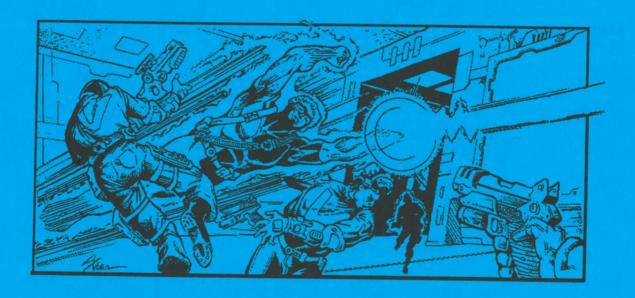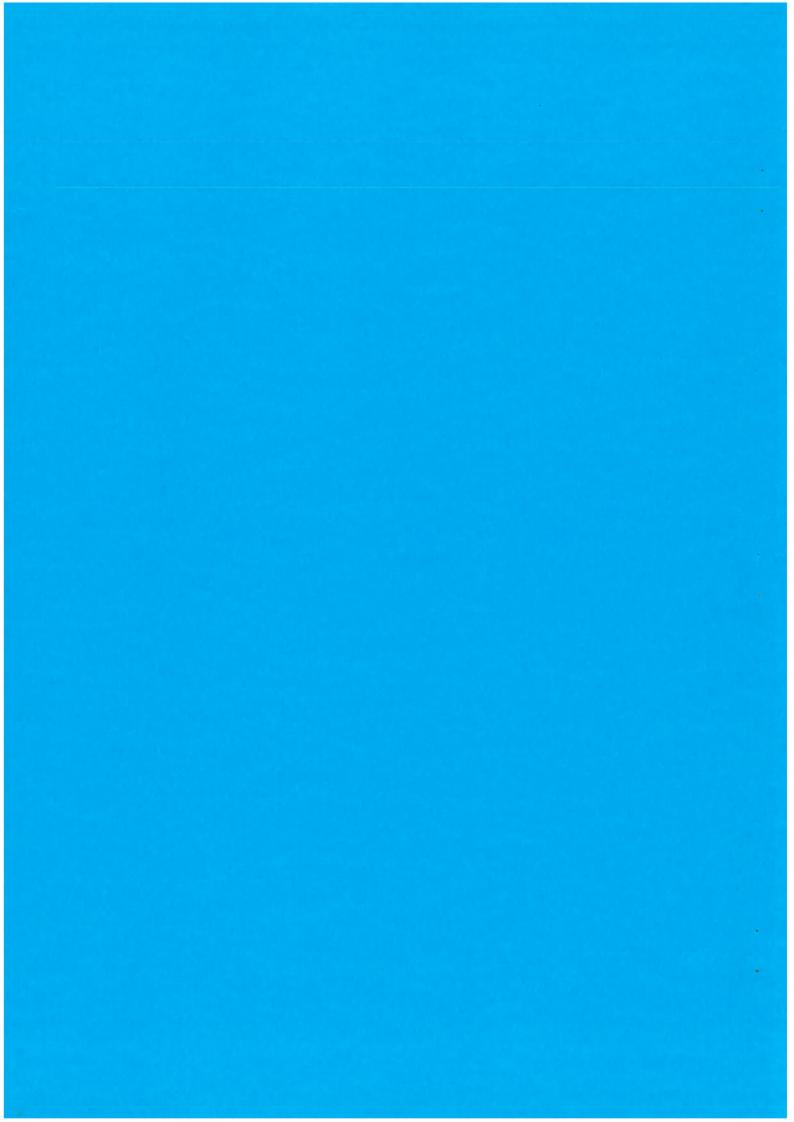# University of
# Queensland Wargamer

Issue No.50

September 1998

# Queensland Wargamer

No. 50 _____ September 1998

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## Editorial

This is my first attempt at putting together the Wargamer, and I hope I've put together an interesting and informataive magazine. I was hoping to have a few more articles, but unfortunately I have not aggressively and relentlessly harass people, which is what an editor probably should be doing. This is also why I am not a very good diplomacy player. (you can read my article on this subject later) On the point of board games, we recently had twelve people turning up to the diplomacy tournament(Not too bad), while there's going to be a Warhammer tournament coming up. Now I know there is still a healthy number of people in the club playing in roleplaying games and magic,(which is good) but I really think we should be recruiting more new people to play boardgames. I especially mentioned Diplomacy and Warhammer because they are starting to grow. Also, there are alot of e-mail diplomacy players in Australia and probably some are in Brisbane. Anyway, I think we should start a website so more people are aware of our club -- perhaps on the University site. I am happy to build one if someone tells me how to use HTML! (whatever that means) Finally, you would have noticed that there are quite a large number of diplomacy articles. I would actually like to have articles on other games such as roleplaying and AD&D, but having no idea what roleplaying even means, I really can't say much about it, and no else has either. So please, everyone please write something... please! (Have I said please enough?)

