

ROUND THE BEND

CRITICAL
REVIEW

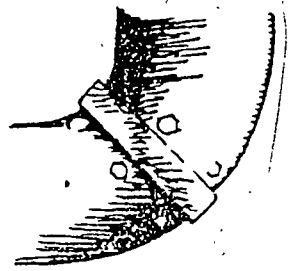
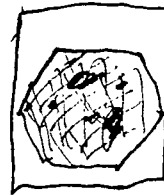
THIS IS A
GAME



THIS IS
ANOTHER



THIS IS A
THIRD



Issue
Seventeen

January 1993

30p + postage

Now START A LINE

PUNKS ROOL

Whatever happened to Richard Egan?
He got an ice pick that made his ears burn...

...delivered in the form of

U P A R O U N D T H E B E N D issue 17
=====

a postal games zine from the hobby's true no. 1 Stranglers fan, Haz "Don't Bring Harry" Bond, which specialises in ever newer and less legible modes of printing, setting deadlines for inconceivably inconvenient times of the year, and rarely if ever getting an adjudication completely correct. He is aided in producing this pretend family fanzine by outside GM Dave "Rok It To The Moon" Rowley, and accountant/mailing operative Joy "Strange Little Girl" Hibbert, plus the four resident "Felines". Merry Xmas, everybody (oops, wrong band...)

The address remains

13 Merrivale Road, Stafford ST17 9EB
=====

(phone 0785 213259 for outraged communications).

Waiting Lists

DIPLOMACY: Steve Homer (?), Keir Hodgson, 5-6 wanted. NO GAMEFEE, so stop panicking, Keir

RAILWAY RIVALS: A gamestart inside for Duncan Adams, John Colledge, Steve Guest and Paul Slade is on the new-style London & SE map. No more lists for a bit, sorry.

