFORD: Every Wednesday during term-time at 7.30 in the nuclear physics building off Keble Road. All welcome. Details from Mark Stretch Flat 23, Stevens Close, Woodstock Road, Oxford OX2 6JW (term) or 2, Over Mill Drive, Selly Park, Birmingham B29 7JL.

RIPLEY, near Woking: Usually 2nd Tuesday of the month, but can vary depending on availability of regulars. Starts with a curry and moves to a pub. Contact Dane Maslen (01483 721856) in advance to check on dates.

The **SHREWSBURY Games Club** meets every Sunday from 2.00 pm to 10.00 pm at The Lodge, Monkmoor, Shrewsbury. More information from Mark Kennett (01743 361417).

HOBBY SERVICES

Springboard is run by Danny Collman, 14 Westover Road, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham, B20 1JG mainly to deal with people who respond to the Diplomacy box flyers. Players are limited to one gamestart.

The Finishing Touch is produced by Richard Sharp, Norton House, Whieldon Street, Amersham, Bucks, HP7 0HU. The results of all Diplomacy games played in the UK: an invaluable source of reference for statisticians, or to find out something about your opponents.

The Novice Package provides a large amount of useful information for those who are new, and not so new, to the hobby. Includes a 56 page booklet with articles on playing Diplomacy and other games by post, a glossary of hobby jargon and pen pictures of hobby personalities, plus a number of sample zines and addresses for hobby services and zine editors. £2 from John Dodds, 55 Leigham Vale, Streatham, London, SW16 2JQ.

Zine Bank: Send a large (A4) SAE stamped for 200g to John Dodds, (address above) and he will send you about half a dozen different zines.

Mission from God lists all the zines in the hobby, with information about prices, sizes, frequency, etc., together one or more brief reviews to give a flavour of what the zine offers. The new editor is Kim Head, 23 Higher Efford Road, Efford, Plymouth, Devon PL3 6LB.

Hobby Advertising Campaign is organized by Stephen Agar (79 Florence Road, Brighton BN1 6DL). The Hobby Advertising Campaign places adverts in various magazines. Stephen wishes to hand this job on to someone else - any volunteers?

The Variant Bank is run by Mark Nelson, 1st Floor Flat, 3 Kelso Road, Leeds LS2 9PR (his email address is amt5man@amsta.leeds.ac.uk). It holds copies of all the well-known Diplomacy variants and more besides. The full catalogue is available for £1.

The **Midcon Zine Archive** always welcomes contributions. Stephen Agar, 79 Florence Road, Brighton BN1 6DL.

Hobby Services Bulletin July 1995

John Dodds, 55 Leigham Vale, London SW16 2JQ

I agreed at Midcon to produce a report just before Manorcon and Midcon each year setting out the state of the hobby services so that the hobby discussions at those conventions could consider whether there were any problems, gaps or opportunities that needed to be addressed.

This is my first report. It is based, as far as possible on the contributions of the people who actually run the services.

Personally, I believe that the biggest challenge ahead is to ensure that good links remain between the different sections of the hobby: postal, the conventions and Diplomacy tournaments, and the e-mail hobby.

Diplomacy on e-mail is expanding rapidly. Although the traditional postal hobby is perhaps smaller than it once was, there are more people than ever playing Diplomacy by various means of correspondence. We need to ensure that Diplomacy players, and players of other boardgames, are aware of all the possible opportunities for playing the games they enjoy. -- John Dodds 1/7/95

Springboard (Danny and Kath Collman)

Kath Collman reports that after slowing to a trickle in the early part of the year, the number of applications to play in Springboard has picked up significantly. There is expected to be a record number of Springboard players taking part in the Diplomacy team tournament at Manorcon.

Boardman Numbers and Diplomacy statistics (Richard Sharp)

Richard says: "The Numbers Game appears 2-3 times a year, but I am hopeful of making it a regular quarterly. Boardman number allocations and the rating system are up to date; In the Beginning will be up to date after two more issues; The Finishing Touch will take a little longer because it's much more space-consuming. The only problem I have is as ever: missing details of some past games. I occasionally pursue cold trails and very occasionally get some information, but probably only Stephen Agar is in a position to help on a large scale. As the hobby shrinks, the stats work gets less demanding."