I've been whinging alot, haven't I? Well, that's just me.
If anyone else wants to whinge or make some "constructive" criticisms or suggestions, then they are certainly welcome to make a contribution.

As this is the 50th edition of this magazine, former editors comment how stressful it is.(Very!) Unfortunately, David Bugler, Nina Williams, Stefan Stanley, Kevin Flynn or Ben Kellett couldn't be contacted. Darryl Greensill's comment was "I've got nothing interesting to say."
I don't know how he could say that after all the pain I've to gone through to publish this!

Gary Johnson's editorial.

I've got to say I'm looking forward to reading this Wargamer. It's going to be the first in a few years that I haven't edited, formatted, and re-formatted until I couldn't stand the damn thing anymore. It was hard work being editor, but I guess I enjoyed it. Hell, I enjoyed all my time on the club executive, though it was hard work at times.

I'm being very boring. I'll stop now.

Gary Johnson


Nick Lawrence's editorial.

When I become Editor in 1992, I suppose I was unique amongst Wargamer Editors in that I had actually been an official Assistant Editor for a whole year! In that time I learnt the valuable editorial skills of chasing people, harrassing them for contributions, then writing your own stuff to fill up space. In some ways my stint as Editor reflects my own development as a gamer. A cautious, guided introduction, followed by a rash of enthusiasm and ideas, finally calming down as I got on with Real Life. I think I've been a good editor and a good player, but I've never been in charge of QUGS and I've never been a GM. Assuming the post of El Presidente is not an option anymore, but the position of GM is still a tantalising one. It is not that I think I will really enjoy the job--in fact, I don't think I would, and I think there are a lot of other players out there who wouldn't enjoy the job either. The point is I feel I need the experience to obtain a properly balanced view of the game, from both sides so to speak. I would encourage everyone to swap roles once in a while: after all, this is role-playing. One of these days I'm going to get together enough time and enough determination and I'm going to write a scenario! It couldn't be much

harder than writing articles for the Wargamer, could it?

Timo Nieminen's editorial.

It seems so long ago that I was editor for this beast of a magazine. I followed in the footsteps of the great Jack Ford, and was succeeded by Nick Lawrence. And there was a break of a year in the middle there, by a would-be-editor who didn't actually put any issues out.

It's easier these days to put out a "quality" magazine. Just look at the old issues and see! Back when I was the ed (makes me sound old, doesn't it?), we'd get illegible manuscripts, sloppy typing, and the very occasional computer printout on a crappy dot matrix. Everything would then be typed (on a typewriter) and fed to the photocopier. The last step is still the same, but the world of computer DTP has taken over preparation of the mag. Some things stay the same though. Just try to get contributions out of most of you lot!   (Very True Indeed!! -- Editor)

And, apart from prettier layouts, what has changed? Over the years, the Wargamer has gone from miniatures and boardgames to mostly RPGs. Reflects the population, I suppose. What highlights were there? The Queensland Wargamer putting the first Gulf War game into print, namely Paul Kinsler's back cover game for the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. And what's to come? We'll have to wait and see. It's up to you now.

# Publication History of the Queensland Wargamer

Complied by Gary Johnson (former editor)

Our story begins with the publication by David Bugler of the *University of Queensland Wargaming Society Newletter*, dated February 1979.  Three months later, the first magazine called the Queensland Wargamer was issued by David.  Originally, there were going to be five issues every year, one every two months (with the December issue held over and joined to the February issue to make the O-Week publication a double-sized special).  However, David never received enough contributions to keep to this schedule:  there

were three Wargamers in 1979 (including the original newsletter), and four in 1980. David's last issue came out in March 1981, as he handed the responsibility of editor over to Kevin Flynn. It had been a frustrating two and a half years.

Kevin would also be editor for two and a half years, though the last six months would be after Nina Williams' brief tenure in the first half of 1983. The last of his magazines (#18) would be the first to include an issue number on the cover, the first to concede that the Wargamer was published "irregularly during the year", and the first to include an index of all articles published in the Wargamer. Curiously enough, in this list there is no issue #8, the last of David's issues is #7 (March 1981), while the first of Kevin's Wargamers (April 1981) is #9. Perhaps Kevin factored in the Newsletter as #1, or possibly #7 was meant to be the (never published) last issue of 1980, and #7 the February 1981 issue. For what it's worth, the Society's copy of #7 has been marked with a handwritten "issue--8". A mystery from the dim, dark past of QUGS...