SOPWITH: Alex Richardson, Mark Stretch, Rob Cullender, Paul Slade and Duncan Adams await one more aviator to make what will be the last game of ariel combat for a wee while.

~~~~~ Article on *Sam Jones* in next ish. Hold your ~~~~~  
~ 4 issues ~ ~~~~~  
~~~~~ ....credit box gamestart box.... ~~~~~  
~~~~~ breath! ~~~~~

#####

One day there will be an issue of U-Bend with every game present and adjudicated correctly, and it will be nicely printed, and the duplicator will not foul up, and the print head will not jam and resist blandishments, threats and WD40, and your editor will probably die of shock and be mourned all over the hobby. In the meantime, readers can take heart in contemplating how far in the future that is likely to be. Until that distant day, we continue, and attempt vainly to provide a better games service than Pete Birks.

("But Pete Birks doesn't run games, Haz".)

I know.

He doesn't post out GREATEST HITS to people who weren't at Midcon, either,

if myself and Mike Clark are at all representative. Of course, the very thought of Mikey and myself being taken as at all a representative sample of the hobby, or of anything else, is enough to make statisticians quail and stroke their Marplan manuals for strength.

Then again, perhaps not; Stafford is (it seems) an average enough town for census takers to be regularly present in the market square with their little clipboards, but no matter how often I parade myself in front of them they never ask me how many hours of TV I watch a week (virtually nil) or my favourite brand of beer (definitely nil).

- advertisement -

Are you fed up with the zines that offer Xmas quizzes full of knotty questions on music, sports and politicians you've never heard of? Then the U-Bend quiz is for you; lovingly prepared for you by David Oya, it features NO QUESTIONS AT ALL on ANYTHING but the HOBBY, and as such is far and away the most fannish quiz you will ever clap eyes on. What's more, neither Geoff Tonks or Rosie Roberts sees U-Bend, so you don't have to worry about their encyclopaedic knowledge making you look like the prawn-brain you doubtless are. Take it away, Mr Oya:

#### THE ZINE JUNKIE QUOTES OF THE YEAR QUIZ THANG

by David Oya

Are you a Zine Junkie? Find out and WIN an anatomically correct model of your favourite zine editor. Second prize: a lifetime subscription to A STEP FURTHER OUT. Simply identify the perpetrator of each of these memorable quotes and the zines in which they appeared, all published during 1992.

#### QUOTES:

- 1) "Yes, I'm a Boring Old Phatr. (Anagram)."
- 2) "'Dildo' is just an extension of 'Dick-head'."
- 3) "I have had some silly letters in my time, but yours really is the silliest."
- 4) "I like the idea of Wheelchair Epidemic being first at the Kirov Ballet."
- 5) "Yes, it's me. No fainting, and no sniggering at the back."
- 6) "Entering the realm of the bizarre, TR leers manically from behind a wheelbarrow, while JC drools over his dibber."
- 7) "You are a complete weenie, Danny is God, there is no hope for you, you should be purged from the gene pool."
- 8) "Of course, nothing beats the true horror of a Friday night at John Harrington's."
- 9) "The Independent on Sunday very kindly listed the basic ingredients of Ecstasy -- they are available in your local supermarket -- courtesy of Messrs Schwartz. Progress report once I've worked my way through the larder."
- 10) "The odious practises of infant baptism and religious instruction of minors should be made illegal."

[[Relatives of David Oya, assuming there remain any who haven't killed themselves from shame, may not enter. Should anatomical models be impossible to supply we reserve the right to replace them with a free issue of U-Bend.]]

### FROM STYGIAN DEPTHS: a new feature

Being the reprint section. I have just managed to cram my zine collection into several hundred (or so it seems) cardboard periodical boxes which the library has deemed surplus to requirements, thus being able to finally junk the tatty carrier bags which had housed it since the grand shelf collapse as reported in issue 10. While doing so, I could not keep myself from glancing at the occasional ancient heap of tatty paper and rusty staple, and thought "What earthly use are these zines doing stuck up against my bedroom wall?" Ignoring the little voice that said "Making a useful insulation substitute", I further mused that it might be a Useful Public Service to instigate a regular reprint column to bring gems of yeateryear to my readership (crikey, I sound like a Capital Gold DJ). This also has the attraction that I don't have to write it, and as we all know, anything that means Bond can turn his brain off and coast along in neutral is welcome to Bond if to nobody else, especially not to the players who have to endure the adjudications I've done in that state of mind....

So here we are. Reprint number one is from HOWAY THE LADS, a vast expanse of litho-printed stuff from Geordieland that used to defy every attempt to be tidy or even presentable as is litho's habit, being full of tatty typing, ugly typefaces, hopeless grammar, nicked cartoons, a lot of games and some very entertaining editorial material from editors Martin LeFevre and Will(y) Haughan. This was the second run of HtL; of the first I fear I have no copies.

Anyway, seeing as Manorcon is the smoothly-organised, well-drilled machine which runs like clockwork year in year out (right, RJW?) I thought it might be rather fun to show what it was like ten years ago....

#### MANORCON '83: How I experienced the marvels and delights of the horseless carriage

by Will Haughan