Novice Package/Zine Bank (John Dodds)

John says: "I am receiving about 3 requests a month for the Novice Package and perhaps a couple of enquiries about the Zine Bank.

The material in the Novice Package is getting very out of date. It is about eight years since the lastest version was written. I have been planning to revise it for the last

couple of years but it never gets to the top of my To-Do list. If anyone out there is keen enough to take it on, I'd be more than happy to let them do it."

Mission from God (Kim Head)

Kim Head will be producing her first Mission from God shortly. She has written to all editors requesting contributions.

Kim says: "Peter Sullivan has forwarded the details of subbers and the balance of their sub, so all is in order there. Future plans are purely to ensure that MFG is regular, reliable, and recognised as an essential and helpful part of the hobby.

My policy is to print any review received, subject to space and assuming the review is not totally scurrilious or obscene. This may offend some editors but will, I believe, add much needed spice to our hobby."

Midcon Archives (Stephen Agar)

Stephen has been busy compiling a comprehensive and up-to-date set of hobby archives and has been helped by the kind gift of zines from many editors. The latest acquisition is a batch of very early zines from the 1970s from the Hoosier Archives in the United States.

Stephen thinks it is a pity that it is not possible to create a really comprehensive set of hobby records by pulling together the resources of the Midcon archive and the underused Walkerdine archive which is run by Andy Bate. Stephen has a full catalogue available of the Midcon archive, available on request.

Mark Nelson (Variant Bank)

I understand that the Variant Bank is in good shape. Mark has a complete catalogue which is available for £1 by post and is freely available at certain internet sites.

Miller Numbers (Haz Bond)

Haz says: "I have not had as much time to devote to these as I'd have liked due to ongoing personal difficulties which means that my zine takes up almost all the time I can spare for the hobby. I am numbering new variants as they start. I hope at some point this summer to enlist the help of Stephen Agar and fill the gaps left by Andy Bate from mid-1992 to end-1994. I would also like to produce a semi-regular publication along the lines of Martin Lewis's Take a Look, reporting on variant results, stats and odds & sods, but this will probably not be out until Midcon at least.

Pimley Award (Haz Bond)

Haz has taken over the Pimley Award from Iain Bowen and will run it in much the same way as before.

Hobby Advertising Campaign / Quick Gamestart Service (Stephen Agar)

Stephen wants to give up his work on advertising. I believe that the Quick Gamestart Service is more or less moribund.

Convention Book (Chris Tringham)

Chris is planning to revise the Convention Book and bring it up to date. The last version was produced in January 1994. He will liaise with Roger Heyworth of Gibson's Games about distribution. He is planning to revise the format to put the specific dates, locations and prices of conventions into a loose-leaf pullout so that the basic edition has a longer lifespan.

OGRE (John Marsden)

John says: "The Orphan Games Rehouser continues to investigate all reports of missing zines. It has just been drawn to my attention that Nothing to Declare is two months late. Stephen Agar dealt with Arfle Bartle Gloop, and probably the only game that will be rescued from Froggy has just restarted. Stephen and I are drawing up a draft for the Guarantee Scheme which I'll bring to Manorcon for discussion."

Zine Poll (Ryk Downes)

Ryk says: "Over the last six months I have announced the winners of the 1994 Zine Poll and produced a large results booklet.

My future plans are to alter the timing of the poll to co-incide with the two largest hobby conventions, starting the poll at Manorcon in July and declaring the results live at Midcon in November. This is in an attempt to increase the number of voters and to make the poll more exciting."

Gladys Awards (John Miller)

I understand that the Awards will continue to be run as in the past.

Hobby Development Fund (Richard Walkerdine)

I have had no news from Richard, but I believe that the Development Fund has a healthy balance and Richard would be more than happy to consider new proposals for using the money to advance the hobby's development.