After producing three issues in 1981 and four in 1982, Kevin was replaced as editor by Nina Williams. Nina reduced the publication frequency from five to four issues per annum, and met this schedule for the first half of 1983. However, she had to leave Brisbane in June that year, and Kevin returned to produce his final issue of 1980, and 38 the February 1981 issue. Although he had been re-elected editor at the club AGM on 1 October, Kevin didn't produce a second Wargamer before leaving.

The next editor was Jack Ford, patron saint of QUGS. To quote from his first editorial (September 1984), "my name is Jack Ford and for the past 3 years I have been Treasurer of Q.U.G.S. During that time I have also been Acting-President, Acting-Secretary and Acting-Editor. In other words, at various times I have been single-handedly keeping QUGS alive!" Jack produced eight Wargamer between Sept. 1984 and Sept. 1987, and was succeeded by Timo Nieminen, who put on #27 in June 1988 before surrendering the position of editor to Stefan Stanley, notorious as the first editor to fail to publish a single issue of the club magazine during his term of office. Tim would replace Stefan within six months, and #28 came out in April 1989.

Shortly before Stefan was elected however, Neil Mack (then treasurer) produced the first club newsletter that was separate to the Wargamer,

reducing and redefining the scope and content of the magazine. For the first ten years, the Wargamer was both a collection of articles and the source of all printed news about the club's activities. Over the years, the magazine had printed several resignation letters, including that of Denis Clancy, the club President in 1980 and 1981, numerous appeals for the rank and file of the membership to get off their butts and get involved in club activities, and various minutiae of procedures and meeting and so on. In the last ten years, such things have been set aside from the Wargamer and distributed to QUGS members in newsletters, leaving the magazine solely for articles and the like.

Timo's time as editor saw the publication of seven regular issues of the Queensland Wargamer and the 1991 O-Week special, the Collected 00?, being all seven episodes of Aaron Yuile's cartoon strip about a suave, sexy and sophisticated spy known only as 00?. Originally published in the Wargamer between 1984 and 1987, 00? was the figurehead QUGS membership cards from 1988 to 1991, and is fondly remembered by older QUGS members when they bother to think about it at all. 00? was succeeded on the cards by the dreaded Vorpal Bunny, another long-time club mascot, who stayed for both of Nick Lawrence's years as editor.

Nick's path to the editorship was exceptional, in that he acted as Timo's assistant editor for the two 1991 issues, #32 and #33, before becoming editor in his own right at the 1991 AGM. As editor, Nick published three regular issues and the 1993 O-Week special, Intrigue at Castle Morien, a complete freeform. His successor in 1994 was Darryl Greensill, who managed one issue (#37), and who was followed by me. I managed twelve in my three years, not only breaking the previous record of eight issues held by four of my predecessors (David, Kevin, Jack and Timo), but keeping to the publication schedule of four issues per annum, something that hadn't been done before. Although my immediate successor (Ben Skellett) didn't manage to produce #50 in time for O-week this year, the fact that you are reading this means that the current editor, Ernest Cheung, has done the job and put together his first Wargamer. Hopefully, it will be the first of several for him. And so the story continues.

# How not to play Diplomacy: A definitive guide

Actually, it's just my experience in the diplomacy tournament, which comes pretty close to a definitive guide for losing in diplomacy.

This was the first diplomacy tournament I've played in, and the intensity and speed of the games surprised me a bit. (This sounds like a football match, doesn't it?) Generally the games were played in good spirits, although diplomacy is not the type of game that has much of that. (Especially not when you've just backstabbed your ally) There were some quite memorable blunders, (especially me) including one unnamed vice-president of the club who tried to move Fleet Naples-Tunis twice!

I myself made a mistake in every game I played -- not exactly the way to get a good score. Well, at least I didn't come last! Here are some of the somewhat amusing mistakes I've made in my games -- Game 1: I was Italy and Daniel Edwards managed to convince me to stab Gary Johnson as Austria by using such words as "You will definitely get Trieste" and "Russia and Italy make a very good alliance blah...blah...blah..." -- Yeah right! Thus I was fooled into a disguised juggernaut, which I overlooked despite the fact Russia and Turkey did not defend Sevastpool and Constantinople; Austria was then destroyed from three fronts but then I managed to get steamrolled but the other two before England came over to just survive on two units.

Game 2 -- Doing well with Austria then inexplicably wrote down Bud Sup Greece and Ser sup Vie-Gal. Obviously this was illegal and Turkey(Gary's Revenge!) managed to walk into Greece. End of Story.

