

Martinscon.

So much has already been written in other zines about this event that I think I'll give a purely personalised report. So...

On Friday, September 12th, I met Andy Pope on the train to New Cross, and arrived at Martin Hammon's 'house' at about 8 p.m.. This was the first Con I had ever been to at which no-one, not even the host, was present when I arrived. Eventually, Andy and I spotted someone who looked like a cat-burglar but who turned out to be Dave Ross, who took us into the commune and up to Martin's room, upon the door of which was a note, signed by one or two Dippy players, directing us to the local pub.

Incidentally, the girl mentioned in Rocinante 8, whom we passed on the stairs, did cower against the wall, but at the sight of Dave's impression of a cat-burglar, not me.

Outside, we met Roger Kitchener and Duncan Rigden, and Dave and Roger offered to drive us round the pub. Then Roger discovered that he'd locked his car and left the key inside, so we spent the next twenty minutes looking for a piece of wire so that Roger could break into it!

Anyway, at the Rose of Kent, New Cross (Courage) at last, we saw a pathetic band of Dippy players sitting in a corner of the Saloon watching Dad's Army on the colour TV. We got down to a bit of chatting, in which I was talking pleasantly to Ade Baird until he was buttonholed by the irrep-
-ressible Barry McManus, when who should walk in but Martin Hammon!

Back at 5 Sanford Walk, with the arrival of the rest of the regulars, the most incredible Poker game got under way. (But not before I had phoned some not-to-early orders to an incredulous Mick Bullock, wangling the GPO out of the cost of the call on 5 Sanford Walk's unique pay phone.) The Poker saw me win £50 (yes, five-0, fifty!), mostly off Tim Spanton, and Sharp lose about £70 to Mark Gleeson in one hand, holding a Royal Flush!!! (Sharp, I mean!)

Next morning, and Sharp plays me at Scrabble for 1p a point. Although I get a 50 start, Richard manages 4 bonuses and beats me by 148! In the middle of the game, I hear the dulcet tones of Victor Logan and fear the worst. Sharp and I, in our little room, are hunched, all unsuspecting, over the Scrabble board. Enter Victor:

Victor: "Anyone for a game of Diplomacy or Monopoly?"

Greg: "No thank you, Victor."

Richard: "No thanks, we're playing Scrabble."

Victor: "Oh. Sort of dominos with letters, is it?"

Greg (spluttering): "Yes, you could call it that, Victor...."

After the Scrabble game, we go into the kitchen, where Mr. Logan is referring to the ads. published in Toad 3:

"Okay, who is New Cross Sanitorium. Is he here?"

A brief enquiry reveals that breakfast is being cooked four houses down, so Richard and I go there hordes of hungry Dippyists are consuming sausages and egg, ably cooked by Martin and served by his voluptuous fiancée. Then we decide to adjourn to the pubs, which are just opening. Quote of the Con then comes from Richard:

"Cor, and I thought Martin was joking when he said his girlfriend had the biggest tits in England....!"

First, then, to the Catford Ram (Youngs), which is sited in a shopping precinct (!), and turns out to be the plushiest pub I've ever been in. There is no dart board and Richard, feeling out of place, insists that we move on!

I suggest the Crown, Lee (Youngs), and we arrive in the public bar to find no dart board there either. Later, we realised that the saloon might have been equipped, but by now it's near closing time and we're at the Old Tiger's Head, Lee (Charrington's), where the dart board is unusable. Anyway, they settle to play Bridge while I thrash Cousins at bar-billiards. Then I nip over to my Dad's shop, which is opposite, and return with my brother (amazing what Dad sells nowadays). We meet some girls who are old friends of ours and chat for a while, then closing time comes, recreation ends, and it's back to the Con.

While Sharp and Weedsack practise their Bridge and everyone else plays Dungeons and Dragons, I occupy myself watching Tim Spanton sleep and tossing

pieces of paper into his wide-open mouth.

Opening time, Saturday evening, and Roy Taylor drives me, Richard, Barry McManus and Glyn Palmer on a pub-crawl of Wandsworth. As we leave, the Dungeons and Dragons mob, now evicted from the house, are watching the thunderclouds coming over....

Darts. I've never played before, really, and it becomes obvious when, playing this over-under game, I am set to go under about 86. I score 59 with my first two darts, and need only to miss the board (scoring 20) to make almost certain of winning. My third dart skewers into the treble 18, and all collapse laughing.

After about our fourth pub (and umpteenth pint...), Roy drives us, in the pouring rain, and the wrong way up one-way streets, to this chinese take-away Richard is sure is open. It's closed. Back in New Cross, however, we find one open, and I get sweet & sour pork.

The rain is now really pouring down. Roy parks about 50 yards from Martin's front door and we all dash, heads down, for the house. I've gone 30 yards and-am-doing 20 m.p.h. when I run into an invisible washing line which catches me round the neck but fortunately snaps. I fall backwards into four inches of water....

Inside, and I can't stomach my sweet'n'sour, which Doubleday eagerly bolts to follow his 3-course dinner.

Poker, and I, half asleep, lose £46. Sunday morning I wander listlessly around looking for somewhere to sleep (3 hours in 2½ days), can't, and decide to go home. Grooooooogh...!

Thanks to Martin for the most eventful Con I have ever attended, to Roy for all that drunken driving, to Tim for the money, and to Richard, Pete and Adrien for taking it off me. I now look forward with relish to ScotDipCon.

