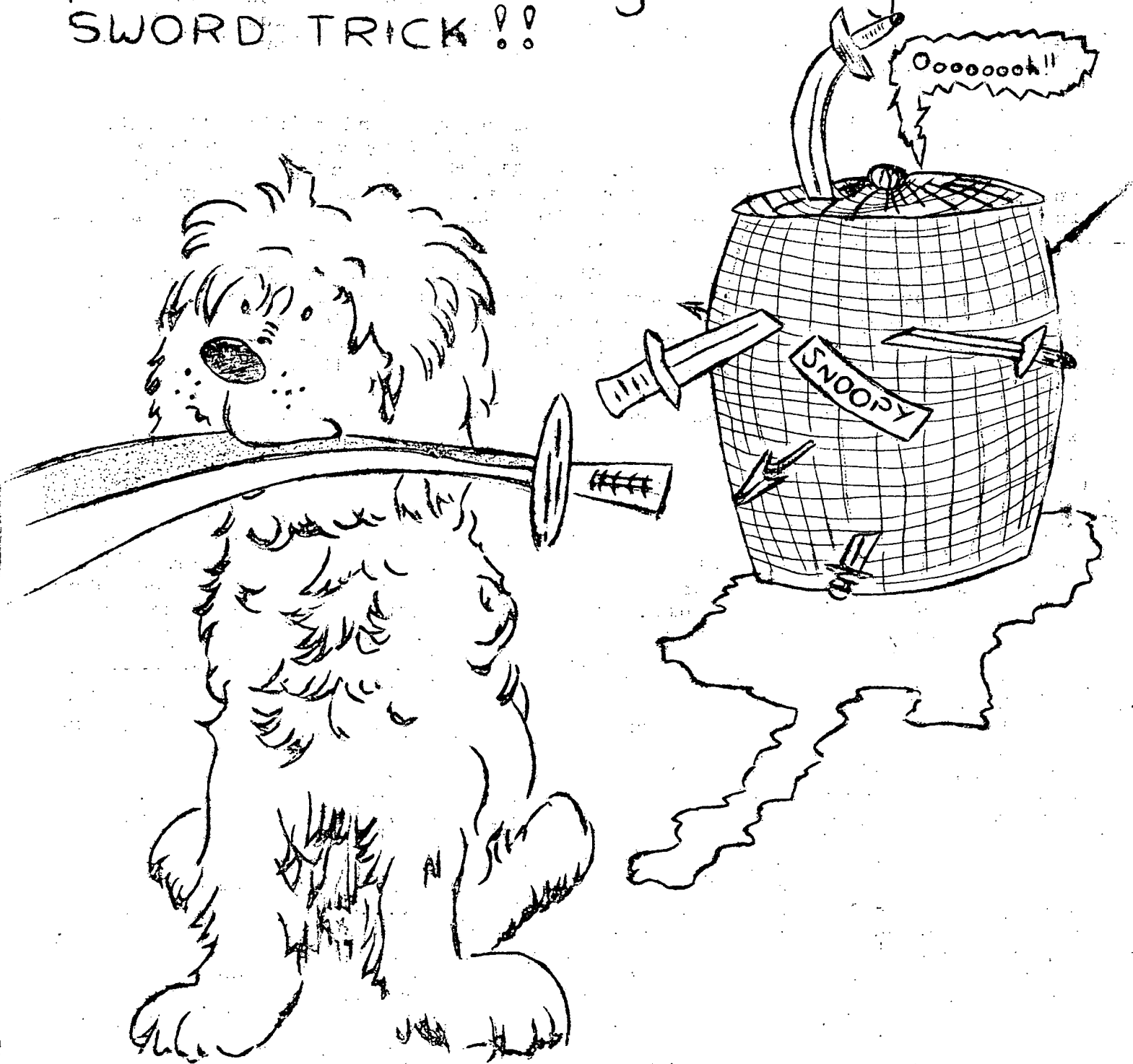


BOOT-wonder dog magician
performs the legendary
SWORD TRICK !!



Welcome each and everyone of you to this the 34th star-studded issue of CHIMAERA, a wonder-'zine edited and published by Boot the wonder-dog, ably assisted by the human Clive F. Booth of 71 Clara Mount Road, Langley, Heanor, Derbyshire DE7 7HS, United Kingdom. Also involved are several other 'humans', and I use the term loosely, who feature as guest GM's, article writers, etc and will pop up from time to time during the pages that follow.

Cost to you is a gift at .88 of a penny per sheet which makes an average issue but a meagre 16 pence for 36 pages (plus postage). Even I don't know how we do it so cheaply and I did the costings. If you want to subscribe (and what sort of heathen must it be that doesn't?), you can do so by sending any sum of over £1.00 to dear old brown eyes Clive and he'll send you issues until it runs out, at which stage he'll promptly ask for more.

Frequency is four-weekly simply because it's easy for me to remember. At the end of each week after sending an issue out I curl up one leg beneath me. When I fall down I know another issue is due. Smart critters we dogs. But now it's over to the star of our show, let's hear it for him.....

Hi folks, I'm Clive, one time editor of the wonder-'zine CHIMAERA but now reduced to second in command to the wonder-dog. Seems he's a damn sight more popular than I am. Ah well, they say never work with animals or kids, I should have known better. I suppose that's why Ian Lee seems to want Dave Thorby out of CORMORANT (Hi Ian! I thought the capital letters might attract you).

Well, we're back in mimeo again after last issues litho experiment. It didn't work for several reasons but mainly it was cost (Bryan underestimated by about 20%) and turnaround (some people didn't get their copies until just two days before the 'Cricketboss' deadline. Apologies for that.) The idea hasn't been rejected out of hand though and we may try again in a couple of months.

This return to mimeo does have it's advantages though for it means that the price of that average issue is reduced by 2p from 18p to 16p, and that's in the region of 12½%. CHIMAERA fights inflation.....

MIDCON II has come and gone, and as it's odds on that most other editors will be publishing reports I'll confine myself to just mentioning a few of the things that stick in the mind. Things like discovering that Victor Logan really does exist, and that for next year he's promising to come in a suit that fits him. Things like playing a game of 'Nuclear War' against Tony Crouch and seeing him eliminate himself before any of the other players had chance to move. Like Paul Willey who wouldn't be seen dead without his handbag, and Mick Bullock who wouldn't be seen dead with his. Lew Pulsipher ripping me off for £1.30 and having to stoop to pass through doors where mere mortals as I can walk with ease. Edi Birsan playing all the countries and moving all the pieces in a tournament Dippy game whilst his opponents looked on. The serious lack of food and liquid nourishment. Sharp and Piggot spreading their anti-Booth propaganda. How many people approached me with "But you can't be Clive Booth, Piggott/Sharp says you don't come to cons." Dago Taylor trapping me in a corridor and shaking my hand before letting on who he was. Tony Crouch and that ruddy tennis ball that followed him everywhere. A rather rotund individual who said "Clive Booth? Never heard of you.....". Bob Howes who doesn't look as old as he says and who doesn't even have a dirty raincoat. Ron Fisher who's nowhere near the massive size everyone says he is. Watching Dave Tant, Bob Howes and several others sitting around a table doing nothing in particular but taking it in turns to mutter 'What time does the bar open'. Ten of us sitting around with Richard Nash on Saturday saying 'we're bored'. Meeting Aaron Cojaksed in person. Insulting Victor Logan and him not appearing to notice, etc., etc., etc.

Roll on Derby 1978 and Midcon III when we can all do it again.

I know that letters to the editor usually go at the back of this 'zine, but just for a change I've decided we start with one. Quite an informative one too containing lots of good advice for those of you who strive to get your names in the 'zine. It's from a favourite correspondent of CHIM's and he's headed it.....

HOW TO GET YOUR LETTER PUBLISHED

by GEORGE NORTH

The best way to appear in print is to make a monthly assessment of your favourite 'zine that is simply glowing with complimentary phrases, colourful approval, and copious quantities of the highest praise to the editor thereof. This can be a bit difficult if you regularly comment on the large size of the 'zine and the amount of work the editor must have put into producing it, and are suddenly confronted with a brand new, smaller than small, magazine. But find adequate words of wisdom you must. Harp on the small print and congratulate your editor on his great genius for having squeezed a quart into a pint pot. Don't ever let him think, not even for a moment, that you had the slightest qualms, and never dream of telling your editor that to read his 'zine you needed a bleeding magnifying glass and a very strong light. Be generous.

Praise the front cover. I know that dogs have nothing to do with our games, but Clive has a thing about Old Brown Eyes, so be nice about his dog. Tell him you laughed fit to bust at the caption where Boot was asked to catch something for the table and plumped for the table cloth. Yes, I know the only thing Boot is likely to catch is fleas, but don't tell Clive that. Telling him things like that does not sell your letter favourably. Love me, love my dog and all that stuff.

Mention the three page editorial by all means. Editorials are the editors own brain child and should never be ignored or disregarded. Yes, I know they sometimes go on a bit and you probably haven't read all the pages, but force yourself. Take a week if you must, but ploughing through the editorial can make or break. Absolutely essential if you are to comment favourably and not risk getting the editors back up; albeit ever so accidentally. Never try and wangle out by saying baby spilled tea on those pages because the editor will only send copies and then you're back where you started. Having read and got the gist, you then know what to agree with and can figure out which way the wind blows. "Rubbish, nonsense and poppycock" are not words used when summing up the editorial and will spoil your chances of getting into print just as surely as not paying your subs. Agree with the editorial until you are sick is my advice.

You are obviously over the moon about the drawings and the litho print. The layout of pages ten and eleven are sheer marvels of perfection and a delight to behold. That you have already been lumbered with flexagons while at Grammar school is beside the point. That you have dabbled with trio-flexohexagons right the way through to duo-deca-flexohexagons doesn't matter one iota. That you know you now have to face a follow on of Mobius strips and variations thereof, and that if you wanted to know about such things you would have purchased yourself a booklet on Origami, mustn't worry you in the slightest. Clive has to award space to his favourite scribes and will defend his writers to the very limit and against all comers. Be nice. Say you turned over two pages by mistake and didn't see the article on flexagons at all. Or else you might throw in a little joke and tell the editor you flexed your hexagon and RICKed your wrist. Editors like a good joke.

Emphasise the bits of the 'zine that really do appeal. Come now, there must be something? The heading of Railway Rivals was a masterpiece bordering on absolute genius. That the editor may have nicked the idea from somebody else mustn't enter your mind, even for a split second. You do not know for sure that it was nicked. Always give the benefit of

the doubt. Bend over backwards until it hurts. As for the crossword that appeared on the same page, tell how it was well produced and every square coming out as plain as plain. That it kept you up half the night and finished up torn to shreds because you couldn't work out the silly, stupid, daft clues might well have your editor in fits, but I shouldn't bank on it.

Save up your ripe tomatoes, old cabbages and cucumbers for Will Haven and Bellicus. Clive will love you for that. But don't go too far, just in case. Editors are allowed a certain amount of poetic licence but landing up in court is expecting a bit much of them. Even your jovial and fun loving Clive must have his limits. Add a few 'ha ha's' here and there to let your editor know you are only kidding. Even now, my own valiant efforts to explain all the ins and outs of what to do to get your letter published in the journal might contain some small indiscretion and miss out on the high standard required for inclusion in the number one 'zine poll magazine - CHIMERA.

The main thing that you the reader must put across to your editor is that you yourself, personally, are one happy hunk of a contented reader of his fabulous and absolutely marvellous monthly magazine and that you are not just saying things in order to wangle a free issue of the biggest and best Dippy 'zine on the market. Follow these instructions and YOU will get your letter published in the magazine just like I did. Dig?

***** GEORGE NORTH 1977*****

As I said before, sound advice if you wish to get a letter published. Boot and I love a good sycophant..... A few misconceptions there though, like 'What have dogs got to do with games - nothing'. Huh! All games are contests, and a contest is just a form of war. Have you never heard of the 'dogs of War'? Oh come now, surely? And as for Boot catching fleas I'm afraid that it is an inevitability, all dogs suffer the same way. Fortunately though, Boot's rich, 100% pure noble British blood (retained even in spite of that gypsy wench's curse) is much too strong for them, and they usually fall to the ground in a drunken stupor within 15 seconds.

The 'Railway Rivals' heading was not nicked either. A lot of the other stuff is, admittedly, but that wasn't!

Anyway, that article was a little tongue in cheek, or at least I'm going to assume it was. Not so the next one though which deals with a similar subject. It comes from one of CHiM's favourite Yanks...

C O N T R I B U T I O N S A N D

P U B L I S H E R S ' S I N S ' .

by LEW PULSIPHER

One often finds an appeal in a dipzine, new or old, for contributions from the readers. Yet there are only a few 'zines which offer such contributions regularly. Why is that?

Experienced writers prefer to send material to established 'zines like DIPLOMACY WORLD, both because of the higher circulation and because they know they'll be well treated by the publisher. Inexperienced writers are often deterred by several circumstances from taking the (for them) big step. First, some subjects are 'written out', and it's hard for a new writer to say anything that hasn't been said before. For example, how often have you read a 'how to play' article that was just a rehash of other articles? Second, especially when the potential writer wishes to say something controversial, there is the fear that he will be unfairly treated by the publisher. Any hobby veteran can think of examples of writers who have suffered from unfair publisher tactics. The novice contributor is faced with a minor dilemma - if he chooses a less well-known 'zine, he may be poorly treated; but if he chooses a well known 'zine with a good reputation, he may find that the publisher

isn't interested in his 'minor effort'. (In practice the latter is almost never true, but this usually isn't clear to a new writer.)

The remainder of this article will consider some of the problems occasional or new contributors to dipzines encounter, and what can be done about them. (I might point out that regular contributors are not immune. For example, when Scott Rosenberg merged The Pocket Armenian with two other New York 'zines, he ceased publishing Verhandeln. But I was never favoured with the courtesy of a private or even public announcement of this, I just noticed that it had occurred. Nice?). At any rate, the publishers' dirty tricks fall into three groups:

- 1) Excerpting
- 2) Refusing to print rejoinder/rebuttal
- 3) Interspersing comments.

A publisher can intersperse a letter or article, distorting its meaning by leaving out negatives, qualifiers, and whole sentences. The more excisions one makes, the easier it is to make the author 'say' something he didn't mean at all. The extremes of this are to paraphrase without quoting anything or to excerpt without indicating so with ellipses. This tactic can be very damaging whilst appearing to be consistent with an effort to discover the truth. If you are sending something to a publisher and have reason to believe he might use this trick, tell him he must print all of it or none (and always keep a copy). It is better to have to find another publisher than to try to clean up after an excerpter. Don't get self-righteous and say something like 'I bet you won't print this you @%&?*!!'. The recipient is likely to do so in order to make you look foolish - and you will.

If you want to pressure the publisher, tell him where you'll submit your material if he doesn't print it. (A publisher always looks bad when he refuses space to a view opposed to his own, which is later published elsewhere with a note that 'so-and-so refused to print this'.) Of course, this is something you would only use when you know in advance that you're in an adversary situation.