Game 3 and 4: Playing two games at once made it even more difficult as I nearly didn't even get my orders in the first move. Goodwill by the others players allowed me to get my orders in as Russia. However, that was as much goodwill as I was going to get for the game. I had an agreement with Craig Sedgwick as Turkey (Who happens to be one of the top players in Australia) not to go to Black Sea and Austria (Geoff Kerr, the eventual winner) not to go to Galicia. Guess what?-- Both went in. Dale Edwards, as Germany agreed not to bounce in Sweden but then went about it anyway. Then Turkey realised Austria was really against him, but by then it was too late for both of us. In the second year, I and England(Gary -- "Best of buddies" -- his words) had a so-called agreement that he would not move into St.Petersburg. And then in the third year, I had an agreement with him that he

would not move into Moscow.  Thankfully I did not make an agreement with him to not go to Sevastpool in the fourth year.  In the other game, I was Germany with an E-F-G with the aim of taking out Italy.  This was more to do with the fact that Italy (Andrew Goff) was doing too well in the tournament thanks to a somewhat lucky 18-centre win and a 12-centres in the second game than anything else.  Although I must admit I just could not be bothered having another war with France(Guess who?)
However, the three-way alliance failed miserably.(For me anyway)

The thing I found most difficult was the fact I had so little time to write my orders in.  I don't believe it's that fair that a game should be decided by a lack of time rather than superior skill.  However, I didn't show too much skill in any case.  But I guess you have balance time with finishing the game quickly.
Well, these are two things you should definitely never do in diplomacy
1.Write in totally wrong orders.  (unless you do it purposely)
2.If four other players say they're not going to attack you, don't believe
   them!  One of them must be lying(or in my case, all four!)

Despite the fact that I did so poorly in the tournament, I enjoyed the game and the competition immensely.  I would encourage others who haven't played before to have a go, since it seems so simple yet it is a very challenging game.

## The 1998 QUGS Diplomacy Tournament

by Gary Johnson

Well, we got eleven players this year (two up from last time), though I was hoping we'd reach two full boards of seven this time around.  Still, three of the players(Geoff, Andrew and Craig) were from interstate, so our club tournament is becoming a fixture on the national Diplomacy scene.  Nearly everone came along to the tournament dinner on Saturday night and had a good time, so I think we'll do that again next year.  Finally, thanks to everyone who played on both boards in one or more rounds, especially David, who struggled through all three rounds in that way.

See you all next year!
Gary

| Placing | Name | Points |
|---------|------|--------|
| 1st | Geoff Kerr | 34 |
| 2nd | Andrew Goff | 33 |
| 3rd | Daniel Edwards | 28 |
| 4th | David Astley | 23 (two boards for three rounds) |
| 5th | Craig Sedgwick | 20 (2;1) |
| 6th | Gary Johnson (GM) | 15 (2;3) |
| 7th | Travis Hall | 13 (played two rounds) |
| 8th | Darryl Greensill | 11 (2;2) |
| 9th | Dale Edwards | 7 |
| 10th | Mark Hodgkinson | 6 (played one round) |
| 11th | Ernest Cheung | 2 (2;1) |
| 12th | Darryl Cox | 1 (played two rounds) |

Note: anyone who played both boards in a round received points for their better games, not for both games.
Best Austria: Geoff Kerr (15)
Best England: Travis Hall (12)
Best France: Andrew Goff (18)
Best Germany: Andrew Goff (12)
Best Italy: David Astley (9)
Best Russia: Daniel Edwards, Craig Sedgwick (6 each)
Best Turkey: David Astley (14)


## Round One, Board one: Stars & Anchors

|  | 1901 | 1902 | 1903 | 1904 | 1905 | 1906 | 1907 | 1908 |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Austria (Gary) | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| England(Darryl G) | 4 | 5 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 10 |
| France (David) | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Germany (Craig) | 5 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 8 | 8 | 8 |
| Italy (Ernest) | 5 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Russia (Daniel) | 5 | 7 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 6 | 6 |
| Turkey (Geoff) | 4 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 8 |

Summary: Austria picked the disgused Steamroller, but forgot to point it out to Italy. England and Germany nailed France while Russia and Turkey dismantled Austria and ground down Italy, but Russia was repeatedly unable to build units to match its supply centres. Game ended with an agreed draw after Fall 1908.