For the benefit of new members, the above is perfectly true, and typical of a good Diplomacy convention. What's that you say? Diplomacy? Good God no, I didn't play that. ScotDipCon 1975 is being hosted by Wink Thompson, of 15 Lineside Walk, Rhu, Dumbartonshire, (Scotland, dummies!). All sleeping space inside the house has already been booked, but you could always sleep in a car, in a tent, under the stars or not at all. The price, to cover the cost of the food, is £1 deposit (as soon as possible) plus £1 on arrival. The date is 24th-27th October, and I hope to arrive some time Friday evening. See you there.

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<u>GAMESTART</u>	<u>NGC 144 (1975 FE)</u>	<u>"ARAGORN"</u>	<u>Player List.</u>
AUSTRIA :	Phil Dines, 31 Elmfield Road, Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE3 4AY.		
ENGLAND :	Jon Grose, 18 Highfield Grove, Horfield, Bristol 7.		
FRANCE :	Frank Dashwood, 12 Lomond Road, Edinburgh, EH5 3JR.		
GERMANY :	Martin Styler, 53 Shenley Fields Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham, B29 5AL.		
ITALY :	Jonathan Palfrey, School of Industrial and Business Studies, University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 7AL.		
RUSSIA :	24336936 Gnr Chris Bishop CJL, 6-27 Med Regt RA, B.F.P.O. 107.		
TURKEY :	Ian Macdonald, "The Retreat", Findhorn, Forres, Moray, Scotland, IV36 OYS.		

Well, you're all paid up with the Club, and at the time of typing this (Monday 6th), I have subscriptions to TotS from six of you and orders from five. The Spring 1901 adjudication appears overleaf, and the TotS house rules, recommended reading for all of you, comprise the last two pages of this issue.

I have decided to call my regular and variant (not ID) games by the names of Tolkein characters, starting with A for Aragorn and working through the alphabet. It remains for me to wish you all luck, and hope you all decide to see the game through till its (or your) end.

Important note - will all players in NGC 144 please note the above names and addresses of the other players, which are almost all different in some way from those in Hello, Good Evening, and Welcome... 57.

Austro-Russian border squabble
Peace, for the most part, elsewhere.

AUSTRIA (Phil Dines): F(Tri)-Alb A(Bud)-Ser A(Vie)-Gal
ENGLAND (Jon Grose): F(Lon)-NTH F(Edi)-NWG A(Lpl)-Edi
FRANCE (Frank Dashwood): A(Par)-Pic A(Mar)-Spa F(Bre)-MAO Builds Hotels
Pic, Cov & Lei. Sq. !
GERMANY (Martin Styler): A(Mun)-Ruh F(Kie)-Den A(Ber)-Kie
ITALY (Jonathan Palfrey): A(Ven)-Pie A(Rom)-Tus F(Nap)-TYS
RUSSIA (Chris Bishop): A(War)-Gal A(Mos)-Sev F(Sev)-Rum F(StP)sc-GOB
TURKEY (Ian Macdonald): A(Con)-Bul A(Smy)-Arm F(Ank)-BLA

No retreats (hardly surprising, really !).

Press:

De La Frenais: - Ashwood to you. Happy new Century to your assorted Majesties from Frank's Republic.

Let us rejoice that in these civilised days War between the Great Powers is unthinkable ! In mutual trust and cooperation entering the Golden Age of peace and prosperity, when Income Tax shall be abolished, beer strengthened and the penny post reduced to a halfpenny (and GMs' typewriters have circum-flex accents).

Vote for Cendre De Bois, President de Gaul.

((Sounds like the NF manifesto !))

((No Dateline)): The people of Russia look forward to the early destruction of the English forces and early occupation of London. "Long live the Tzar".

Sara's Sleazy Swedish Sauna: A typical Spring '01 season. I haven't got Mick Bullock's analysis of openings with me at college, but I would guess that all the opening moves are very common except France's. A couple of gems from the GM's mailbag: "Already I have the feeling there are some not-quite-honest people about." - Chris Bishop. You betcher, Chris ! "You can credit me with £12 - rent for stopping on my property x 2 as I own all the blue sites." - Frank Daswood. No chance, try Rocinante. TotS House Rules are at the back of this issue, and all players are recommended to read them carefully.

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Once again, I have not received any orders from the SESAME player for his Intimate Diplomacy game against Richard Sharp. This is a final warning; if I have received no orders from the player concerned by the Intimate Diplomacy deadline, his or her name will be revealed for public ridicule. If I receive no orders from anyone who is a member of the Society for the Extermination of Sharp And Morris Everywhere (the last game report can be obtained from me), I will consider the game to have been conceded, and SESAME disgraced. So you have been warned !

ID - B has only one season adjudicated this time, since Dave Brown has found that now he's at work he has less free time. Surprise, surprise ! He would, however, like another game. Fortunately, so would Mike Ingham, so ID - E will be between these two noble personalities. I already have a preference list from Mike; can I have one from you by the deadline please, Dave ? Ta. Dave's new address, by the way, is:

37 Hopefield Avenue, Kilburn, London, NW6 6LJ.

Dave Ross is also on the move, to:

Rayleigh Tower, Flat no. 5, University of Essex, P.O. Box no. 26,
Tivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3UE. !!!

Dave Brown also expresses surprise at my House Rule 4, regarding voluntary disbandment of mercenaries, and says "... Part of the interest in ID is in skilfully manipulating mercenary units on to another player, which he has to guard, in case they turn upon his back..." Well, if Mike is agreeable, we could play ID-E with the GM retreating unordered mercenaries. How about it ?