Another typical ploy is not to print any information which in any way counters the publishers own view. All you can do in this case is try to find someone else to publish it, but for many subjects the chances aren't good. One big reason why publishers have so much influence in this hobby is that very few non-publishers can be certain of getting an article or letter published elsewhere when an opponent refuses to print it. A publisher, of course, can always print things in his own 'zine, so he always has some retaliatory capability. A 'zine that has been a refuge for those who have been frozen out is Diplomacy Review. As the forum for hobby opinion and hobby 'politics' it is more likely to accept minority or non-publisher protests or counter proposals than other 'zines.

Another tactic, employed most notably by New Yorkers, is to intersperse the publishers comments within the body of the letter or article by an outsider. Such comments are often cutesy and sickly humorous, or ignore what is said later in the piece (or even in the same sentence) in order to distort the writers' meaning and make him look ridiculous. Fortunately this pernicious habit is not wide-spread.

Another tactic sees the publisher print a rebuttal to something originally written about him, and then say something like 'I could tear this apart, but I've lost interest/don't want to use the space". This may be his legitimate reason, but more often it's a face saving attempt by a publisher who put his foot in his mouth and doesn't know a better way to extricate it when taken to task. At least, in this case, ones contribution is there for all to judge, and I suspect the publisher seldom saves more than his nose anyway.

In all cases the non-publisher is at the mercy of the publishers. A more mundane illustration of this is the 'plugs' publishers give to each other. I have seen at least one publisher blatantly state that he would give a plug of equal length and strength of recommendation to any 'zine that gave his 'zine a plug. What happened to accuracy? Unfortunately the non-publisher must face the fact that much of what is written

in one 'zine about others is probably biased in favour of those 'zines. A tradition dating from the founding of the hobby directs publishers to help each other out by giving a good word whether deserved or not. This leads to incompetents finding enough players to start several games, so that when they inevitably, finally fold, several players and subscribers are hurt in the process. Occasionally one sees a publishers trying to fight this tendency with 'honest reviews'. In most cases, however, a reviewer tells you more about 'zines by what he doesn't say. Fearing to offend, or following tradition, when he sees a 'zine that looks promising he may make a critical comment about printing or something that 'could improve' and otherwise say nothing at all rather than criticize. This is nice, but it doesn't help the average reader. You just have to learn to read between the lines.

LEW PULSIPHER 1977

The preceding piece, as you will no doubt already have guessed, was written by Lew for inclusion in an American Dipzine, but owing to a fold it was never published. I think though that much of it is applicable to the hobby over here too and I'm sure that many of you will recognise some of our own publishers from it. I make no claims at all as to being totally innocent of never committing any of the three 'dirty tricks' myself, but where/if I have done so it has been totally unintentional. I wonder how many other publishers can say that? Think about it. I know that I've suffered at their hands before when my replies have been paraphrased and excerpted apparently to fit their next series of answers.

Interspersing comments is a frequently occurring thing not only amongst letters and articles but also amongst columns or sub-sines. I'm pleased to say though that this mostly occurs with newer 'zines and editors and that generally they quickly grow out of the habit. (As an example see Ian Lee's CORMORANT No.1 where the brash young, new editor goes out of his way to make Richard Nash look an idiot by unnecessarily interrupting his strategy article from start to finish).

All in all I don't think that our British 'zines are too bad on the three dirty tricks, but then I seldom write anything to another editor that he is likely to want to excerpt, intersperse or omit anyway, so I wouldn't really know.....

'Zine reviews always remain a source of amusement to me, and I recall Walter Luc Haas (editor of the Swiss 'zine BUHM) telling the story of how he asked a British editor to give him a plug and recieved a reply to the effect of 'Sure, you write it, I'll print it'. Boy, would that have been a honest review!! I don't recall whether Walter said he sent anything or not, I'd be very surprised if he did, but it leads one to wonder just how many of the other reviews that editor published were obtained in the same way.

But what about you, readers and contributors, what are your feelings? Do you feel that you've been unfairly treated by an editor, or have ever been tempted to pay out a sub to a 'zine on the recommendation of another and then later regretted it? I'd be particularly interested to recieve information from contributors to any 'zine (including this one) that feel they have been subjected to any of the three dirty tricks. It would be interesting to see if any editor or editors crop up regularly.

I wonder if the hobby does need an ombudsman.....?

It is an accepted fact that it is our American cousins that go for the Diplomacy strategy articles rather than we British. I don't know why that should be, but as far as I'm concerned they're welcome to them. Take a look at this example which appeared in DIPLOMACY WORLD 3-4 (and remember that DW is the Yanks hobby showpiece):

'The optimum situation for England is one where he can pick up both Nwy & Bel in the first year. Bel is a tough neutral to win, because frankly, everybody wants it (except for Russia, Turkey, Austria, and Italy).' Dummies, why say everybody when they really mean France & Germany? Maybe that's why they think everbody likes strategy articles...

TEKUMEL



Pe Choi

An adventure in umpteen parts set on the fantasy world of Professor M.A.R. Barker and recreated by the T.S.R. game 'THE EMPIRE OF THE PETAL THRONE',

THE QUEST FOR THE TREASURE OF CHAYAU'DLANG'USH

Part 17

Qyshū and his party ate well as guests of the islanders and were able to pick up a few scraps of information about their hosts. The islands secret remained hidden though, for whenever the conversation seemed to be heading in that direction Thesū with a knowing smile, would subtly change it's cause.

After the meal the women were once again admitted to the room and they quickly cleared the dishes from the low table. Thesū had ushered

his guests with their cushions to the far wall of the room, and it was there that they sat wondering just what sort of an 'entertainment' it was that Thesū had told them was about to follow. Once again he clapped his hands in command and the door was flung open. This time four pretty young girls each dressed in a flowing gown of brightly coloured silk were admitted and they moved quickly and lightly, almost seeming to drift on a breeze, to the table. One wore crimson, one gold, one blue and one green, and as they moved the light caught the folds of the material creating an almost hypnotic shimmering effect of subtly changing hues. Qyshū was transfixed by the beauty of the four girls and their fabulous gowns and he watched intently as they stepped onto the table to form a square standing back to back. He was so engrossed in their actions that he had failed altogether to even notice that half a dozen or so musicians had followed them into the room. When they hit the first note of their tune in unison it caused him to start visibly, but his attention was soon back on the girls who were starting to sinuously and erotically move their bodies to the beat. Slowly at first but gradually the tempo increased with the music; all eyes were upon them as faster and faster they swayed and twirled around the table. Qyshū could feel his heart pounding in his chest as his excitement grew. Quickly he stole a glance at his companions to check their response and found that they seemed to be even more under the spell of the music and the girls than he. Gresh'l, Ukshēn and Dyogheykh were all clapping their hands vigorously to the beat and Hailmhūling was up on his feet swirling and twisting to the music himself. Qyshū's eyes were drawn irrevocably back to the girls and he realised that he too was now clapping his hands to the beat. From the corner of his eye he noticed that Ukshēn had also climbed to his feet to join Hailmhūling in the wild dance. In Qyshū there was a feeling of excitement and elation, and the music and the girls became to his mind the only things in the world, everything else had ceased to exist. He knew that he was now on his feet himself gyrating with the others, but there was nothing he could do about it; there was nothing he wanted to do about it.

Then gentle glow of white light from the walls began to change, slowly at first to pink and the gradually picking up speed, to gold, green blue and then back again to pink. The whole room was bathed by the coloured glow and where the light caught the rapidly moving, swirling fabric of the girls gowns it reflected onto the walls and ceiling in ever changing moire patterns.

Everyone was now on their feet, both Qyshū's party and their hosts, all caught by the music and light, all dancing together around the girls on the table. Even P'Khilu the non-human Pe Choi slave of Qyshū was caught in the trance-like state and danced with the others. The only

ones who seemed to be unmoved by it all were the two Tinaliya, Untego and So'slyzsun, and they now stood amongst the musicians watching the whole scene with apparent mild amusement.

Then suddenly it was over.

The music stopped, the girls fell to their knees and the lighting changed smoothly back to white. The participants in the wild dance found themselves looking into each others sweat soaked faces in amazement and it was Thesù who was the first to recover his composure.

"I hope you approved of our entertainment" he said.

Greshl, whose lumbering frame had now collapsed back onto the cushions, wiped his arm across his, looked at the sweat stains it had left on the sleeve of his tunic and then replied "Well, it's certainly a bit of a change from chewing the Hnéqu at the Winemakers!"

Everyone laughed, not so much at Greshl's attempted joke, but more at the sight of his mountainous bulk stretched full out on it's back on the cushions with arms thrown out and topped by his round jovial face still flushed from his exertions.

Two more females entered the room, deposited tray of goblets and jugs on the table and then left as silently as they had entered. The four dancing girls then proceeded to pour a red wine from the jugs to the goblets and then to distribute it amongst those present. The party broke up into several smaller groups and for an half hour or so they chatted informally. Qyshù sat with Thesù, P'Khilu and one of the dancing girls relating some of his other adventures in distant parts of the world. Dyogheykh and Hailshuling occupied the corner over by the door with two of the girls and the guards, their loud, bawdy laughter frequently reverberating around the room. The two tiny Tinaliya chatted with the orchestra, occasionally drawing hoots of laughter as they attempted to play in turn each of the instruments that were very much larger than themselves. Ukshén and the remaining dancing girl sat alone on the cushions, away from the others, talking quietly and edging closer to each as the conversation became more intimate.

All too soon it was time to return to the ship, otherwise it would have been impossible to make it before nightfall. Farewells were said and Thesù and a small band of warriors accompanied them back to the beach where the out-riggers and their oarsmen waited. Before they left Qyshù was given details of the area from which they were to collect the provisions they'd just purchased and Greshl said he would have some of his crew out to do it whilst the rest of them were trekking up ^{to the} ruins of the castle on the morrow. The area designated was the forested peninsula across the bay from where the 'Adhin Eng'shaur' lay at anchor and wouldn't present any problem.

Once in the out-riggers they found themselves waiting for young Ukshén who still stood a little way up the beach his hands clasping those of the dancing girl.

"Oh come on Romeo!" bellowed Greshl standing up in the boat and rocking it dangerously, "We'll be back through this way in the morning, can't you leave her alone until then?!"

Ukshén turned and hurried down the beach his cheeks glowing with embarrassment. Seeing his colour though just encouraged Greshl to tease him all the more and soon Dyogheykh and Hailshuling were joining in too. As the three boats skipped back across the river their voices rang out over the still waters carrying their crude witticisms back to those on the shore. Hearing them Thesù looked to one of the warriors that stood nearby, shook his head slowly, shrugged his shoulders and said "Come on, let's get back to the village, I've got to make a report."

The trek through the forest over the river, back to their own rowing boat was uneventful for Qyshù and his companions, and after a few minutes of pulling on the oars they were back on board the 'Adhin Eng'shaur' just in time to see the sun disappear into the sea. (Qyshù had ascertained now why it was that the islanders chose to hack their way through the forest along that particular stretch of coastline rather than taking the easy way and walking along the beach. Thesù had told him during

their talk that there was a colony of Tsoggu somewhere just off the coast that were often attracted by any activity along that stretch).

The first thing Qyshu did on arriving back on board was to ask Gresh'l, Ukshén, Hailmhuling and Dyogheykh to his cabin where they could discuss the events of the day whilst they were still fresh in their minds.

What did they know? Well, they had discovered that although the island was not on official maps its existence was apparently well known to their government and it seemed too as if it might be visited pretty regularly. Many of the nationalities of humankind were represented in the population, but they had seen no non-humans at all, apart from the village of Ahoggya they'd sailed past on the north coast. Qyshu was also a little perturbed about the way they had all reacted to the music in the underground room. He'd chewed the Hnequ himself, very strong forms of it not usually available to the general public, but even the elation he'd experienced from that was no comparison to what he'd felt earlier that day. What had caused it? Was it the girls? The music? The lights? Or was it something else altogether? No-one could really provide any sort of answers at all, but Greshl's philosophy was one of 'why worry anyway?'. They were here to look for treasure, the natives were friendly enough and were even providing a guide to take them part of the way up into the mountains. There certainly didn't seem to be any cause for undue concern. The only problem they looked as if they might meet was in the form of an old magic-user up in the hills, who, apparently every once in awhile would stop people passing through the mountains and ask for a toll, usually in the form of food or wine. Any magician living the life of an hermit in an out of the way place like this though was unlikely to have a knowledge of magic any thing like as extensive as Qyshu's, or even, for that matter, Greshl's.

One person in the room wasn't interested in the discussions though, he sat staring at nothing in particular, daydreaming and fingering a green gemstone that hung from a chain around his neck, a gift to him from the dancing girl Daq'raisho. Ukshén's mind was on things other than pirate treasure and mysterious islands; Ukshén was in love.

Clive F. Booth 1977

(The TSOGGU are marine creatures of Tékumel, fairly common but tending to congregate only in small numbers. In appearance they resemble the rotting corpses of humans that have been in the sea for some time. They have white, pupil-less eyes that put anyone looking into them into a hypnotic trance, in effect freezing them to the spot.



I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE MYSELF
MY NAME IS

The CHIMAERA column that puts faces to the names with auto-biographical notes. This issue we commence with...

PAUL JOHN HUMPHREYS

Born: 28:4:60

Eyes: Shifty

Birth marks: none

Education: studying maths & physics to A-level.

Achievements: 6 O-levels with 2 results awaited. Been awarded a flying scholarship.

Ambitions: To fly with Red Arrows or British (Pitts) aerobatic team. Not to grow old.

Special likes: Riddleys Bitter, Rainbow, Deep Purple, Cycling, oh yes and aircraft.

Special Hates: Punk Rock Bands, (except the Stranglers), snobbish 'zine editors.

CLIFFORD PATRICK KENNEDYBorn: 16th April 1954Barrister Exams for second time and writer of poison pen letters in BEILICUS.Present Status: Studying for Final morning, running (some say ruining) the greatest fantasy game of them all, DUCAIS (Yeah!) and playing inter alia chess, snooker, soccer, tennis, table tennis, pitch and putt, golf, SPI games (especially WW2 eastern front), and of course Diplomacy.Activities: Staying on in bed in the morning, running (some say ruining) the greatest fantasy game of them all, DUCAIS (Yeah!) and playing inter alia chess, snooker, soccer, tennis, table tennis, pitch and putt, golf, SPI games (especially WW2 eastern front), and of course Diplomacy.Interests: All the above plus nude women (with or without big knockers), International Rugby, English cricket (Yorkshire in particular), Sheffield Wednesday (that's not a joke) and books about WW2.Achievements: University Law Degree, rescuing DUCAIS from the doldrums, introducing at least 12 people to Diplomacy over here (Eire) and getting up before 11 o'clock the day before yesterday.Dislikes: Diplomacy drop-outs, people who don't answer letters, Irish Jokes,, women who wear chastity belts, racialists, niggers, players who leave DUCAIS without telling me, Second World War movies, Virginia Wade, Tommy Docherty, Mr. Samson (the Greek referee who robbed our soccer team of a place in the World Cup Finals, people who think they're better Diplomacy players than me, arrogance, those who attempt to play down the decisive role the Soviet Union played in defeating Nazi Germany, and finally, BBC TV reporters who don't know the difference between the SS and the Waffen SS.Hopes: That one day DUCAIS will number 50 active players; that God exists and that Clive and Will Haven will patch up their little differences (could be painful mind).