## Round One, Board Two: Boats & Bullets

|               | 1901 | 1902 | 1903 | 1904 | 1905 | 1906 | 1907 | 1908 | 1909 |
|---------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Austria(Dale) | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| England(Travis) | 4 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 10 | 10 | 12 |
| France(Andrew) | 5 | 6 | 7 | 10 | 10 | 11 | 11 | 14 | 18 |
| Germany(Gary) | 6 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 2 |
| Italy(David) | 3 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Russia(Darryl C) | 5 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Turkey(Darryl G) | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 1 |

Summary: Italy misordered Naples to Tunis in Spring 1901, giving France a dream run into the West Med. Western Triple started breaking down as a result of conservative English play and German nervousness, but neither turned on France, who powered through Italy and into the Balkans. Russia and Turkey put up stout resistance for a time, but gradually cracked. Game ended with a French victory after Fall 1909, 1 minute before the time draw was due.

## Round Two, Board One: Aubergine

|               | 1901 | 1902 | 1903 | 1904 | 1905 | 1906 |     |
|---------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|
| Austria (Ernest) | 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 0 |  |
| England (Geoff) | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 8 |  |
| France (Dale) | 5 | 5 | 8 | 9 | 9 | 10 | France concedes 3 |
| Germany(Andrew) | 5 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 10 | 12 | to England |
| Italy (Darryl G) | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |
| Russia (David) | 5 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |
| Turkey (Gary) | 4 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 4 |  |

Sumarry: Western Triple meets Steamroller. Russia tried to take on England and Germany at the same time, with predictable results. France declined a draw after Fall 1906, but was forced to accept an unfavourable settlement one year later. Game ended with an agreed draw after Fall 1906, an hour before the end of the Saturday evening session, giving some players free time on Sunday morning.

## Round Two, Board Two: Zucchini

|              | 1901 | 1902 | 1903 | 1904 | 1905 | 1906 | 1907 | 1908 | 1909 |
|--------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Austria(Darryl G) | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| England(Craig) | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 6 |
| France(Daniel) | 6 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 8 | 10 | 10 | 13 | 13 |
| Germany(Darryl C) | 4 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Italy(Gary) | 4 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| Russia(Travis) | 6 | 6 | 9 | 10 | 9 | 6 | 5* | 3 | 1 |
| Turkey(David) | 4 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 8 | 10 | 11 | 13 | 14 |

*Mark substitued for Travis in the Sunday morning session.

Summary: Italy and Turkey crushed Austria, who was helping Russia and France pulverise Germany. During all this, both Austria and Turkey missed a turn (though not the same one). France pushed into England, but pulled back when Italy went west. Turkey then stabbed Italy for the western half of Austria. The next morning, France and Turkey agreed to share the board, squishing Italy between them and grinding Russia between the two of them and England. Game ended with an agreed draw after Fall 1909.

## Round Three, Board One: Ka Mate

|              | 1901 | 1902 | 1903 | 1904 | 1905 |                       |
|--------------|------|------|------|------|------|-----------------------|
| Austria(David) | 5 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 4 |                       |
| England(Daniel) | 4 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 8 | Conceded 1 by Austria to |
| France(Gary) | 5 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 7 | England               |
| Germany (Ernest) | 5 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |                       |
| Italy(Andrew) | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 |                       |
| Russia(Craig) | 5 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 6 |                       |
| Turkey(Mark) | 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 6 |                       |

Summary: Western Triple started out well for England and France, but things bogged down when Austria and Russia demolished Germany. A quiet Turkey only started to get into gear when Austria changed sides, taking Venice and helping England against Russia. Expansion in all directions left Austria vulnerable to various attacks, and when the game ended Austria conceded Berlin to England. Game ended with an agreed draw after Fall 1905.

### Round Three, Board Two: Ka Ora

| | 1901 | 1902 | 1903 | 1904 | 1905 | 1906 | 1907 | 1908 | 1909 | 1910 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Austria(Geoff) | 5 | 6 | 8 | 9 | 9 | 10 | 10 | 12 | 12 | 15 |
| England(Gary) | 5 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 8 | 11 | 11 | 12 | 9 |
| France(Darryl) | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Germany(Dale) | 5 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Italy(David) | 4 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 9 |
| Russia(Ernest) | 4 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Turkey(Craig) | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

*Daniel substitued for Ernest when the latter had to leave.

Summary: Western Triple turned into an alliance between France and Germany against England after 1901, and the rest the board sighed in relief. Austria used Italy against Turkey and England against Russia, giving St. Petersburg and Moscow to England to sustain a determined defence against France and Germany. When the Austrians arrived in the Germany rear, the German war effort in the north disappeared; likewise for the French when the Italians swept into the West Med. As time ran, English tried to hold back the Austrian juggernaut, but Italy remained loyal to the ally who helped it capture all of Turkey. Game ended with a time draw after Fall 1909.

# The Lepanto Opening

## *Edi Birsan*

Introduction: Edi Birsan is one of the most well-known opening strategists in diplomacy circles, and the Lepanto has certainly improved Italy's chances in the game. In the late 60's and early 70's he wrote a whole series of articles on openings and diplomacy strategy and tactics. Here is a reprint of the original article which he wrote 28 years ago.