Friday July 29th, 3.45pm, messrs. Haughan, LeFevre, Piper and Loveys rendezvous in Gateshead Town Hall car park, and off we zoom in Martin's Skoda with the throaty roar of a rusty lawnmower. Martin's view of navigation is simplistic -- "Birmingham, turn left at Leicester" -- thus adding at least 50 miles to the journey. If Martin had been an Elizabethan seafarer I doubt if the Americas would have been discovered (and with Ronnie in charge I wish he had been!) The first 150 miles or so of the journey pass quickly enough, just a couple of enforced stops due to spark plug malfunction involving absurd pantomimes as we hunt for silver paper. Hell, I used to fix Scalectrix cars in the same way. The Skoda is fitted with a temperature gauge and as the zoom becomes putt, putt, putt the needle rises to an alarming 120 degrees. I suppose this was to be expected as the old chug-a-boom is being asked to pull 4 people, two of whom are Loveys and Piper, at 80mph in temperatures in the 80s. We pull onto the hard shoulder and hear awful bubbling noises (me crying). Ha! I've worked it out; the Skoda is steam powered, that gauge isn't temperature but steam pressure! Martin rummages around in the engine and treats us to a marvellous impersonation of a man who has just burnt his fingers. We decide that the nearest place to go for water is a colliery we can see at the bottom of a virtually perpendicular, overgrown bank. Gary and I were elected to go, hell, I thought I was going to a games con, not training for the SAS. It must have been my lucky day, I managed not to tear my trousers or, more importantly, my skin when climbing over a barbed wire fence.

Markham Colliery, you were a godsend, even if your workers speak the North Derbyshire version of an obscure Mongolian dialect. Off we go, having taken on water and coal.

I thought I had instilled in Martin that the A38 was the route to aim for, nice and simple, even Vasco LeFevre should have been able to handle that. We leave the M1 at the correct turn off, approach the roundabout, signs for A38 and Derby one way and A38 and Mansfield the other, no problem. Then bloody Rolf Harris Piper pipes up "Naw, we wanna go to Marnsfield." This comment was so asinine I did not bother to reply (how Gary hitched to Australia is a mystery to me, I think it was all a mistake, he just went out for a packet of fags and his sense of direction (sic) led him astray). He had given Martin a decision, his circuits start to overheat, does he turn left or right? No, the idiot goes straight on and back onto the motorway we had just left. I utter several randomly chosen expletives and produce a map. Contrary to whatever LeFevre says it did not cost 3/6d and did not give stage coach schedules. (Stage coach, that would have been bloody luxury compared to our journey). We try again and potter along B roads with Martin perversely misunderstanding all signposts and redressing his errors with feats of driving which would have made Mad Max blanch, he's the only person I know can do a wheelie in a dodgem car. By chance we discover we are in Heanor and debate the merits of calling in on PC Clive Booth -- any more of Martin's antics and we would have met him in his nick. At 7.30pm a drink is called for, not bad, a four hour journey and still about 60 miles from Birmingham. We stop in a place called Codnor. (That is not a typing error). Kimberly Ales, very pleasant, excellent ham sandwiches with real ham, not yer slimy plastic stuff. Of course Piper wolfs down two. The landlady was the object of many a man's fantasies, fortyish, attractive, rich and has a pub. There was a sufficient number of tattooed young studs bristling about the place to deter anything more than speculation. We jokingly ask directions to Birmingham and an ancient rustic at the bar says "Aye, I thought you were Brummies by your accents." I'm from Cumbria, Martin is from Sidcup, Gary is from Morthampton via Australia and Keith is from County Durham, well, he was close. The juke box actually had records on so old that Martin recognised them.

Off we set again, having taken on coke but significantly not water. We all stare at the gauge more intently than Mr Sulu might. Loveys had the map and uttered such well known Ordnance Survey phrases as "We want the turning next to my thumb". Amazingly we reach the A38 but after 10 miles or so disaster strikes again and we grind to a halt without any signs of habitation as far as the eye can see. As Marx probably didn't say, "History repeats itself, the first time is tragedy, the second time is farce." We had no water left. In best Captain Oates style Martin pisses in the radiator and then in best knacker style he runs, not a pretty sight, across the dual carriageway and disappears into a strand of trees looking for a non-existent stream. We wet ourselves laughing as he hadn't taken a container with him! He returns sniffing for water, like Gollum with a beer belly. He finds it too!

We prise open an iron grid (just like a D&D scenario) and there is water 20 feet below. Who is going to climb down? "I'm too big," (Piper), "I'm too fat," (Loveys), "I'm a coward," (LeFevre), "I don't trust you lot," (Haughan). What followed was a scene straight from "Now Get Out Of That". A plastic bottle weighted with pebbles is tied to a piece of plastic washing line (left over from Midcon last year!) and thrown down the well. It floats serenely with the pebbles efficiently keeping the hole out of the water. We throw bricks at it, no use, tie building bricks to it, they fall.

off. Panic sets in and our collective intelligence manages to get it filled, mainly with pebbles but eventually the radiator is full and we take on wood to supplement the coal and coke.

Pioneers arriving in Santa Fe could not have felt the same elation as we did on arriving at Spaghetti Junction, with Keith trying to identify which 1829 tiles were used in its construction. We follow the maps provided but someone steals the A38 and we are sucked into the black hole of Birmingham's traffic system (sic). Three navigators and a driver like Martin mean we arrive -- at the Royal Angus! We try again, Martin takes what we all agree is a wrong turn and three miles later we hit the A38.