CHRIS BOYESBorn: 25:5:55 (My parents tried to make it easy for me to remember, which is fortunate because my memory is appalling.Appearance: Rather striking, being 6' 1" with ginger hair and a well cultivated beard. I grew the beard for fun about 3 years ago and then was too lazy to start shaving again. I wear glasses except for the odd occasions when I can remember where I put my contact lenses.Occupation: Student of Dental Surgery. Oh! where did everyone go?Temperment: Very mild mannered and polite until I get a drill in my hand. Aha! now tell me, does it hurt when I drill this nerve here...?Ambitions: To be able to extract teeth in one piece. To get more people to play my 'Sport of Kings' game in 'Nitehawk'.Achievements: Hundreds of small pieces of teeth in varying sizes. Soon get the hang of it I expect.Hobbies and interests: Wargames of any type, chess, football and I've tried just about every other sport.Major interest: Food, and I'm still under 11 stone.Dislikes: Smoking, but I still can't give it up. Being hit by cricket balls when I've dozed off. Playing in goal at hockey without protective clothing (they won't let me do that again I can tell you...).Marital Status: Still open to offers.

Well there you are, three more CHIM subbers that cease to be just names. There are, however, lots more of you that still do remain no more than names on the circulation list, so let's have something from you for next time.

After the above auto-biographies there are two questions that have got to be asked. One is to Chris Boyes: 'What did happen when you played in goal without protective clothing?', and the other is to everyone in general: 'Do you think Cliff Kennedy was trying to tell us he runs a game called 'DUCAIS' (yeah!)?'

SPACEFILLER

Invicta have taken to advertising their 'Mastermind' game on commercial radio. "If Nell Gwynn played King Charles at Mastermind" goes the ad, "Who do you think would win?"

Personally I haven't a clue, but I'd bet on Nellie having a couple of oranges in the solution.

KURSK

SPI © 1971

A game review by
CLIFF KENNEDY.



'Kursk' is a grand-tactical game of 1943 in the Soviet Union and the background to this famous battle is as follows. The destruction of the German Sixth Army at Stalingrad decided that Hitler wouldn't win the war, the disastrous Battle of Kursk decided that he would lose it.

In the spring of 1943 the Germans prepared 'Operation Zitadelle' (the Kursk Offensive), their last major offensive in the Soviet Union. The Soviets also prepared, fortifying the most vulnerable sector of the front, the Kursk Salient, with tank traps, minefields and a massive concentration of infantry and armour. The Germans were aware of this and decided to gamble. But they waited, and kept waiting, whilst Soviet strength built up faster than their own, all of which eventually led, when the Germans did attack, to the famous 'Death Ride' of the panzers.

The game itself provides six varying scenarios, four of which deal with the 'what would have happened' type of situation e.g. if the Germans had attacked earlier. The other two are the actual battles of Kursk, namely the German Offensive (a dull, static affair), and the Soviet Counter-Offensive. It is this latter that I propose to dwell on.

'Kursk' is basically a two-player game and lasts for 6 game turns. Each player turn is proposed of three phases, namely (i) the player can move any of his units to their full movement allowance, (ii) the player may then attack any adjacent enemy units, and (iii) the player may move again any of his ARMoured units for a second time. Armoured units are therefore of prime importance as they can move twice during each player turn. The opposing player then follows the same procedure and when he has finished his moves that is the end of the game turn.

The game map (22" x 28") portrays the area of Central Russia in which the decisive operations in question took place, with a hexagon grid superimposed to regularize the movement. The main feature of the board are the German and Soviet fortified lines which stretch the length of the board. A units attack strength is weakened if it attacks an enemy unit within its own fortified hex. The only other reasonably novel feature of the game are the air units which can perform any one of five different missions i.e. attack enemy supply lines, support a ground attack, attack an enemy air-base, intercept enemy aircraft, or cover friendly ground units from air attack. The opposing airforces are roughly of the same strength so they tend to negate each other. Apart from that the basic SPI movement, combat, zones of control, supply and stacking rules apply.

But the beauty of 'Kursk' is not in the mechanics, but in the actual playing of it. In the Soviet Offensive scenario the Soviet player has no less than 70 infantry and cavalry corps, 20 armoured corps and a dozen other minor units at his disposal against a German player who has 42 infantry and 13 armoured divisions as well as 18 other lesser units and yet, according to the manufacturers, the probable outcome of the game is a marginal German victory. How is this possible? Well apart from the fact that the German units are more mobile than their Soviet counter-parts the games victory conditions necessitate that the Soviet player score some decisive victories and capture certain objectives before victory can be his. The winner is determined on the basis of Victory Points which are awarded for the strength of enemy units eliminated and for capturing and holding (in supply) certain geographical objectives at the end of the game, the main ones being the cities Bryansk (in the north) and Kharkov (to the south) both of which, at the start of the game, are well behind the German lines.

The games played usually come out with the Germans being pushed (or chased, depending on how good the German player is) back to their fortified line (the Hagen-Line) in the north, behind which lies the vital

city of Bryansk, while trying to stop the 'Bolshevik Hordes' in front of, inside or behind the even more important city of Kharkov. It is the legendary Soviet steamroller in action. The Germans must carefully extricate the bulk of their infantry to positions in the Hagen Line (a withdrawal of up to nine hexes in places). This is very difficult and you will probably win or lose the game doing this - it not being unknown for the Soviet player to conduct a pincer movement on the retreating Germans flank and trapping anything up to 15 German divisions and thereby smashing his northern front wide-open. This scenario is by far and away the most delicate I've ever played and a few errors can cause tremendous variations. The game usually lasts around three hours.

(Just how good are you at SPI games? By playing the Germans in this Scenario you'll soon find out!)

***** CLIFF KENNEDY 1977 *****

"What shall we do next?" says I.
 "Time we had a game report" says Boot.
 So here we are...

RAILWAY RIVALS

Station-Master
DAVID WATTS.

RC 20 L
 Round 4

FIL ROUGE (Rob Thomasson - red)

4a: (I17)-G16-Toulouse-F17. 4b: (F17)-E18-E4. 4c: (E4)-Montpellier.
 (I have fined him a hex and routed him through E6 as he didn't specify which way in 4c.) (G16)-G14, in sheet 5. 26+10-1 (to RICH)-1 (fine) = 34.

APEX TRAIN SERVICE (Andrew Smith - purple)

4a: (Sheet 4, H10)-H12-I13; (K1)-Boulogne. 4b: (Paris)-M17. 4c: (M17)-L16-L14; (L10, sheet 6)-K10-J10. 33+1 (fm PART)-3 (to GSR)-1 (to RICH)+12 (fm UKDAER) = 42 points.

PARIS-AMIENS RAPID TRANSIT (Frank Dunn)

4a: (Amiens)-Boulogne. 4b: (Boul)-Calais; (Amiens)-J3. 4c: (J3)-Lille; (J3)-Dunkirk; (F15)-G15-Dieppe. 18-1 (to ATS) + 10 = 27 points.

ROYAL INTERNATIONAL CARRIAGELESS HORSEWAY (Richard Bartle - Orange)

4a: (K14)-H15-G15. 4b: (G15)-F14-F11. 4c: (F11)-Bayonne; (K9)-Rennes. 30+10+1 (from FR) +1 (from ATS) -2 (fines for impossible or wrong moves) = 40 points. (Note changed moves; yours couldn't be done - river between I15 and H14.)

UKDA EURORAILS (Richard Nash - Black)

4a: (L10)-H12. 4b: (H12)-E11-D11. 4c: (D11)-B10-N11-Grenoble. 43+5-12 (to ATS) = 36 points.

An interesting set of moves, with some uncertainty due to the sell up of GSR tracks.

At this stage it is vital to invade other territories, even though you make enemies by so doing.

Bids for GSR's track

Section:	A	B	C
ATS	-	-	8
FR	9	13	9
RICH	13	9	4
PART	10	-	-
UKDA	5	5	-

Scores at end of round 4 (after allowing for bought lines).

ATS.....	42	UKDAER.....	36
PART.....	27	RICH.....	27
FR.....	12		

Note the new policy of fining players 1 point for every wrong hex in their orders except where they themselves forget 1 hex.

There had to be firm bids - no if's and buts. Tracks operate under new owners in round 5: best to cut strips of hexes to cover green lines.

THROWS FOR ROUND 5: (increased as only 5 now).

5 - 5 - 6

DAVID WATTS 1977

O U T D O O R S U R V I V A L
GM'd by CHRIS RICK

Two more people have bitten the dust and with the chaos that this game has been in recently I'm not surprised. The two casualties are Ian Jones and Andy Davidson. As for the rest, there is a clear leader followed by a bunch of five or six. Due to various states of repair of some of you though, the race is not over yet.

So onto today's events, with a brief mention of occurrences yesterday.

ADAM QUINTON: After a long rest he left the cover of the forest and entered a large desert. This enabled him to avoid an area infested by Quinton-eaters.

ALLAN OVENS: was so busy travelling yesterday that he left his hunting until it was too dark to see. Not to be caught out today he spent the whole day hunting and nursing his considerable wounds. Although food was plentiful his condition was little improved.

DAVE THORBY: is moving nicely now, but just can't find food. No doubt when he stops singing the wildlife will return.

RON CANHAM: After stepping carefully over a dead Davidson he passed through an area overrun with Quinton-eaters in complete safety, and today was seen moving rapidly to clear ground.

DAVE TANT: Halfway through the big fight Dave Allen lay down and went to sleep, fearing some disease Dave Tant made off at speed with his two spears. After his dismal hunting record Dave started today with some hunting, he couldn't skewer anything with his spears, but did fall over and sit on a rabbit.

DAVE ALLEN: Pleased with the success of his little ruse yesterday, Dave picked up one of the discarded spears and limped off along the river bank. Rob Chapman overtook him at speed, and blew a raspberry from a safe distance.

ROB CHAPMAN: After the hand of God had finished with him yesterday, Rob has been sprinting about with his luggage, overtaking several people, leaping a river (in two bounds), and generally doing a pretty good Superman act.

BILL THORNE & HENRY OLSEN: These two are in good condition and moving fast on a similar route. Both have asked for rulings on some good ideas and if the rest of you aren't careful they're gonna sail right past you.

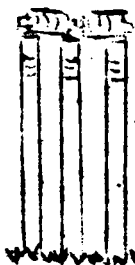
11TH COMMANDMENT: Storm damage is recovered if you remain in one hex for one turn.

.....and then there were nine....

CHRIS RICK 1977

3B Nottingham Rd., Loughborough

Oh my gawd! It looks as if Bill Dove is going to do an Allan Ovens on me, offering to run a small unobtrusive game to fill a page or so, and then seeing it take off like no-one expected. Anyway, here's Bill's 'Cricketboss' game with 21 players the most played game (non-dip) in CHIMAERA, even the late lamented 'Soccerboss' only had 20! Will somebody tell me why it is that some games just take off this way, then perhaps I'll be able to recognise them in advance...



C R I C K E T B O S S

A Unique System of Postal Cricket Simulation

GM'd by BILL DOVE

Welcome to one and all with the news that the first 'Cricketboss' season is now underway. I have closed my lists with 21 players which means an additional group will be run before the league starts in the form of an Invitation Trophy. All teams will receive incident cards, gate money, etc regardless of competition. The first two in each group will form Division 1 (10) and the rest will form Division 2 (11).

New teams and players this time are as follows:

WAKADOO C.C. - Steve Pratt (previously un-named).

WISDEN ALL STARS - Bill Thorne RAMBLERS C.C. - Ray Miller

SUSSEX C.C.C. - Clive Waterhouse ASSYRIAN ALL STARS - Ray Lee

SUTTON STROLLERS - JIM MANSLEY

RESULTS:

- Cleveland (Garratt) bt Bedfordshire (Tucker) by 34 runs.
1. 256-5 Haas 101 232-8
Dorcrisp 52 Cooke 83, Rotter 50, Thunder 4-26
 2. Yorkshire (Powis) 203-8 bt Essex (Boyes) by 24 runs
Pont 3-30 Boyce 50 n.o. Old 3-15
 3. Ulster (Bolton.P) 236-4 bt St. Albans (Ball) 231-6 by 5 runs
McLoughlin 73 no; McBride 94 St. Luke 75 no. St Anthony 73, Smith 3-35
 4. Londonshire (Lockyer) 253-3 lost to Surrey (Dove) 254-4 (39.3) by 6 wkts.
Hudson 117 no. Perryman 61 Lynch 110, Butcher 53, Naylor 3-45
Middlesex (Rundle) 221-5 lost to Ducais 223-2 (35.3) by 8 wickets.
 5. Brearley 80, Featherstone 54 no, Portado 79 no. Maolsala 50 no.
Steiner 3-42
 6. A.T.C.G. (Walton) 229-7 bt Rutland (McLaren) 207-9 by 22 runs
Shakespeare 73 no, Arlott 3-32//Butcher 64, Bennett 3-45
 7. Chim Cavaliers (Booth) 141-9 lost to Carrickfergus (Bolton.D) 144-5 (25)
by 5 wickets. Smith 4-27
 8. Wisden All Stars (Thorne) 220-8 bt Wakadoo (Pratt) 216-7 by 4 runs.
Hutton 94, Ibsen 3-49 Linwood 55, Goddard 3-39
 9. Almeria National 178 (35.3) bt Ramblers (Miller) 140 (30.2) by 38 runs.
Minling 4-38 Voriak 3-28, Prezov 3-29
 10. Sussex (Waterhouse) 217-5 bt Sutton St. (Mansley) 199-6 by 18 runs.
Long 58, Mendis 61 no. Pollard 81 no, Imran Khan 3-23
 11. Assyrian A.S. (Lee) 100 (32.2) lost to Sussex (Waterhouse) 102-3 (16.3)
by 7 wickets. Khan 4-28.

GROUP TABLES

Group 1.	P	W	L	Pts	Cash	Group 2	P	W	L	Pts	Cash
Cleveland	1	1	0	4	6,000	Surrey	1	1	0	4	13,600
Yorkshire	1	1	0	4	10,700	Ulster	1	1	0	4	9,700
Bedfordshire	1	0	1	0	3,400	Londonshire	1	0	1	0	6,600
Essex	1	0	1	0	5,500	St. Albans	1	0	1	0	8,700

Group 3.

Ducais Slashers	1	0	4	5,600
A.T.C.G.	1	1	0	6,600
Middlesex	1	0	1	8,400
Rutland	1	0	1	5,600

Group 4

Carrickfergus	1	0	4	17,700
Wisden A.S.	1	1	0	5,700
Wakadoo	1	0	1	6,100
Chim Cavs.	1	0	1	4,500

BENSON & HEDGES INVITATION TROPHY

Sussex	2	2	0	8	9,600
Almeria	1	1	0	4	4,600
Sutton St	1	0	1	0	3,700
Ramblers	1	0	1	0	12,700
Assyrian A.S.	1	0	1	0	6,700

Teams in this league will receive
£4,000 gate money per match as
they play more games,

INJURIES: St. Albans: St. Peter 1w, Chim C: Ilteys 3w, Essex: Ackfield 2w,
Surrey: Bennett 3w, Cleveland: Hamme 1w, Rutland: Old 1w,
Ramblers: Mincing 1w, Wakadoo: Ibsen 1w, Wisden: Miller 3w,
ATCG: Bennett 3w, Sussex: Greig 1w.