By most means of statistical analysis, Italy is the weakest power on the Diplomacy board. This could be attributed to several factors, including a weak position between Austria and France, and perhaps the ineffective development of trust between the Austrians and the Italians due to the unusual situation of adjacent home centres. More often than not, the Italians are unable to overcome the Turkish position quickly and fall prey to a combination of Turkish resistance and back-stabbing by a western power.

A possible reversal of the Turkish domination of the southeast is an alliance between Austria and Italy which uses an unusual opening by the Italians to quickly secure the fall of the Turks. The principal problem in attacking Turkey is that players find its corner position very difficult to crack. Italian initiative combined with Austrian pressure can remove the Turks to gain the corner advantage by the emplacement of an Army deep behind the Turkish position in Syria! While it may be an unusual position for an Italian army, it is the most effective manner to turn the Turkish flank and to threaten the Turkish mainland. The trick then becomes to get there before the Turks block you.

The Spring 1901 moves for Italy should not reveal an open bias toward Austria and should indicate instead a kind of calm wait-and-see attitude. Thus, the Spring should see the Italians moving Fleet Naples to the Ionian sea, Army Rome to Apulia and Army Venice holding. This position gives the Italians a secure position in case of Austrian or French threats. Note that the Italians can support themselves in Venice from Apulia if a threat does

materialize. Hopefully, the French will be involved in the west and the Austrians will be moving to Albania with their fleet and occupying Serbia.

Then in Fall of 1901, the Italians make the initial set-up for the drive to the East. This is done by convoying the army in Apulia to Tunis. This leaves the Austrian-Italian alliance with two fleets that can threaten the Aegean and provides Italy with the flexibility provided by the army in Tunis, which can be convoyed back to Italy or to Albania if plans go wrong. The Italian army in Venice holds and is thus able to provide some security in the North. Note that should the Russians and the Turks combine, the Austrians will be in desperate need of an extra army to fend off Russians attacks.

After a Winter build of a fleet in Naples -- the traditional build of Italy in the first winter -- the Italians order the following for the Spring: Fleet Ionian to the Eastern Med., Fleet Naples to the Ionian, and Army Tunis and Army Venice hold. This secures the convoy route, for in the Fall the Italians are clear to convoy Army Tunis straight to Syria. The fall of the Turks is now a certainty. The positional advantage of moving to the Eastern Med. is enhanced by the existence of the Austrian fleet in Greece. When the Italians make their move to the Eastern Med., the Austrians should also attempt to force their way into the Aegean, more to keep the Turks out than to gain it for themselves. In the Spring of 1903, the Austrian-Italian alliance will have three fleets that can come to bear on the Aegean as well as an army that can threaten Smyrna. For those who wish to fantasize, visions of the Italians moving on Sevastopol can be conjured up by the movement of the eastern army to Armenia. or, in the event that the Austrians are to be stabbed, the army could be used to very effectively turn against the Austrian position in Constantinople.

While this opening is very effective, crushing the Turks caught unaware, it is futile to attempt it if the Turks move their fleet to Constantinople in the Spring of 1901, for they will surely move it to the Aegean in the Fall and build a fleet in Smyrna in the Winter with Spring orders bringing it to the Eastern Med. Here we see the flexibility of the opening moves, as the army in Apulia could be used for other things, because such a Turkish opening usually means that the Austrians are in for a lot of trouble from the Russians. But then that is another battle and another article.

# Gaming in a Computer Age

Whether puzzling over a strategy war game such as *Starcraft* or dodging swinging blades as Lara Croft in *Tomb Raider II*, a string of new releases guarantee a seemingly endless supply of interactive entertainment. *Wolfenstien* and *Quake* established a new level of violence, with the aim of giving your enemies a twelve gauge facelift. This style of game has since been emulated countless times. Personally, I am an advocate of less gruesome, more strategic offerings such as the *X-Com* series by Microprose. Cheats which provide extra abilities or guaranteed victory are available for most adventure games, but by using these quick fixes, you are only cheating yourself.

Few of us may remember the *Ancient Art of War*, the earliest military strategy game with graphics to hit the computer market. From it spawned the myriad of games now available. Similarly, *Rogue* was the forbearer of Dungeon based adventures such as *Diablo*. The net has a Roguelike Game Homepage at **http://www.win.tue.nl/games/roguelike/#home**.