EXTRA INCOME: £1,000 to Carrickfergus & Ulster. £5,000 to Yorkshire.

GROUND DAMAGE: Bedfordshire pay £5,000.

AVAILABLE MINOR COUNTY PLAYERS

W/keeper	lvl.1	reserve price	£7,500	//	Batsman	lvl.1	reserve	£5,000
Bowler	lvl.1	"	£5,000	//	Coach	lvl.1	"	£7,500
Scout	lvl.1	"	£5,000	//				

Londonshire bought the level 1 scout last time for £5,000

NEXT WEEKS FIXTURES

Benson & Hedges Cup

- | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---------|-------------|----------------|--------------|----------|--------|--------|
| 1. Yorks | v | Beds | Sunny | 2. Cleveland | v | Essex | Dry |
| 3. St.Albans | v | Londonshire | Good | 4. Surrey | v | Ulster | Dry |
| 5. Rutland | v | Ducais Sl | Good | 6. Middlesex | v | ATCG | O/cast |
| 7. Carrickferg v | Wakadoo | O/cast | 8. Wisden A.AS | v | Chim Cav | Wet | |

Benson & Hedges Invitation Trophy

- | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|---|-------------|-------|--------------|---|-----------|------|
| 9. Almeria Nat | v | Sussex | Dry | 10. Ramblers | v | Sutton St | Good |
| 11. Assyrian AS | v | Almeria Nat | Sunny | | | | |

PRESS

CARRICKFERGUS

So the Chim Cavaliers lose - quite right. Only they could field a bowler who hits the umpire at the bowlers end with a wide - and the wicket-keeper looked remarkably like a large furry dog.

TAG HILL - CARRICKFERGUS

We can also field a manager who hits another manager whilst he's still in the pavilion, so watch your lip.

DUCAIS - ULSTER

Team should read Ulster P.C.C. not C.C.C. as Ulster isn't a county but a province.....nothing personal.

DEADLINE: Two weeks before main CHIMABRA deadline (orders accepted Sat).

BILL DOVE, 27 Davos Close, Woking



© Palitoy Parker

A Game Review by
CLIVE F. BOOTH

How many people are there in this country that don't know how to play the pencil and paper game 'Hangman'? I don't suppose there are many and I don't suppose it was much more even before 'Games & Puzzles' published the rules a couple of issues back.

Now, why do I bring up 'Hangman'? Well, the first time I looked at 'Probe' I got the distinct impression that it was no more than a variation of that game, for four players but without the gallows. Fortunately though, on closer inspection and on playing the similarity does not prove to be too great. In fact with the maximum number of players participating it can prove quite challenging.

The game is marketed as being playable by between two and four players, and although this is strictly true it is not really effective with the minimum number and plays much better with the four, or even the three.

Playing equipment consists of 4 plastic trays each with twelve cleverly hinged plastic keys that can be easily flicked open or shut; a pack of 36 activity cards; and 4 pads of paper strips that can be torn off to fit neatly into the plastic trays. To play the game each participant chooses a word of up to twelve letters and it is the task of the others to discover it by 'Hangman' style guessing at the letters. The differences from 'Hangman' are that all the players are involved as both guesser and guessed at the same time, up to 5 dots are allowed either before or after the word to disguise it, the 'activity cards' which add an element of chance, and the scoring of points by players as they successfully uncover a hidden letter. (As I said, not really too similar to 'Hangman' at all!)

Once each of the players has decided on his own hidden word, he writes it out on one of the paper strips provided and then drops it into his tray, closing the keys to conceal it. Play may now begin and the first player takes the top card from the 'activity' pack and

follows its instructions which will either bestow a bonus or penalty on one of the players or simply tell the player to take his normal turn. (Typical instructions are: 'Deduct 20 from your score', 'Player to your left exposes a dot', 'Quadruple your first guess', etc.) Once the instructions have been complied with or noted, the player may then ask any one of the others for either a letter or a dot. If the person asked should have the thing requested hidden anywhere in his word then he must reveal it by flicking forward the key that hides it (If, however, the letter repeats in the word as with the e and t in better, then the questioned player need reveal only one.) A score is achieved equal to a number stamped on the inside of the key and as each tray is marked in the same way, the scores running from left to right as 5-10-15-15-10-5-5-10-15-15-10-5, you can by careful positioning of your word in the tray often ensure that the easily guessed letters (the vowels, which everyone goes for first), will fall on the lower scoring keys. Anyone that puts an e on a 15 key for instance, is very likely making a gift of the points to one of his opponents.

For the first few rounds letters tend to be guessed and exposed regularly, but the pace at which this happens slows down drastically as the game progresses. One reason for this is that the rules categorically state that it is illegal to keep lists of the letters guessed, and to remember what has been tried by all the players at each other and the responses it drew, requires you to be some kind of memory man!

Play continues around the table in the same fashion until all but one of the words have been identified, and when that happens there are just two more further rounds allowed in which players may make final efforts to identify it. If they fail, then the player whose word it is receives a bonus dependant on the number of unidentified letters remaining. The winner of the game is the player with the highest score at the end of the final round.

If at any stage during the game a player thinks he may have identified an opponents word, he may interrupt play regardless of who's turn it is. The only proviso when doing this is that the word he believes he has discovered must have at least five unexposed characters (either letters or dots). He must then read them off to the other player in correct sequence i.e. reading from left to right, and if he is correct he receives in addition to the normal points value a 100 point bonus. If however, he is wrong then he is penalised to the extent of 50 points. (I am afraid that the rules are not too clear on the use of this 'interruptive' rule, for although they seem to suggest that any hidden letters or dots in the word are exposed only if the whole word is identified correctly, they do not actually say so. Indeed, if that were the case then why should they be read out a letter or a dot at a time when it would be easier and quicker to just state the word along with it's start position? To do it that way would also eliminate any chance of a player giving away clues to his concealed letters by displays of 'emotion' as they are read out. Maybe the intention is that the letters are revealed one at a time as they are called out, but that course of action also has problems. For instance, what if the caller makes several correct calls followed by an incorrect one? He may be penalised 50 points but what about the innocent guy who's just had all his letters revealed? Unfortunately it's one hazy area in otherwise perfectly clear rules. Personally I play it that any player using the 'interruptive' rule must state the word and position of the dots. If he is not 100% accurate then he is penalised 50 points and the other player reveals nothing.

Verdict: O.K. for a light hour or so with the family in the evening though I don't rate it as highly as its sister game 'Boggle' reviewed last issue. Nevertheless, it can still be quite challenging and bring the odd furrow to the brow at some of the obscure looking words when only a few letters are revealed. I do, however, feel that the 'activity' cards add too much of a chance element as it is quite feasible that you could lose to an absolute dummy simply because he picked up the right cards. Probe should be available from all games shops and from most good toy shops.

THE PITS OF CIL XV

(The Chimaera Game of Dungeons and Dragons)

A request from David Bolton to delay his entry for a while as he's apparently about to enter Queens' University Belfast. Oops, I seem to have put the apostrophe in the wrong place! Now I don't want you all getting the wrong idea about David: going to an Irish University must be enough of a handicap without me casting aspersions.

So, I'll move David down the list a bit. In the circumstances I will take two new players in this month as I was going to take one anyway. So will Russell Noonan and Alan Powis start doing the necessary with lists and S.A.E.'s, or let me know if they don't know what I'm talking about because they haven't got "Pits" articles I & II.

This leaves.....

THE WAITING LIST

1st Richard Sealy: 2nd Jerry Elsmore: 3rd George North:
4th David Bolton: 5th Henry Olsen: 6th Don Turnbull: 7th Andy
Davidson: 8th Mike Lean: 9th Keith Thomasson: 10th Jim Botten:
11th Barry Delf: 12th Simon Lindsay: 13th Ian Gibson, I. Wishart

WEAPONS

Some people are confusing hand-axes with Battle-axes. The two are, of course, very different. A hand-axe is handy for chopping wood, and could probably lop off a finger or an ear, but the battle-axe has a shaft anything from 3 - 6 ft. long with a massive blade, sometimes a double one, which can easily go through armour.

The former's damage figures are about right in the rules, but I've always felt they undervalued the battle-axe.

WAND OF COLD

A blast from this, hitting a body of water, will freeze a volume of 1 cu. foot into ice for every point rolled on 6D6.

POLYMORPHING

An extract from a recent letter from Lew Pulsipher may be of assistance to anyone who, like me, finds the rules less than specific on these spells.

"A couple of years ago I heard Gygax ((name-dropper!)) explain a polymorph spell. There are three saving throws: - one to see if the magic works at all; one to see if the target gains the powers as well as the appearance of the creature ((i.e. if the magic worked on the first throw the appearance was gained)); and the third to see if the target gains the mind of the creature IF he already gained the powers."

Well, that seems fair enough for a "Polymorph Others" spell, and doesn't seem to contradict the original rules. I would

say that the creature polymorphed would retain its own alignment unless it failed all three saves, in which case on the third throw working its alignment would be changed to that of the creature to which it had been polymorphed.

However, "Polymorph Self" is a different matter and the rules are specific here that all abilities cannot be gained. I would also say that as the person will want the spell to work, his "saving throw" against it must be reduced! The same would seem to apply to a member of one's party willing to have a "Polymorph Others" spell cast upon him.

I shall therefore rule that a Polymorph spell cast on a willing target reduces all figures required to save by half.

For a "polymorph Self" spell to work, the first two saving throws must be "failed", and the caster will then have the appearance and non-combat abilities of the intended creature. The third throw will not apply.

ACTION

Clive's recent poll of readers' comments on "Chimaera", while producing a generally favourable reaction to these pages (many thanks to those of you so indicating) did bring some comments that my related details were too brief and that this article would be improved by expanding the stories of the deeds of the parties involved.

Well, I can only agree. Trouble is, there are two factors against this: firstly the space available and secondly the desire for secrecy on the part of the players.

However, Clive has agreed to allow me a little more space, when necessary, for dealing with such matters as come under N.G.C. Fantasy gaming business, as I am hoping to refer N.G.C. Dolchstoss readers here for matters of general interest to Fantasy Gaming Buffs who aren't actually in this game. Articles such as last time's "Injuries from Falls" would properly come under this heading, and allow me to keep the basic four pages for my players (who get more numerous all the time).

So, how secret must I keep your adventures? Obviously if one of you leaves a booby trap for someone to find later, I shouldn't reveal it, but those of you who have passed through, for example, the Domain of Chaos, will know where a later party is that also reaches it. Does that matter much, though? You will have realised by now that I'm pretty hot on Chaotic acts from Lawful characters, so I won't let you be too beastly to each other.

What I propose from now on is to detail fairly fully two or three parties' adventures each issue. I will warn those who will be covered next time, and they must tell me if there is anything they want kept secret. To start, next time I shall be detailing recent adventures of Clive Waterhouse, Adrian Attwood and Allan Ovens. Very brief details will continue to be given of the other players.

This time, as the holiday backlog and Midcon preparations have prevented my answering more than one letter from each player, action has been at a minimum. So I'll give the D.M.'s view of Midcon Dungeon, otherwise known as.....

THE CATACOMBS

Several would-be players didn't turn up, and in the end Bill Howard, Ian Drylie, Chris Rick, Adrian Attwood, Ian Jones, Dave Thorby, Bruce Davidson, Dave Knight, and two others (whose names I missed) went down.

A poem (well, it rhymed) on a scroll found near the surface, set them looking for a "Big Stone Man" who would give them a map for "The Bowl of Midas". A wandering Conjuror, charmed during their travels, revealed that the Bowl of Midas was a cauldron with appropriate transmuting qualities, but they never found the Big Stone Man, much less the Bowl. Unfortunately they wrongly assumed that the B.S.M. was a Stone Giant.

Nobody assumed the role of any of the Dwarves or Hobbits that were available, and the lack of Dwarves caused several involuntary descents through traps. The precipitate firing of arrows at a Unicorn also deprived them of a potential ally.

However, they were fortunate in finding a Medusa fast asleep and one intrepid Elf Swordsman earned several hundred xp's by creeping over and plunging an arrow into each eye, then killing her with assistance from another archer.

A rack of swords were found with an uncomfortable electric current passing through them, then the party descended to the Second Level.

Many secret doors were missed from time to time, which would have produced some much needed magical equipment. Perhaps, instead of sending only three or four characters to search the walls in each direction, it would have been better to send almost all the party right round each room.

Still a rather nice sword turned up in a room where an Ochre Jelly was despatched with a Fireball, after one or two characters revealed their inexperience by wanting to fire arrows at it.

A Bishop proved very useful in turning away Wraiths, but the Clerical Scroll they carried wasn't appreciated much. Then a group of Hobgoblins were speedily despatched, but their secret cupboard with Flying Carpet again went undiscovered.

A wandering Neutral Hero led them to the Stone Giant, heavily disguised as a Giant Beetle with a Magic Guitar) but by now the party was becoming disorganised as 2.00 a.m. passed. Despite warnings from the Hero, the Giant was allowed to strum the Guitar, which had the power to stun. Three characters remained on their feet and disposed of him with Fireball and arrows but, when the rest had awakened, one idiot strummed the remains of the guitar again! That time everyone was stunned.

To their enormous good fortune, the only Wandering Monster rolled during their slumbers was Lawful, and they were able to rifle the Giant's cupboard, though not without two people taking a ducking.

Thereafter the time was very late, and the party did little but wend their way back to the surface.

Several useful conclusions were drawn from this, and will be exploited at the next Con.

1) The maximum number of adventurers at a noisy Con. should be 6; possibly 8 if we have the room to ourselves.

2) Pre-rolled characters save a lot of time and can be balanced to make all relatively equal. However, "swapping" equipment shouldn't be allowed and the pre-rolled characters should be "dealt", not allowed to be selected, to save more time.

3) The modular rooms and corridors, squared and of standard sizes, were effective, as was having the minatures accurately reflect the equipment.

4) The levels must be kept small.

5) For a one off adventure like this, much time can be saved by allowing the characters to "remember" the route and not have to draw their own map. Indeed, if a time limit of 6 hours is fixed, we could forget about the need to leave the Dungeon altogether. (Stop that noise Lew!)

It was a great pleasure meeting so many of you, and I hope to see you all again next year, if not before. Bill Howard has volunteered to help with next year's Dungeon and now I'd ideally like two more to volunteer as soon as possible from among those playing at Nottingham, in The Pits or both.

Sorry some of you have had to wait a little while for replies. By the time you read this I shall be up straight again after giving golf a miss this weekend. (Oh the sacrifice!) From then on it'll be back to the promised standard of "a reply within a fortnight of receipt".

I hope to work steadily up to 24 players, now my Dippy commitments are almost done, but after the next eight or nine come off the Waiting List entrance will only be when players drop-out/die. Anyone feeling like adding his name now should be warned he could have a very long wait.

NEXT DEADLINE:
See back cover

Dave Tant,
32 Nursery Avenue,
Bexleyheath,
Kent DA7 4JZ

DIPLOMACY SECTIONNORSEDIP 2 SPRING 1907

FRANCE (O'Reilly) F(Por)-MAO*, F(Lon) st., A(Mar)-Gas, A(Par)-Bur,
 A(Bre) s A(Mar)-Gas, A(Wal) st.
 ENGLAND (Anarchy) F(Edi) st - - - -RUSSIA (Anarchy) A(Ank) st.
 GERMANY (Nash) F(Den)-NTH sby F(NWG, F(Kie)-Hol, A(War) s A(Mos),
 A(Gal)-Bud, A(Mun)-Tyr aby A(Boh), A(Bel)-Pic, A(Ruh)-Bur, A(Ber)-Sil
 ITALY (Haughan) A(Ukr)-Rum sby F(BLA), A(Sev)-Mos, A(Con)-Bul,
 F(AEG)OCon, A(Vie) ms A(Bud), A(Ven)-Tri, A(Rom)-Ven, F(GOL) s A(Pie)-
 Mar, A(Pie)-Mar, F(MAO) s F(Spa-SC)-Por, F(WMS)-Spa-SC, F(Nap) unordered.
 Retreats: French F(Por) disbands

Press

MUNICH: Welcome back one and all. I reckon it won't be long before Willy has won; however, one never knows. And you still need an extra unit from somewhere Willy.....

BASILISK FINAL REPORT

GM: Clive F. Booth Magazine: CHIMAERA Line up annouced: 8th Oct 1975

AUSTRIA Bob Howes
 ENGLAND John Meadon NMR a'10, won a'12
 FRANCE Dave Pollard NMR s'03, a'03, Anarchy s'04, eliminated A'05
 GERMANY John Lovibond NMR a'04, s'06, a'08, out a'08
 ITALY Howell Davies NMR s'09, Anarchy s'11
 RUSSIA Robin Allen d.o. s'01, Ron Kelly NMR s'02, a'02, Paul Cook
 TURKEY Robin Churchill NMR a'01, Anarchy s'03, out a'07 / nmr s'08, s'10

	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	
ENGLAND (Meadon)	4	5	5	8	9	11	15*	16	17	16	17	18	1st
AUSTRIA (Howes)	3	3	2	3	5*	6*	7	5	6	7	8	8	2nd
RUSSIA (Cook)	6	4	4	4	4	5	6	7	7	9**	7	7	3rd
GERMANY (Lovibond)	6	7	7	6	5	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	4th
ITALY (Anarchy)	5	6	8	10**	10**	8	5	6	4	2	2	1	-
TURKEY (Anarchy)	4*	4*	3	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FRANCE (Anarchy)	5	5	5	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

***** * = 1 short. ** = 2 short. *** = 3 short.

StatementsAUSTRIA - 2nd

For me, this game was totally attritional, and great sport! In the end it was all too easy for John, but as wins for England are not too frequent in U.K. dippy it is worthy of merit on that score alone.

Austria is certainly not a country that I would choose willingly - and it would be below Italy on my personal preference list - and being stabbed in winter 1900 (I kid you not! "Let us have an alliance and take out Italy", "O.K.", followed by A(Ven)-Tri, A(Rom)-Ven, F(ICS)-Nap.....) did not help one little bit. I seem to recall being reduced to two units in '02, but H----I D---s (I gather the mention of his name is now verboten in the hobby) unaccountably refrained from taking me out of the game, and by biding my time the chance ultimately came to retaliate.

The private Italo-Austrian power-struggle meant that the bolstering of the defences of a crumbling France and Germany was neglected. England took over both of them, and at about that time H.D. welshed (pardon the word, all those born west of the Severn Bridge) on his poker debts and disappeared overnight from the hobby. Paul Cook (Russia) and I were not talking to each other after a brilliant coup by me in 'Daedalus' and an equally effective one by him in another 'zine which shall be nameless.

By the time we did get back on speaking terms England was already in a winning position. There was one fleeting chance of effecting a stalemate line when John NMR'd a couple of 'years' ago, but lack of co-ordination over which of us should take Berlin while the opportunity was there finally let England attain the magic 18. If Italy had been around

to make the semblance of a defence of Tunis and Naples, England would have had a much tougher task on his hands.

Clive decided to join the 'anarchy' school at the wrong time so far as this game was concerned. 'Basilisk' indeed, is not a good advert for the anti-standby faction. Still, second with Austria is not a bad result, and I thoroughly enjoyed the game.

Final thought....never a word passed between John and I. Doesn't say much for my diplomatic prowess, does it?

RUSSIA - 3rd

I took over Russia in this game following Ron Kelly's infamous resignation. At the time why he resigned was understandable, Russia was being taken slowly apart by a strong Anglo-German alliance. I managed to hold out for a few seasons before receiving a letter from John informing me that he intended attacking Germany and promising me I could have St. Petersburg back 'sometime'. At the same time I heard from Bob telling me he intended attacking Italy who had now gone west. I spent the next few seasons helping Austria carve up the Italian possessions in Turkey and the Balkans and was recovering nicely while England gradually got more powerful. Bob and I then set out to stop John. We would have succeeded too, particularly after John's NMR, were it not for Howell Davies dropping out, and a lack of understanding between myself and Bob. On the last season I wrote a stinking letter to Bob on this subject, and he replied agreeing but (rightly) criticising my moves. My second set of orders somehow failed to reach Clive on time, although posted 1st class two days before the deadline - ah well. Congrats to John who played a fine game, and to Bob for recovering after having everyone jump on him, also to Clive for GMing etc.

GERMANY - 4th

I believe that I was given Germany in this game, I also believe that I was taken in by John Meadon's persuasive croon over the 'phone. The name 'Basilisk' still stirs vague and sad memories, and I have looked at the game-reports from time to time. It seems that Farmer Bob, the battle-scarred geriatric of Oxford Town, put up stiff resistance but failed.

Congratulations to you John (you swine!!!), hard-luck to Bob and Paul; and thank you to the GM (whose name escapes me) for the effort he put in whilst I was still involved.

ARGOS 1975FH SPRING 1910

ENGLAND (Bullock), F(ENC)-IRI, F(Edi)-NWG sby F(NTH), F(Den)-SKA, F(HEL)-Den, A(Swe)-Lvn cby F(BAL), F(Ber) st., A(Bur) & A(Ruh) s French A(Mun), A(Tyr)-Tus (no such unit!), A(Spa)-Mar, F(NAF)-Tun sby F(WMS), A(Pie) unordered.

FRANCE (Anarchy) F(MAO), A(Mun) stand.

ITALY (Nash) A(Ven) st*. (it's a fleet!)

RUSSIA (Lovibond) F(NWG)-NTH*, F(BAS) s F(StP-NC)-Nwy, A(Nwy)-Swe sby A(Fin), F(StP-NC)-Nwy, F(GOB) s A(Nwy)-Swe, A(War)-Pru, A(Sil) s A(War)-Pru, A(Boh) s French A(Mun), A(Tyr)-Ven, A(Vie)-Tyr, A(Bud)-Ser, A(Tri) s A(Tyr)-Ven, F(Sev)-BLA, F(Con)-AEG, F(Tun) s F(TYS), F(TYS) s F(Tun).
Retreats: Italian A(Ven) to ADR or Apu. Russian F(NWG)-Cly.

Press

THE YELLOW SUBMARINE

"Has the fighting ended yet, Spaghetti?"

"What? Oh yes, it has. But it seems they are now arguing over whether or not it as actually ended....."

MOSCOW - TAG HILL

Draw? Yawn! Tell Bullock to piss off!

TAG HILL

Another proposal: R/E/I/F as 1/2/3/4. Votes next time etc.

DAEDALUS 1976AO AUTUMN 1910

AUSTRIA (Thorby) A(Sil)-Mun sby A(Boh) & A(Tyr), A(Gal)-Sil, A(Mos)-Lvn sby A(War), A(Ukr) s A(War), A(Sev)-Mos, A(Pie) s Italian F(TYS)-Tus, F(ION) s Wop Italian F(WMS)-TYS, A(Vie) s Italian A(Por)-Hell, B70(Tri)-Ven,

ENGLAND (Howes) NMR!!!! F's MAO, Por, ENC, GOL*, Ber, BAL, StP-NC.

ITALY (Lean) A's Bre, Mar, Bur, Ruh, Mun*, Kie, Pru, Lvn* all stand.

F(Tun)-WMS, A(Tus) s Austrian A(Pie), A(Spa)-Mar

Retreats: English F(GOL) & A's (Mun), (Lvn) disband.

WINTER 1910

AUSTRIA Tri, Bud, Vie, Ser, Gre, Rum, Bul, Sev, Mos, War
Ank, (Smy), +Mun = 12:N/C

ENGLAND Lon, Lpl, Edi, Nwy, Den, Swe, StP, Kie, Ber, Hol
Bel, Par, Bre, (Mun), (Spa), +Mar, +Por = 15:bu 3 none rec'd.

ITALY Nap, Rom, Tun, Ven, Con, (Mar), (Por), +Smy,
+Spa = 7:bu 1 F(Rom)

RAG HILL - AUSTRIA

'Cos you never asked me if I was leaving early on Sunday, that's why. You just leave it to me to think of everything.

GORGON 1976GB AUTUMN 1908

It seems that the game is over. Last issues draw proposal drew one vote for and none against. No votes, I clearly stated, would imply acceptance and so the final voting was 3-0.

Not very satisfactory the game ending this way but the moral to be gleaned is 'always vote and get your orders in on time'.

Statements and any complaints for next issue, please. Oh, and in case you've forgotten the agreed end was FRANCE/ENGLAND 1st, RUSSIA 3rd.

ICARUS 1976HB AUTUMN 1907

Draw proposal rejected 3 for, 1 against.

AUSTRIA (Pringle) A(Tri) ms A(Vie).

FRANCE (Forrest) A(Kie)-Mun sby A(Ruh) & A(Bur), A(Den)-Swe sby F(SKA), F(Tun)-ION sby F(Nap) & F(Tyr), A(Ven) s Austrian A(Tri), A(Rom)-Apu, A(Gas)-Mar, F(HEL)-Kie.

GERMANY (Wardley) A(Ber) ms A(Mun), A(Sil) s A(Mun),

RUSSIA (Anarchy) F(Swe)*, A's Nwy, StP stand.

TURKEY (Johnson) A(War)-Lvn, A(Gal)-War, A(Mos) s A(Gal)-War, A(Ser)-Tri, A(Alb) & A(Bud) s A(Ser)-Tri, F(ION)-ADR, F(EMS)-ION, F(Gre) & F(ABG) s F(EMS)-ION

Retreats: Russian F(Swe) disbands.

WINTER 1907 builds

AUSTRIA Tri, Vie = 2:N/C

FRANCE Par, Bre, Mar, Spa, Bel, Por, Lon, Lpl, Hol, Edi, Ven, Tun, Den, Rom, +Kie, +Nap, +Swe = 17:bu 5 F(Bre), A(Par) 3 owed!

GERMANY Ber, Mun, (Kie) = 2:lose 1 A(Sil)

ITALY (Nap) = 0:OUT!!!

RUSSIA Nwy, StP, (War), (Swe) = 2:N/C

TURKEY Con, Ank, Smy, Sev, Bul, Rum, Ser, Gre, Bud, Mos, +War = 11:bu 1 A(Smy).

PressPARIS - ANKARA

If you had a chance of winning I would have understood you not conceding victory to me, but the fact that it only prolongs the game without affecting the result annoys me. Had my regent not guffed my

orders back in '06 I would have won that year: but as it is I shall have to wait until either Autumn 1907 or Spring 1908. Ah well.

PARIS - TAG HILL

Did you get my victory statement, Clive?

TAG HILL

Oh? If I did I think I must have lost it. Better send another.

JANUS 1976HX AUTUMN 1906

AUSTRIA (Waldschmidt) A(Mos)-StP, A(Ukr)-War sby A(Gal), A(Sil)-Ber, A(Tyr)-Mun sby A(Boh), A(Vie)-Tyr, F(Tri)-Cuba, A(Bul)-Con.
 ENGLAND (Nash) F(NTH)-Hol*, A(Yor)-Lon, F(Wal)-Lon, F(Den)-Kie aby F(HEL), A(Swe)-Nwy.
 FRANCE (North) F(NAO) s F(Lpl), A(Bur) & A(Ber) s A(Mun), A(Mun) s A(Kie) F(Hol) s A(Kie), F(Bel)-NTH sby F(ENG), A(Kie) st., A(Mar)-Spa.
 GERMANY (Watson) NMR!!!! F(StP) & A(Lvn) st.
 ITALY (Nathan) F(NAF)-MAO, F(Tun)-WMS, F(TYS)-GOL, A(Ven) st., F(Apu) s A(Ven), F(Gre) st., A(Smy) st.
 Retreats: English F(NTH)-Edi, French A(Kie)-Ruh

WINTER 1906 builds

AUSTRIA Bud, Tri, Vie, Ser, Rum, Bul, Con, Sev, Mos = 9:N/C
 ENGLAND Lon, Edi, Nwy, Swe, Den, (Lpl), +Kie = 6:N/C
 FRANCE Bre, Mar, Par, Spa, Por, Bel, Ber, Hol, Mun, (Kie), +Lpl = 10:N/C
 GERMANY War, StP = 2:N/C
 ITALY Nap, Rom, Ven, Tun, Gre, Smy, Ank = 7:N/C

PRESS

THE REYKJAVIK ARCHIVES - Part XI

Anna Gnasher fired the pistol at Richard and because she was as bad a shot as her husband she missed.

Suddenly, Herr Gunther, the Austrian ambassador rushed into the room.

"Stop! Stop! The Kaiser's changed his plans."

"Or, which one? The Austrian or the German?" retorted Anna. Gunther ignored the remark with the contempt it deserved.

"His Imperial Highness has declared war on the totalitarian war-monger France in conjunction with peace-loving and democratic England. Ah! here's the Italian Ambassador, Signor Spaghetti."

Madame La Pom-Thom screamed, "You sacundrel! Vive la France! We'll still win Europe. Ha! Ha! Without your help! Vive le roi!"

"Who let her in?" muttered Richard, opening a bottle of champagne.

"To victory!"

"To victory" said the two ambassadors in unison.

LONDON - REKY-BREK

Didn't know you were writing 'Echo' press; in any case it is obvious Anna will miss. I taught her how to shoot.....

GENERAL - ADMIRAL

By god, I wish we had one.....

FRANCE - ENGLAND

Come, come now, Paddy. You can't expect to win 'em all!

KRAKEN1976FF AUTUMN 1905

AUSTRIA (Ferguson) NMR!!!! F Nap & A's Ven, Tri, Vie, Bud, Alb all stand.
 ENGLAND (Gale) A(Lon)-Kie cby F(NTH) & F(HEL), A(Den) s A(Lon)-Kie, A(Ruh) s French A(Bel)-Hol, F(Swe)-GOB, A(Lvn)-StP.
 FRANCE (Rundle) A(Bel) s English A(Lon)-Hol, A(Bur)-Mun sby A(Tyr), A(Mun)-Ber, F(TYS)-Tun, F(GOL)-Spa-SC, A(Gas)-Mar.
 GERMANY (Dove) F(Hol), F(Kie) st. NMR!!!!
 ITALY (Barker) F(WMS) & A(Rom), (Pie) st. NMR!!!!
 TURKEY (Close) A(Boh)-Gal, A(Gal)-Rum, F(Rum)-BLA, F(ION)-Nap, F(DMS)-ION, F(AEG) s F(EMS)-ION, A(War) ms A(Mos).
 Retreats: German F(Kie) annihilated.