## Online Gaming.

In a universe beyond imagination, only the strong survive. *Ultra Corps* is a futuristic game of shaky alliances within which you communicate, trade and combat around 6000 gamers around the world. Each player controls a home planet and expands their empire through the destruction of his or her neighbours. For more information on the free beta testing currently taking place, go to **http://www.vr1.com/megacorps/**.

*The Realm* is a graphical adventure where devotees of fantasy gaming assume the role of an adventurer in a medieval society, are fitted with armour and select from a range of weapons. New players are often hustled by more experienced adventurers. Never trust anyone who says "Hand over a thousand gold and I will give you this nice, shiny sword" (you will most likely be given the sword, through the ribs). The game supports a reasonable combat and spell system. A 30 day free trial is available and worth checking out at **http://www.realmserver.com**.

The "kill everything in sight" game, *Diablo,* can be played over a service called Battlenet, but a reliable source has informed me that those sneaky game developers have created a back-door which allows them to search through the files on your hard disk. So beware !!!

## On-line Resources.

How would you like access to thousands of new spells ? The Great Net Spellbook and the Great Net Prayerbook are filled with thousands of new spells and prayers. And although designed with the *Advanced D&D* game in mind, they can be adapted for other role-playing games. Each can be downloaded from **ftp://ftp.win.tue.nl/pub/games/spells/html/cover.html**. There are a number of other on-line texts which can be downloaded at no cost. Although TSR's legal representatives have recently hacked a path of devastation through most *D&D* sites, there still exists a number of generic role playing aids and resources including

campaign settings, character sheets, weapons, traps, rule variations, new character classes and races. Two of these sites stand out in terms of their range and quality of "free stuff". The first is Olik's AD&D Pages, an extensive archive of goodies which can be found at **ftp://ftp.tas.gov.au/misc/gnsb/books/~olear/ADnD/index.html**. The second has a wealth of D&D tools, including character generators, plus linked sites and can be found at **http://www2.cybernex.net/~jefkirsh/Dnd.html**

*Heroes* is a random character generator for *Advanced D&D* (1st Edition) which can churn out an unlimited supply of playable characters from any of the common classes or races. It is incredibly fast and adds unique touches to each adventurer (maybe a fear of heights). The user can set upper and lower limits on things such as attributes, hit points and level. The character generator program is available for free at a number of Internet sites, including **http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Vault/1642/**

## Regarding Board and Card Games.

Many popular board games are available on-line, played against whoever happens to be logged into the system, or computer simulated opponents. For an interesting variation of the trading game *Medici*, use a recent version web browser to access **http://www.dnai.com/~soongliu/java_game/medici.html**. For a cannon load of articles to tune your *Diplomacy* skills, or learn how to play the game over the net, the site for you is **http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/DiplomacyWorld/**. If you have access to newsgroups, then try subscribing to **rec.games.diplomacy**. The *Risk* board game has also been reproduced, for the personal computer, by Hasbro Interactive. Even *Magic: The Gathering* can be played against your computer, with the ability to design and play-test new decks. Internet Relay Chat and News groups allow you to talk strategy, trade cards or maybe even discuss the size of your deck with like minded individuals. Fortunately, many site names are self explanatory. For example, Wizards of the Coast (With their acquisition of TSR last year) is found at **http://www.wizards.com/**, and the latest on the *Star Wars* and *Star Trek* CCGs would command a visit to **http://www.decipher.com/**. For new additions to the Warhammer stable of miniatures, march into **http://www.games-workshop.com/**.

## Play-by-mail.

In 1992, I ran a play-by-mail version of *En Garde*, which met an early demise due to the cost of sending a 16 page magazine through the post each month, followed by fortnightly updates. The magazine detailed player movements, interactions, and related events occurring in 17th century France. The computer age has brought new life to these play-by-mail systems, as electronic mail allows more frequent moves at a substantially reduced cost.

For more information regarding any of the games, programs, resources or sites mentioned, you are welcome to contact the QUGS Secretary by e-mail or at any club meeting.

Brad Henry
QUGS Secretary
s367005@student.uq.edu.au

# Godzilla for Champions

by Gary Johnson

Are your players finding it too easy to overwhelm their super-foes with sheer physical force? Want to remind them that sometimes it's more important to rescue innocents and protect property than to chase the fleeing villain? Well then, consider that skyscraper-smashing, atomic breath-blasting King o' da Monsters, GODZILLA!