WINTER 1905 builds

AUSTRIA Bud, Tri, Vie, Ser, Gre, Nap, +Ven = 7:bu 1 None rec'd
 ENGLAND Lon, Lpl, Edi, StP, Swe, Den, Nwy, +Kie = 8:bu 1 A(Lon)
 FRANCE Bre, Mar, Par, Spa, Por, BeI, Mun, +Tun, +Ber = 9:bu 2 A(Par), F(Bre).
 GERMANY Hol, (Ber), (Kie) = 1:N/C
 ITALY Rom, (Ven), (Tun) = 1:lose 2 F(WMS), A(Pie).
 TURKEY Ank, Con, Smy, Bul, Rum, Sev, Mos, War = 8:N/C

PressSMYRNA

Superturk was troubled. He had received no communiques at all. He sniffed - once, twice and then, after a short pause, a third time. He looked at his advisors. "I smell a rat", he said. The master-at-arms to rouse the messengers.

LEANDER 'REDISCOVER' AUTUMN 2904GM & DESIGNER: RICHARD BARTLEGERMANY LOOKS GOOD AS EPIC LAND BATTLE COMMENCES

ITALY (Booth) F(Cub) s F(CARS)-AZOR, F(CARS)-AZOR, F(TYRS)-Sar, F(Apu)-Ven, A(Rom) s F(Apu)-Ven, F(CMS)-WESM.
 SCANDINAVIA (Nash) F(Fin)-Len, F(NSW)-Sto*
 BALKANS (Quinton) F(Ven)-Tri, F(EASM)-Izm, F(Buc)-BLAS, F(AEGS) s F(IONS)-Cre, A(Ode)-Lvo, A(Vol)-holds*, A(Hun)-holds*, F(ADRS)-IONS, F(IONS)-Cre.
 GERMANY (Waterhouse) F(NTHS)-Sco, A(Pol)-Hun, A(War) s A(Pol)-Hun, A(Tro)-NSW, F(NWGS) s F(NTHS)-Sco, A(WhR)-Lvo, F(Hol)-Bel, A(Aus) s Italian F(Apu)-Ven, A(Cze)-Vie, A(America does something else...
 RUSSIA (Neuman) A(Est)-Len, A(Ukr)-Vol, A(Mos) s A(Ukr)-Vol, A(America copies Germany's...
 FRANCE (Close) A(Lyo) holds, A(Gen)-Ven, A(Wal) holds, F(Sco)-Ire, F(Mor) s F(MAOC)-AZOR, F(BAEI) s F(GOL)-Sar, F(MAOC)-AZOR.
 TURKEY (Lean) F(BLAS)-Usk, F(Ben)-EASM, F(Usk)-Izm, F(Cre) s F(Ben)-EASM*, A(Kui)-Asi.
Retreats: Scandinavian F(NSW)-GOBO, Balkan A(Hun)-Bgd, Turkish F(Cre) off, Balkan A(Vol) off.

WINTER 2904 builds

ITALY Cub, Nap, Rom, (Sar), (Mor), Tun, +Ven = 5:lose 1 F(CARS)
 SCANDI (Sto), Fin = 1:lose 1 F(NSW) GM
 BALKANS Bgd, Sof, Ath, Tri, (Ven), Ode, Lvo, (War), (Hun), +Cre = 7:lose 1 F(EASM) GM
 GERMANY Ham, Dre, Ber, Mun, Bel, Hol, Pol, WhR, Den, = 15:bu 4 A(Hun), A(Ber), Osl, Tro, +Sto, +War, +Hun, +Sco F(Ham), A(Dre).
 FRANCE (Sco), Ire, Lon, Par, Tou, Mar, Spa, Por, +Mor, = 9:bu 1 A(Par).
 TURKEY Usk, Ank, Izm, (Cre), Ben, Sue = 5:bu 2 F(Izm), F(Ank).
 RUSSIA Mos, Vol, Est, Len = 4:N/C

PRESSMOROCCO

"Someone, somewhere, wants a letter from you", said the poster on the wall. "Too true", muttered the Dauphin as he ducked out of the way of another over-ripe tomato.

GM

Mike's NMR last time could easily have been attributed to me, so sorry if I messed up a lot of plans that way. Hope Clive can read this set of moves properly since I've typed it ~~XXXXX~~ for hmi!

SPACEFILLER

Newcomers to the hobby, that haven't had time to get around yet and see for themselves many of our competitors in the 'zine producing field, may be interested to learn of the 'Zine Bank' run by Tim Roberts, 85 Elers Road, Ealing, London W13 9QB. Send Tim 35p in stamps along with a large envelope and he'll fill it with 'zines for you and send it back. An ideal way to sample the field before parting with your money.

MARS 1977BT SPRING 1904

FRANCE (Noonan) A(Wal)-Lpl, A(Mar)-Pie, F(Lon)-ENG, F(Maf)-WMS,
 F(Bre)-MAO, F(Spa-SC) s F(Maf)-WMS, A(Par)-Bur,
 GERMANY (Smith) A(Swe)-Fin, A(Kie)-Mun, A(Nwy) s Russian A(Lvn)-StP,
 A(Ber)-Sil, A(Lpl) st., A(Pru)-Lvn, F(NTH)-Bel, A(War) s A(Pru)-Lvn*,
 F(SKA)-NTH.
 ITALY (Ovens) A(Mun)-Bur, A(Pie)-Mar, F(WMS) s F(TYS)-GOL, F(TYS)-
 GOL, F(Tun) s F(WMS).
 RUSSIA (Malvisi) A(Lvn)-War, A(Mos) s A(Lvn)-War, A(Bud)-Ser, A(Tri) s
 A(Bud)-er, A(Bul) st, A(Rum) s F(Bul), F(BAR)-StP-NC.
 TURKEY (Randall) NMR!!!! F AEG & A's Gre, Ser*, Con, Ank all stand.
Retreats: Turkish A(Ser) disbands. German A(War)-Ukr

Press
FROM OUR TURKISH CORRESPONDENT

The panting patriarch redoubled his efforts to catch the fleeing maiden. As he reached out to rip the thin silk from her nubile body, he tripped over his surplice and pitched headlong down a steep hillside.... The bearded despot jerked awake, his sweaty pyjamas clinging to his ample form. His sleep-sodden brain (for want of a better word) was aware of some pressing need. There was something that had to be done and done quickly. Fighting off a rising feeling of panic, he staggered across the room to the map-table. All the markers had taken up new positions with the exception of the little yellow jobs which represented his own forces. Aware that he had made a dreadful blunder, Nirlek summoned his generals to a urgent conference. Fleets were immediately despatched to the Ionian Sea, armies to the Balkans.

"And what orders do you have for me, O mighty one?" inquired the commander of the Caliph's Light Camel Brigade, who had hastened from his garrison duties in Serbia. Nirlek ruminated briefly and noisily. He knew he could trust his Russian ally to eschew any attack on those countries fortunate enough to benefit from patriarchal rule. There was no military requirement for which the Serbian garrison was fitted.

"Order your men to build a winter palace for me, where I may take the pleasures before we over-run Austria next year," snapped the mighty ruler.

With those fateful words the Patriarch stumbled back to his verminous couch, and having given orders to be awoken before the next deadline, he eased his way into dreamland with another rifle through the well thumbed pages of the wonder *phyllo* 'zine, Chimaera.

NORNS 1977DQ AUTUMN 1902

AUSTRIA (Bartle.T) A(Vie)-Bud, A(Ser)-Bud, A(Tri) st., F(Alb) s A(Tri).
 ENGLAND (Waterhouse) A(Fin)-Swe sby F(Nwy), F(Lon)-NTH, F(NTH)-HEL.
 FRANCE (Lockyer) A(Mun)-Ruh, A(Bur)-Bel sby A(Pic), A(Spa)-Mar, A(Mar)-Pie, F(MAO)-WMS.
 GERMANY (Howes) F Bel* & A's Ruh, Kie, Ber stand NMR!!!!
 ITALY (Anarchy) F Tin & A's Rom, Ven, Tyr stand.
 RUSSIA (Bolton) F(Swe)-Den, A(Rum)-Bud sby A(Gal), F(Sev)-Rum*
 TURKEY (Bidwell) A(Arm)-Sev sby F(BLA), A(Bul)-Rum, A(Con)-Bul.
Retreats: German F(Bel) disbands. Russian F(Sev) annihilated

WINTER 1902 builds

AUSTRIA	Tri, Vie, Ser, (Bud)	=	3:lose 1 A(Vie).
ENGLAND	Lon, Lpl, Edi, Nwy, +Swe	=	5:bu 1 A(Lon).
FRANCE	Par, Bre, Mar, Spa, Por, Mun, +Bel	=	7:bu 1 none rec'd
GERMANY	Kie, Ber, Hol, (Bel)	=	3:N/C
ITALY	Ven, Rom, Nap, Tun	=	4:N/C / 1 owed.
RUSSIA	StP, Mos, War, Rum, (Sev), (Swe), +Bud, +Den	=	6:bu 3 A(Mos), A(StP),
TURKEY	Ank, Con, Smy, Bul, +Sev	=	5:bu 1 F(Smy).
NEUTRAL	Gre	=	1

Press
is over the page..

AUSTRIA - RUSSIA

You started it!

RUSSIA - AUSTRIA

so you don't want to reconsider?

ŒDIPUS 1977DR SPRING 1902

AUSTRIA (Pringle) A(Bud)-Vie sby A(Tri), A(Ser)-Bul sby F(Gre):
 ENGLAND (Dove) F(ENC)-Bre*, A(Nwy)-Swe, F(NTH) s German A(Hol)-Bel,
 F(Lpl)-IRI.
 FRANCE (Nash) A(Spa)-Gas, F(Bre)-ENC sby F(MAO), F(Mar) st, A(Bel)-Bur
 GERMANY (Powis) A(Mun)-Bur, A(Kie)-Ruh sby A(Hol), F(Den)-Swe, A(Ber)-
 Mun
 ITALY (Lee) A(Pie)-Tyr sby A(Ven), A(Rom)-Apu, F(Tun)-ION.
 RUSSIA (O'Frisbee) F(GOB)-StP-SC, A(Mos)-Ivn, A(War)-Gal, A(Vie)-Bud*,
 A(Rum) s Turkish A(Bul)-Ser, F(Sev) s A(Rum).
 TURKEY (Kennedy) A(Bul)-Ser, A(Con)-Bul, F(Ank)-Con, F(Smy)-AEG.
 Retreats: English F(ENC) disbands. Russian A(Vie)-Boh.

PressPARIS - ROME

Non-aggro it is, O.K.?

PARIS - LONDON

And to think I could have joined Cricketboss had we been allies.
 Come to think of it, I still might.

TAG HILL - PARIS

No you won't.

ITALY - FRANCE

Strong words!!! You could always take indigestion tablets.. (Cyanide
 would be preferable.....)

NORTH HERTS DIPLOMACY ASSOCIATION

A meeting of the Association will be held in Paris in Autumn 1902.
 All cordially invited, especially German speakers.

ABDUL - TAG HILL

Old Turkish proverb say, 'He that lies with dogs must rise up with
 fleas'.

TAG HILL - ABDUL

Boo and I go for the old Chinese proverbs more. 'Two's company,
 Fleas a crowd'

POLYIDUS 1977EI SPRING 1902

AUSTRIA (Nash) A(Gal)-Bud, F(Gre)-Alb, A(Ser)-Tri, A(Vie)-Tyr.
 ENGLAND (Malvisi) F(Bel)-Hol sby F(Nth), F(Edi)-NWG, A(Lon) st.
 FRANCE (Haughan) F(Por)-MAO, A(Bur)-Ruh, A(Spa)-Gas, A(Mar) st.
 GERMANY (Thompson) F(Kie)-BAL, F(Den)-Swe, A(Ber)-Mun, A(Ruh) s A(Hol),
 A(Hol) st*
 ITALY (Bolton) F(Nap)-ICS, F(Tun)-WMS, A(Tus)-Ven, A(Ven)-Tyr,
 A(Tri) st.
 RUSSIA (Lee) F(Fin)-StP-SC, A(Mos) st, A(War)-Ukr.
 TURKEY (Wakefield) A(Bul)-Rum sby A(Sev), A(Con)-Bul, F(Rum)-BLA,
 F(Smy)-AEG.
 Retreats: German A(Hol) disbands.

PressDEAR MUSSOLINI,

Please beware of sudden marauding irate Austrians around
 the Carrickfergus region of your empire. My information suggests that
 they are not very pleased with you.

Yours,

FERDINAND

DEAR LUCY,

I have this delusion that I am a rotten Diplomacy player and
 that everyone is out to conquer my country.

signed;

Carefree Austrian.

DEAR LUCY,

I keep on thinking that everyone is against me and that they are trying to take me out.

signed,

ANOTHER WORRIED ITALIAN.

DEAR A.W.I.,

Have you tried writing to Claire Rayner?

Yours,

LUCY.

MOSCOW

The Czar had many things to say...mostly unrepeatable...ARGHHHHHHH!!

MOSCOW (again)

"Better to fail in attempting the exquisite, than to succeed in the department of the utterly contemptible."

((Arthur-Macken))

TURKEY - AUSTRIA

Holidays got in the way. Alliance still on unless.....

QUIRINUS 1977EZ. AUTUMN 1901

AUSTRIA	(Tucker)	A(Vie)-Tri, F(Alb)-Gre	sby A(Ser)
ENGLAND	(Powis)	F(NWG)-Nwy, A(Yor)-Bel	cby F(NTH)
FRANCE	(Fryatt)	F(MAO)-Por, A(Mar)-Spa, A(Bur)-Bel	
GERMANY	(Olsen)	F(Den), A's (Kie), (Mun)	st. NMR!!!!
ITALY	(Nash)	A(Ven)-Tyr, A(Rom)-Ven, F(ION)-Gre.	
RUSSIA	(Bartle.T)	A(StP)-Fin, F(GOB)-Swe, A(Ukr)-Rum	sby F(Sev).
TURKEY	(Howes)	F(Ank), A's (Bul), (Con)	st. NMR!!!!

WINTER 1901 builds

AUSTRIA	Bud, Tri, Vie, +Gre, +Ser	=	5:bu 2 A(Vie), A(Bud).
ENGLAND	Lon, Lpl, Edi, +Nwy	=	4:bu 1 F(Lon).
FRANCE	Par, Bre, Mar, +Spa, +Por	=	5:bu 2 A(Par), A(Mar).
GERMANY	Ber, Kie, Mun, +Den	=	4:bu 1 none rec'd
ITALY	Nap, Rom, Ven	=	3:N/C
RUSSIA	Sev, Mos, War, StP, +Rum, +Swe	=	6:bu 2 A(Mos), A(StP)
TURKEY	Con, Smy, Ank, +Bul	=	4:bu 1 none rec'd
NEUTRAL	Tun, Bel, Hol	=	3

Press

ROME

Ah well, plan 1 failed, now for plan 2. I never did like playing Italy anyway.