| Value | Char | Cost |
|-------|------|------|
| 105 | STR | 0 |
| 10 | DEX | 0 |
| 50 | CON | 80 |
| 40 | BODY | 30 |
| 5 | INT | -5 |
| 5 | EGO | -10 |
| 40 | PRE | 30 |
| 5 | COM | -2 |
| 20 | PD | 14 |
| 20 | ED | 6 |
| 2 | SPD | 0 |
| 25 | REC | 26 |
| 100 | END | 0 |
| 75 | STUN | 5 |

| 100+ | Disadvantages |
|------|---------------|
| 10 | Public Identity:  Godzilla |
| 25 | Distinctive Feature:  Gigantic Reptilian Monster |
| 20 | Reputation:  Giant Reptilian Monster 14- |
| 15 | Physical Limitation:  No Fine Manipulation (frequently, greatly) |
| 25 | Hunted by All Governments (NCI) 14- |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| 902 | Atomic Energy Bonus |

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|--------|-----|
| 270 | 12d6 RKA vs ED, 1" Area of Effect (+½), atomic breath blast | 27 |
| 90 | 4d6 HKA vs PD, total 8d6K, 0 END, bite | 0+10 |
| 40 | 9d6 HA vs PD, total 30d6, 0 END, tail | 0+10 |
| | | |
| 60 | +90 STR, only vs grabs and entangles (-½), total 195 STR, internal surge of energy | 9+10 |
| | | |
| 68 | +34" Running, total 40"/80", 100 km/hr | 8 |
| 23 | +23" Swimming, total 25"/50", 60 km/hr | 5 |
| | | |
| 120 | 15 Growths, 0 END, persistent, always on | 0 |
| 24 | 4 Density Increases, 0 END, persistent, always on | 0 |
| | 32"Reach, +10 to PER, - 10 DCV, -19 KB | |
| | | |
| 225 | +60 PD/ED Armour, hardened, total 80r60 PD/ED | |
| 10 | 20 PD/ED hardened | |
| 60 | 50% PD/ED Resistant Damage Reduction | |
| 24 | 12d6 Absorption vs ED, only vs radiation (-1), feeds STUN, only to starting value (-½) | |
| 9 | 10 pt. Mental Defence | |

| OCV 3* | DCV -7 | ECV 2 | Phases:  6, 12 |
|--------|--------|-------|----------------|

| Costs: | Char | | Powers | | Totals | | Disadv | | Base |
|--------|------|---|--------|---|--------|---|--------|---|------|
| | 174 | + | 1023 | = | 1197 | = | 1097 | + | 100 |

\* N.B. Godzilla is sufficiently large that his tail, claws and feet are at least 1" in size, so our heroes had better Dive For Cover to get away from him.  Dodging around isn't going to do very much to something the size of a house …

Background and Personality:  Godzilla is a gojirasaurus mutated by the side-effects of nuclear bombs dropped at some point in the past in the Pacific.  Sometimes, Godzilla comes from an island where dinosaurs survived the great dinosaur extinctions of 65 million years ago;  at other times, he is a freakish throwback to a long-extinct species.

Early in his career, Godzilla seemed to be interested in nothing but rampaging across Japan and destroying Tokyo, but with passage of time he found himself fighting other giant monsters more and more often, frequently acting to defend Japan from the depredations of such fiendish monstrosities. Whether he does this to preserve Japan as his own "territory" or from a sense of altruism varies from cases to case.

Powers and Tactics:  If it moves, swat it or stomp it; if it's tough, breathe on it; if it grabs you, drive it off with an internal surge of energy.  'Nuff said.

Appearance:  Godzilla is **BIG**.  This version is some 60 metres tall and weighs 40 000 tonnes, though sometimes Godzilla is up to 40 metres taller and 20 000 tonnes heavier.  Bulking up for the monster season, perhaps?

Scenario Suggestions:  Well, obviously Godzilla swims up to town and starts stomping around, but why?  Is he just having a bad day?  Or is a criminal mastermind manipulating him to further some nefarious scheme?  Also, how can our heroes stop Godzilla?  Heroes outclassed by Godzilla's physical powers should be contacted by helpful scientists capable of exploiting whatever weaknesses this version of Godzilla has.  "Pass the Barium Rods, Professor, I'll fly them up into the brute's mouth!"  "But Starburst -- Godzilla may incinerate you with his atomic breath!"  "That's a chance I'll have to take.  The futhre of millions depends on this."

Conversely, anyone with mental powers should easily influence the gargantuan goliath, so if one or more of the Pcs have such abilities, plan around this.  Give them oodles of civilians to rescue from burning buildings, sinking ships, and broken bridges before then bump into the big G himself.  Of course, if the defenders of the city just ignore these people in peril, you can guess what the media will be saying tomorrow...

One final point.  If or when the PCs do subdue Godzilla, what will they do with him?  Keep him around this base as a guard-gojirasaur?  I doubt it.

By Gary Johnson


Closing Spiel

That's all for the 50th issue -- See you all folks!

Editor-- Ernest Cheung