TAG HILL - ROME

Sounds like a quote from Don Revie.

THE PALACE

An attempt on the Tzar's life was foiled yesterday morning after it was discovered that all the Palace bog rolls had been substituted by Brillo Pads. The Tzar is feeling very sore about it.

NEWS REPORT 2

Another attempt on the Tzar's life was foiled last evening when the City Fire Brigade arrived at the Palace to successfully quench the flames. The Tzar was said to be fuming.

NEWS REPORT 3

One hour ago a third attempt on the Tzar's life failed - two would be assassins were arrested holding 20' of rope.

The Tzar is feeling hung up over the whole business.

RHADAMANTHYS SPRING 1901

AUSTRIA	(Sealy)	F(Tri)-Alb, A(Vie)-Tri, A(Bud)-Ser	
GERMANY	(Wishart)	F(Kie)-Hol, A(Ber)-Kie, A(Mun)-Ruh	
ENGLAND	(Nash)	F(Lon)-NTH, F(Edi)-NWG, A(Lpl)-Yor	
FRANCE	(Burke)	F(Bre), A's Par, Mar	all stand NMR!!!!
ITALY	(Kennedy)	A(Ven)-Tyr, A(Rom)-Ven, F(Nap)-ION	
RUSSIA	(Parsons)	F(Sev)-Rum, F(StP)-GOB, A(War)-Ukr, A(Mos)-Sev.	
TURKEY	(Bartle.R)	F(Ank)-BLA, A(Smy)-Ank, A(Con)-Bu1	

TAG HILL - DUBLIN

Absolutely no jokes about Irish men called 'Burke's', but will the dependable one called Kennedy please go round and see the one called Burke on behalf of Boot and I, and ask him what he's playing at. Ta.
LONDON

Here's to a nice devious game, and, in my case, to a long one. I hope to God that the Marstians don't come back to haunt me.....

WESTMINSTER - TAG HILL

Why pick such a devilishly long title old chap? It sounds more like a disease than a name, eh what?

TAG HILL - WESTMINSTER

I don't think 'Clive F. Booth' is either long or sounds like a disease. And anyway, I didn't pick it, my parents did... (I did have some).

ROME - TAG HILL

The Italian people would like to dedicate the following poem to Signor Booth and his much maligned dog:

'Every time you come to town,
The boys keep kickin' your dog aroun'
Makes no difference if he is a houn'
They gotta keep kickin' your dawg aroun'

TAG HILL -- ROME

'Your Irish Wolfhounds might be so dumb,
to accept a kick aimed at the b-m.
My dog is smarter, and that's no lie,
He'll put the Boot in if you try.

RUSSIA - TURKEY

Thanks for the free 'zine, is this bribery? The printing has improved.

Today is Saturday, the day after the deadline, and the post-lady has just bought me the usual pile of mail including several sets of the missing orders. Sorry, but a deadline is a deadline and although I'm usually flexible there are so many games involved this time that I have no intention of re-GMing them all, it would take too long. Orders received this morning were from Bob Howes, Alan Watson and Henry Olsen.

WAITING LISTS

DIPLOMACY Regular 2 season/year: Line up for next game is as follows:

John Rayns, A. Cross, R. Lee, S. Lindsay, R. Miller, P. Sealy, A. Watson. Game fee is 75p + £1 refundable deposit.

The game will start immediately one of the others ends, which should be a couple of issues,

MERCATOR Mk.V Option Y with Key rule: Game fee 50p with £1 deposit.

GM: Peter Nunn: Players-Boot, C. Waterhouse, A. Smith.

Starts immediately list is full.

OUTCOR SURVIVAL: Game fee 50p, no deposit. GM: Chris Rick (address in game report). Rules from me 2p.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS: Game fee 40p. GM: Dave Tant. See 'Pits of Cil' in this issue for details.

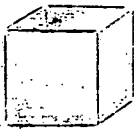
PLEIADES CLUSTER: Game fee 20p. GM: Ray Lee. Players: A. Parsons, C. Walton, P. Lindsay, D. Bolton, A. Cross, P. Sealy. See elsewhere this issue. Rules from me for 2p.

INVITATION TO A GUNFIGHT: Game fee 55p, GM: Ray Gale. Players: J. Botten, A. Cross, A. Quinton, D. Bolton + others who have written direct to Ray. See elsewhere this issue. Rules from me for 5p.

WARLORDS! GM: Richard Nash. A miniatures wargame by post. Details next issue, hopefully.

I suppose you've all heard of the pub with no beer, well now I present to you the Post Office with no stamps.. TA-RAAAH!!

Ridiculous isn't it? I've just been down to the local Post Office for £20.05 worth of stamps and all they had was £1.20 worth. Who says deepest Derbyshire isn't the commerce centre of the U.K.?

BLACK BOX
Game No.1£1.35
- First Prize! -

Lionel Bidwell: 5th ray enters 25, emerges not
 David Bolton : 3rd ray enters E1, emerges 1E
 Mike Lean : 5th ray enters A, emerges 16, 6th 15, exits 12.
 George North : 3rd ray enters S, emerges 9, 4th B, exits not.
 Andrew Smith : 5th ray enters 2, emerges 16, 6th 7, exits 20.
 Kth Thomasson : 5th ray enters 27, emerges not, 6th 11, exits 3.
 Rob Thomasson : 5th ray enters SS, emerges not, 6th WY, exits not.
 Bill Thorne : 5th ray enters 8, emerges not, 6th S, exits not.
 Mike Vernon : 5th ray enters 15, emerges not, 6th D, exits not.

PLEIADES CLUSTERLew Pulsipher's game of interstellar conflictGM: RAY LEE

Line up: Andrew Parsons, Deals Stores, The Street, Roxwell, Nr. Chelmsford, Essex CM1 4PA
Chris Walton, 287 Holly Lane, Erdington, Birmingham B24 9LE
Pete Lindsay, Kingspark Cottage, Radernie, Nr. Cupar, Fife.
David Bolton, 19 Carrickburn Road, Carrickfergus, Co. Antrim, N. Ireland BT38 7ND
Adam Cross, 4 Hill End, Anchor Hill, Wivenhoe, Essex.
Peter Sealy, 4 Gordon Road, Southend on Sea, Essex SS1 1NQ

Ray seems to have been caught on the hop by the interest in this game and as at the moment only produced 4 maps. These I will send to the first 4 players on the list above, and leave it to Ray to send copies to the other two. (I'll add the 18p postage to your credit, Ray). Anyone else interested, write to Ray quickly.

Game fees of 20p have been deducted from the credits of each of the players

INVITATION TO A GUNFIGHTSending out 'Invitations'GM: RAY GALE, 338 High Street, Tyne & Wear.

By now, hopefully, everyone should have copies of the Skirmish rules so could all interested parties please write to me for their character sheets and situation. I will hold on until the next Chimaera before sending them out. First to receive their characters will be the leaders who will detail orders for each of their men and their own figure to carry out. Next, when these orders are in, the rest will receive their characters and their instructions from the leader. They will then send me orders to cover their own man's movement until they are interrupted by some nasty man shooting at them, etc, etc.

Anyone who hasn't written before, write now while there is still time to take part in this western spectacular which makes the O.K. Corral look like an episode of 'Crossroads'.

If you have a novice with a factor of 2, don't blame me. This is not supposed to be a balanced game in that sense. You have to make the best of what you have. Characters will be picked at random for each player.

So, I hope you gentlemen have an enjoyable game and remember 'a man's gotta do what a man's gotta do'. So watch out for anyone tearing up the street, arms waving excitedly, yelling 'Where's the john...'

RAY GALE 1877

Since all players have got to write to Ray anyway, it would relieve administration worries at this end if you could all send him your game fee rather than me deducting it and passing it on. All players on the above list have paid for rules from me so their game fee is only 50p. Others 55p.



Must admit I was a little disappointed in MidCon at Nottingham University. Nobody told me you were all ruddy bipeds! I was so embarrassed.

Letters to Ol' Brown Eyes

386. Dave Taut

I'm sorry I seem to have upset Clive Wardley and from his use of my surname I suppose that's a friend gone. My loss, I know, but I've always thought you had friends despite their failings, not because of their virtues.

I consider irresponsibility is a failing of Clive's, and I don't retract any comment. He in fact NMR'd three times in seven 'En Garde' game months and two of the others were 'campaign' months when his character did nothing but follow orders, and I strongly doubt whether Allan received instructions from Clive about them. In March 1701 he did well too, and could have built on that if he'd bothered.

In 'The Pits', despite being one of the first to put his name down, Clive's party didn't move until part 6, and then NMR'd in 8, 11 and 12. As I put in about 4 hours hard work just to get a party started off in my dungeon, I get cheesed off when it meets that sort of response.

Then, of course, there is the matter of 'Leviathan', which had £3.00 off me altogether, for which I received 6 'zines at varying intervals with none of the games I entered for ever starting. And at one time I remember reading an explanation to the effect that the 'zine was late because they'd gone to a Con!

Now if I start something, and persuade people to invest time and money in it, I bloody well see it through, despite any personal inconvenience, otherwise I'd expect to be called irresponsible at best.

387. Clive Waterhouse

I was astonished to read Clive Wardley's letter (383) in the last Chimaera, and find the image of responsibility he portrayed of himself.

As a 'player' in his game of D&D in 'Leviathan' (The Ancient Anubians), I consider the treatment I (and no doubt other players) received as disgusting. The gamestart was announced in Leviathan 4 (5th Nov 1976). My orders were sent in quickly and I had a reply on the 7th Dec. 1976. New orders were sent in quickly but I next had a reply on the 23rd March 1977. Orders were again sent in, but I heard nothing further from Clive. Then in Chimaera 30 I read that there were rumours of the game folding which were confirmed in 19 $\frac{1}{2}$. What I object to is not that the game was forced to fold due to Clive's lack of time, but that it was necessary to drag the game out for 8 months or so. I cannot believe that was necessary and for most of this I did not know if the game was going on or not. I can only wonder if this is Clive Wardley's idea of responsibility.

Hmm, you're welcome to reply to that Clive, but from where I sit the criticism seems completely fair. I have heard many complaints about 'Leviathan' and have even suffered myself. I joined an 'Empire of the

Petal Throne' game, remember? I've moved once about 9 months ago and haven't heard anything 'official' since. I even sent the GM a s.a.e. and still got no reply.

'Leviathan' is grossly inefficient and cannot be recommended to anyone. There are continual promises that improvement is on the way, but nothing ever seems to happen. The latest change, I understand, is that it will be split into two magazines with Canham/Wardley doing one and Porter/Willis doing the other. Whether it will make any difference remains to be seen but personally I doubt it. 75% of the Leviathan crowd are a nice lot and you can't help but like them, but I'm afraid they do not have the rigid devotion to a task that it takes to turn out a games magazine. Maybe they would be better folding it altogether and devoting their energies to producing something like the proposed 'Phantasmagoria' which they could do at their own leisurely pace without inconveniencing any of the players.

I find it sad that 'Leviathan' should find itself in such a position, with such a reputation, for I genuinely liked it (before the Willis era) and wanted to see it do well. Chimaera set a trend for games 'zines, proving that they could work and cope with a large diversification of interests in games. 'Leviathan' has undone much of what Chim did and helps give us all a bad name. I hope, sincerely, that this new attempt to make Leviathan respectable works, for frankly if it does not I shall wish no further involvement with it.

THE WARGAMER' / UKW

388. Charles Vasey

I feel I must make some comments about the UKW thing. First, O'Fee really does sound like a schoolboy. Why must we help infant projects (you said something like this in EtF)? What does one get from UKW? Contacts - very good and worthwhile, not much use to me but if value to others. Games - OK if you want them but I buy games because I want them not because someone has just started producing them. Thus UKW games should be fiercely reviewed because they are presented to be played as pukka games. BotR is perhaps different, but I've never played it anyway. Does Chris Boyes really mean it is 'great' - like the Wing-co said, are there no bad games (there are if you read PA reviews)? What else do you get from this infant project? A 'zine - now the only two ways to make 'zines better are 1) write articles, 2) moan reasonably. Supporting them, glossing over failures will help no-one. Thus I can see no reason to 'support' UKW in any way other than that in which I would 'support' Avalon Hill, or Marks & Spencer.

In reply to R. Nash sq. - people clearly expected a game for £1.20. Comparisons with SPI are irrelevant when one has an absolute (it's either a game or it ain't), hence some were happy, some were annoyed. Caveat Emptor.

Low Pulsipher on Ethics: I do not consider that any matter of ethics comes into what Dave Merriman did, or indeed what Poulter did. I would still have published Dave's scenario anyway, and this way more people get to read it. Indeed Dave Isby of SPI commented upon it to me with regard to his Air War game. Even if he'd told me it was going to UKW it would not have seemed a material fact to be considered or mentioned. I only give such credits were material is re-printed.

389. Martin Edwardes

UKW's subscription system seems to have got you confused. The basic subscription to the club is £2 per year, for which you receive four quarterly issues of the 'Wargamer', and all the facilities of the club. For an extra £4 you get the four games featured in the magazines - which are produced to SPI standards, with die-cut counters, etc. (The counters for 'Eylau' are I think, in 7 colours and black with the board in blue, green and black). Alternatively you can buy the games as you go for £1.50 each, thus giving you the choice of getting the game or not after having seen the rules. For non-subsc-

scribers each issue is available, magazine & game, for £2.00, but the services of the club are not available to them. I hope this clears up the confusion.

390. Richard Nash

To Lew Pulsipher: I base my opinion on the many wargames clubs throughout the UK which have collapsed through lack of support, as well as the many Community Groups over here (Belfast) that have fallen by the wayside due to a lot of adverse criticism; that two US clubs collapsed due to lack of support, seems to indicate that I am right. As for the conventions they were planned for the summer of 1978, not 1977.....

To Clive: I got issue 2 of the 'Wargamer' and this indicates a change of policy about which Keith Poulter will be getting a very strong letter from me as I consider it backtracking amongst other things. I've been wargaming since the age of 8 so most of the contents are familiar to me - and are good. However, the £2/£6 bit change is annoying and not, in my opinion, desirable.

'Nuff said on the subject I think, and unless anyone comes up with something that hasn't been said before, then the discussion is closed. I have several more letters on file from 'CHIM' readers on the subject, but as I don't wish to bore you unnecessarily by dragging this on, I'll just say that the majority are in favour of UKW. One thing that no-one has done yet is comment on how the latest game, 'Eylau', comes up to their expectations.

THE BATTLE OF THE RING

391. Martin Edwardes

Now, BotR. I have got one or two amendments and - tara! the expansion kit.

Errata (for the two player game)

- 1) Saruman should be played by whoever does not possess the ring. Saruman and the man-orcs can never take the ring. (Poulter Amendment)
- 2) Remove the three North-Easternmost Orc armies and the Northern most & Southernmost man-Orc armies from the initial set up. (Edwardes Amendment)
- 3) Place two blank counters and the ring face down in the Shire. They are moved separately and are only revealed when captured. (Booth Amendment)

Suggested additions to the game (Andrew Barton)

SHELOB: Any Allied force crossing or stopping in Minas Morgul must throw two dice. If the result is 11 or 12 the army is destroyed.

DRUADAN: As 'Shelob' but affects evil armies. Druadan is the hex south-west of Entwash.

HARADRIM: Two of the Orc armies take on a speed of three. One per turn can be built on Harad as one of the Mordor builds. One starts the game on Harad.

392. Chris Ruffle (Gamestesters)

I hope the following answers to Mr. Botten's questions on 'Madame Guillotine' prove satisfactory:

- 1) When the forces of two players are in a single area and neither declares a fight, neither player receives the victory or control bonus points, unless one player declares that he does not contest the others control.
- 2) To receive victory points for the Assembly a player must control also the Hotel de Ville.

If your readers have any more questions concerning either of our two games 'Madame Guillotine' or 'Mercenary' I will be happy to answer them.

393. Bill Howard

I was disturbed to hear that you aren't going to treat the CHIMAERA subbers any differently from poor old Will Haven - surely you can't criticise us all.

Another complaint, I'm not sure of the morality of photocopying

games rules (I do it myself), but actually advertising them, I do think is going a bit far.

Eh? What game rules? I thought that meant copies of Allan Owens postal rules for 'En Garde'. Shock! Horror! I shall look into it immediately. (That's my story and I'm sticking to it.....). Oh Christ, look who the next letters from, I thought I told you not to let him in, Boot?

394. John Piggott.

So interesting to see what Dave Merriman, Paul Blackwell and Lew Pulsipher think of 'Ethil'. Doubtless I could be just as scathing about several 'zines that I don't get. Of the four named contributors to you 'Ethil' demolition spot, only Rob Chapman has ever sent me any money; his are the only opinions (of the ones you printed) which are worth even a cursory glance. I'll be interested to see if 'Bellicus' gets a better average next time.

Now to the meat of Chomaera 33, I refer, of course, to the Booth-Haven feud. I hope you're seriously expecting us to believe you didn't know Will is gay - down here in *civilization* London it's been common knowledge for years. Were I in Will's shoes, I'm not sure which I'd find the most offensive; the original reference to 'fairy' (so kind to the hands) or the obsequious apologies and oh-so-innocent surprise that followed his revelations in Bellicus 45. You might bear in mind that 10% of the population are homosexual; so Chimaera probably has several others amongst its readership. Assuming your circulation is more than 20, that is....

Good luck with the new format. Personally, I thought it looked one hell of a mess, but I doubt whether my opinion is typical of your readership, and I suspect you'd be ill-advised to take much notice of it (for more details of this last point, see my all-new blockbusting review of Chimaera in the next Ethil... or the one after, depending on when I manage to write it!). No doubt I could locate a few people who don't get Chimaera, and persuade them to write derogatory comments about it for Ethil. I don't think I will, however, for I honestly don't see the point.

Ah well, here goes, we'll start at the beginning even though the first paragraph is nonsense. Lew Pulsipher does see Ethil, you've told me yourself that you've sent him copies (did you think I'd forget?). Paul Blackwell told you clearly last issue how he came by the issue he was commenting on (didn't you read it?), and that only leaves Dave Merriman. Do you honestly believe that copies of Ethil don't get passed around and read by people other than the actual subscribers? Don't be naive John, it doesn't become you. When I asked Chim subbers a few issues back how many people read their copies, some went around as many as five people. Still, if you consider it necessary that to make any comment on a magazine the reviewer must have sent the publisher money, then I'll be quiet happy to go along with it. I shall look forward to receiving a cheque when/if the Ethil review goes ahead. You do not send me money for your copies of CHIMAERA and so are ruled out by your own definition as a capable reviewer. Eh, eh.... What I find most ironic though John, is that you who are always so ready with the biting criticism in your own 'zine, should be so touchy when the boot is on the other foot. Oh, and incidentally your opinion as to the new format of CHIM tried last time isn't so far out of step with the majority of the readership.

I don't give a damn whether you believe I was ignorant of Will's homosexuality or not and I fail to see why my apologies should be viewed as obsequious. I regretted my comments and so I apologised, but I don't expect you to understand that as you've never been wrong have you? If I had known before hand why should I have apologised? More likely I'd have said 'told you so...!'

Your statistics are interesting, 10% eh? And that means others read CHIM, fair enough, I'd be surprised if they didn't, but your logic there suggests that as 2% of the population are illiterates I must have a couple of them reading it too. (My circulation is ^{more} than 20, and more than 'Ethil' too no doubt...).

Well, after that little outburst we'll follow it up with another letter from the same person, only this time written in one of his more sane and logical moods.

395. John Piggott

I fear you understood wrongly my point about amateurishness: probably my fault for failing to choose a better word. We all know that no-one makes money out of postal Dippy, but there's another sort of professionalism that we all ought to espouse: it involves such things as ensuring that our games are running efficiently and with the minimum of delay; that mistakes are few, and are corrected at once if they occur; and so on. I'm sure you totally agree.

Totally. I'd even apologise only I'm afraid you might interpret it wrongly.

396. Alan Powis

'Presstigious': If game press cannot go with the game it should not go in a separate supplement. I doubt if many people will hunt through it to find press for their game. Another bad point in my opinion.

Point taken, and all the press is back in the main 'zine this time even though it'll put another couple of pages onto the length of the 'zine. I must agree with you that Dippy press belongs with the game, but the problem is that I have so much I want to get into each copy of CHiM now it's getting to be a problem where to put it. I tried an experiment of a separate press supplement for players only (free) and it saved me about three pages from the main 'zine. Unfortunately, it didn't work. Another alternative is a supplement containing Diplomacy only.....but that sounds vaguely familiar, Chimaera A & B, and I don't want to go back to it.

397. Mike Vernon

I am in full agreement with Allan Owens about the game rating system used by some reviewers. It is based entirely upon one persons opinions and is meaningless without some reference points on the scales of values used. Perhaps one of those who use the system would like to explain how they arrive at the ratings given, and 'graduate' the scales for us by giving the ratings for a number of well-known games. On second thoughts, if all those who believe in this system of assessing the value of a game were to do this, I strongly suspect that their ratings would differ sufficiently to demonstrate the pointlessness of the system.

Game reviews have got to be based on one persons opinion, what other way is there of doing it? I hate games involving wheeling and dealing with shares and would probably rate them low for action/excitement. Others like them and would rate them high, so who are you going to believe? Anyway, you asked for a few examples, so...

398. Richard Nash

Basically it (the rating system) is in two sections. 1-5 means a rating on the basic game which cannot be varied. Thus chess would have 5 (top marks) since it cannot be varied but is a good game. 6-10 are the same ratings but higher in that the game can be varied.

That is it briefly. Basically the overall rating is the total of the individual ratings divided by 9. Also, I have reviewed good, bad and average games. To date they are:

L'Attaque	7.33	Exploration	7.55	CA	1.78
Sixth Fleet	7.39	Breitenfeld	7.44	Borodino	8.22
Flying Circus	6.33	Combat Command	7.89	Year of the Rat	4.11
Fall of Rome	8.90	Scrimmage	4.45		

I make that:- 1 outstanding, 1 pathetic, 2 poor, 2 good (CC/Boro) and the other 5 average/good, from 6.33 to 7.55. I know Allan was referring to reviews in general, but for my part I try to keep a balance.

399. Mike Vernon

Name Game: a couple of couplings suggested by the focus on John Piggott - cross John with a mermaid and would you get Ethil Nerman.....combine 'Ethil' and 'Penthouse', would the result be Frog's Porn?

And that's where I'm terminating the letter column for this issue. There are a couple of things that will wait until next time, i.e. letters on British Radio and the continuation of the Irishman/Kentishman joke battle (might give it a page next time if space allows...).

Subject of NGC efficiency, or rather, inefficiency, bought up last issue did refer to occurrences during last year which have now been sorted out. Good.

PERPLEXOR

Answers to last issues crossword as follows:

ACROSS 5) EWE, 6) INITIALISE, 8) EMPTY, 10) OWE, 11) SOLO, 12) SEA, 13) PIE, 14) ARISE, 15) EYE, 16) EWE, 19) FORESEE, 20) EMANATE, 22) ATE, 24) CAPITALISE, 26) IONISE, 27) BESIDES.

DOWN 1) SIAMESE, 2) CIRCULAR, 3) ALONG, 4) USE, 5) ENTAIL, 6) IONOSPHERE, 7) EMBRACE, 9) THE SEVEN SEAS, 12) SEE, 15) EASY, 17) ERASE, 18) YOU, 21) TEASE, 23) TOO, 25) TEE

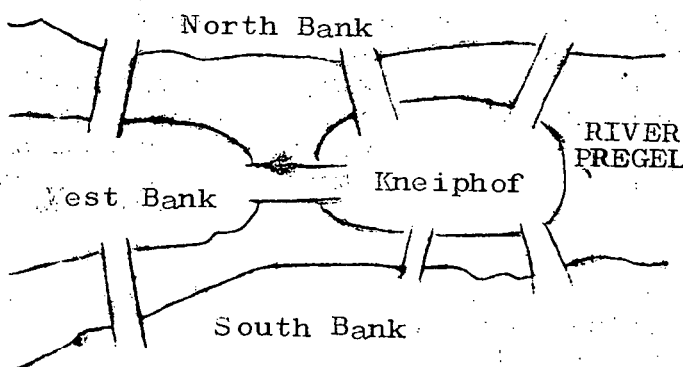
Seems that that was a little too difficult for you as only one entry was received. That came from Tony Bartle, but unfortunately he had a few incorrect answers and so doesn't qualify for the 50p prize. Tough luck Tony, though I admire you for even attempting it.

This issues problems are a little simpler.

1) Which would cost you more: Half a dozendozen oysters at a dozen pounds the half dozen, or a dozen dozen oysters at a half dozen pounds the dozen?

2) What is the next letter in this sequence
O T T F F S S

3) Below is a map of the old city of Konigsberg. The ambition of the citizens was to walk around the city, crossing each bridge once and only once, finishing up for a beer at the famous Kneiphof Beerkeller on the



centre island. This was proved to be impossible long ago. However, Baron von Glockenspiel who lived on the North bank became so frustrated with thirst that he built an eighth bridge which would enable him to enjoy his beer after walking across each of the eight bridges once.

Unfortunately, the Baron had a rival, the Count von Toothree who lived on the south bank, and he set about building a ninth bridge which would not only allow himself to walk the nine bridges before enjoying a pint, but would also stop the Baron's attempts to do so.

This almost led to civil war, but this was prevented by the Mayor who built a tenth bridge so that both the Baron and the Count, after walking across each of the ten, found themselves, not at the Kneiphof, but back on their own banks.

Between where and where were the three bridges built?

The usual 50p prize for the first correct solution drawn out of a hat on the first Chimaera deadline day (not the Cricketboss one, the one after). Best of luck.

G A M E S S H O P

(If you've any games you want to sell or buy, advertise them in this column. The service is absolutely free.)

Bill Thorne 93 Downend Road, Horfield, Bristol, BS7 9PR would like to obtain copies of two US games 'New Town' and 'Mr. President', Contact Bill at above address if you can help.

Simon Lindsay 9 Holway Avenue, Taunton, Somerset has for sale the following games. All boxed and in near perfect condition.

World War II & World War III @ £4.20 each. Global War @ £5.20. All SPI games and prices include postage.

THE LAST ROUND-UP

'Anarchy and Imperialism' mentioned last issue is a Diplomacy variant about to be run by John Garrett. Game fee is £2 but there is one free place being offered (your choice if not already taken), to the solver of the following:

From the letters in the
block to the right form
the names of a certain
number of areas on a
Diplomacy board.

GOLDNABNVIOCOYE
IUUAPUPAAUIRTCA
RRMANS GALPPONAO
ARES OCINBNNSLSI
KANHTTTRLAIASL

Entries opened 3rd October 1977, send to John at 19 Weaverthorpe, Nunthorpe, Middlesbrough, Cleveland, TS7 0FU.

Budding variant designers there's still time to enter the 'Diplomacy World International Variant Competition' and win yourself subscriptions to some of the worlds top 'zines. Send entries (which must have been unpublished before) to Lew Pulsipher,

London House, Mecklenburgh Sq. London WC1N 2AB.

Closing date is 30th November 1977.

Sorry, but House Rules haven't been done again. I'll get them to all the people that asked just as soon as I can. In the meantime, just assume that what I say goes.

Saw two new 'zines knocking around at MidCon, one from a Scot called Forsyth who I don't know, not even his address. (Someone made a paper aeroplane out of my copy didn't they, Bartle?). And the other from a well known bunch of Geordies and called 'Howay the lads'. Willy Haughan, Henry Olsen, Ray Gale, Ian Waugh are the names behind it. Yeah, it's another attempt at running a 'zine by committee and we all know what happens to them. Still, sooner or later one of the will succeed and this crowd have the experience of Willy Haughan with them so aren't entirely raw. Again, my copy went missing during the Con, but I think it was intended to be a gaming 'zine and not just a Diplomacy one. Address? Try Willy Haughan, 54 Linden Road, Gosforth, Newcastle, Tyne & Wear.

Cover for this issue came from Tony Bartle, thanks Tony. This is the usual free issue in payment. Still more covers wanted for future issues, and although I don't wish to put the damper on anyones enthusiasm, it would help considerably if all the artwork could be done rather than me having to redraw it.

Bob Brown's excellent 'zine 'The Tinamou' turned up in photo-reduced form last time, and this is how I'd hoped Chimaera would look. Carries games of Diplomacy and Diplomacy variants but few articles etc. Also has a fair excuse for a sub-'zine from Ron Fisher in which I actually signed up for a dippy game without having my arm twisted. That's how I rate it. If anyone's interested I've a spare copy you can have with the next Chim.

Graeme Levin's glossy 'Games & Puzzles', surely a must for everyone in this hobby, looks like becoming available by subscription only in the very near future. Check with your newsagent.

Dave Watt's has launched his 'Railway Rivals Recorder' 'zine early. The only UK 'zine to employ slave labour, it is spirit duplicated and

and monthly. Carrying games of Dave's own 'Railway Rivals' it costs 7p per issue + postage. Issue 1 promised much, including a threat to displace Chimaera from the top of the 'zine poll...! This lad's got ambition. Worth getting if you're a RR or 1829 fan, but hurry as Dave is limiting circulation.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Martin Rundle to 12 Paul Grdns, Radcliffe Rd., Croydon, Surrey.
Ian Wishart to New Bungalow, Rossie Mills, By Montrose, Angus, Scotland.

Cost of this issue: CHIMAERA 17p: EN GARDE 9p, EN GARDE RULES 4 1/2p

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DEADLINES: C/Boss to Bill Dove for Saturday 1st October 1977
Other non-dip games to GM's by Friday 7th October 1977(+Leander)
DIPLOMACY to me by Friday 15th October 1977

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This is the Tommy Cooper of the postal 'zine scene (i.e. most impersonated). It is called CHIMAERA, it is a wonder 'zine, and it comes to you from Olive F. Booth Wellington Station 71 Clara Mount Road, Langley, Heanor, Derbyshire DE7 7HS United Kingdom.

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