We arrive at the Manor House at 10pm, hot, tired and hungry after what, you must agree, is a traumatic journey. Our luck still held, only Keith had been allocated a room. Martin throws a wobbler, yells a stream of expletives at Pete Calcraft and smashes his bunch of keys onto the table. The key ring explodes sending keys clanging away like shrapnel. There is a stunned hush in the room and as Gary said later Martin looked a right prat. Calcraft was his usual mild mannered self and blamed it all on Rip Gooch, who, I must admit, had assured us there would be plenty of rooms. Mike Benyon must also take some blame as in my booking letter I specifically said I was only sending £3 on the assumption that the full amount could be paid on arrival, otherwise I would pay it on request. What did they expect us to do coming all the way from Newcastle, walk round bloody Birmingham all night? I became silently angry when I realised that I would be deprived of a bed by sheer bloody incompetence. Perhaps that was the reason Rip had chosen not to attend.

A pint would have calmed my nerves -- argh, lager or Tartan, sometimes life can be so cruel. Things took a further step for the worse as I bumped into a pissed Mike Woodhouse. He accompanied Martin, Ian Ferguson (an attendee of local hobby-meets who had very sensibly travelled down by train) and I in the search for something to eat. Mike and I study the menu outside a Chinese restaurant: whilst the other two disappear for an Indian. Two girls pass and we indulge in witty banter. They inform us that the Chinese is no fun as they had been thrown out merely for dancing (?) I tell them that the Woodhouse's party trick is dropping his trousers. They pull out a camera and encourage him. I only mentioned it in the first place to embarrass him and I was sure he had seen the two policemen across the road. Down come Mike's trousers and flash goes the camera as the two women complain about his underwear -- he was wearing some. Mike is saved from the law as three young punks appear round a corner, much more fun to harrass.

Back at the Manor House we eat with gusto (whoever he was). This does not improve Martin's temper and obviously someone, sooner or later, was going to cop a blast of angst. Gareth Cook came to introduce himself; perhaps it was the acid-trip pattern of Gareth's shirt that provoked Martin to say "We've decided we don't like you -- purely personal, you understand." Gareth left. Now I'm more used to a few jabs between the ribs with a stiletto but Martin's style is a full-blooded blow with a two-handed broadsword. (Note to subscribers -- we do not normally behave like that when meeting strangers).

Pete Calcraft kindly offered us a bed at his digs and we leave around 12.15, sadly leaving the games in full swing. I sleep in a bed previously occupied by a Mormon missionary -- wow! I slept badly as the incessant traffic rumble from the A38 is rather more than I'm used to from a cul-de-sac in Whitley Bay.

Morning sees us chatting aimlessly with Pete and Mark Mantle with Pete giving vent to his annoyance at Gooch not providing the maps for the con until a few days before the event, despite a bookful of promises that they were on their way, almost finished, etc. Back at the Manor House the real games players, naturally including Loveys, are hard at 1829 by 9.30. I meet old pal Martin Hammon, god he brings back memories of happy times; we both started postal Diplomacy together in the same game in 1974 in FRIGATE. It is good to see him back in the hobby. People are becoming impatient for the start of the Diplomacy tournament; in the absence of anything better to do I volunteer for a vacancy in the MAD POLICY team, god knows why. Woodhouse blunders in clutching a brandy bottle. Pete Birks comments that he looks like a has-been rock star -- he's missed out the bit in the middle, you know, fame, wealth, success, and gone directly from being a nonentity.

The Diplomacy game proved to be interesting. As it was a team tournament I played a straight bat and kept it tight defensively. As Turkey I was forced to ally with Gareth Cook's Russia as Italy was shaping up for a Lepanto. I wasted two moves trying to support Matthew Huntbach's Austria; I was the only one who told him the truth and was consequently ignored. Italy, whose name I have forgotten, obviously thought I was a fool as he suggested such garbage. When I pointed out what crap he was talking he became quite upset. He had no idea of how to compromise and if suggested moves were not totally in his favour he refused to do anything. Russia and I stabbed Austria so I could gain a build to outnumber the Italian fleets. In the west Steve Jones (France), Mark Billenness (England) and Dave Cowling (Germany) did not seem able to settle into any sort of alliance, until just before lunch when Mark was comprehensively stabbed by the other two. After a passable lunch and a few bottles of cold Pils things changed, with Gareth grabbing three builds. I thought it was all over for me as I was well committed against Italy and a build of F(Sev) would have stuffed me. Even the actual build of A(Sev) had me worried, and I was mightily relieved when Gareth headed north. I think he should have stabbed me as it was obvious he would become a target, having reached 9 centres. I took the chance to stab him as he became embroiled with Germany and as France sailed fleets north. We spent a while chasing each other around Austria and without Italian help I would have got nowhere. I managed to set Italy up and in 1908 I had 10 centres along with Steve Jones' adroitly handled France. We dismantled Italy and both finished with 12 centres at the tournament's end in 1909. Steve tried to claim a forced win which I thought was unfair as we had played to a specific and artificial end; there was no way I would have attacked Italy and Russia just to grab a few centres in a regular game. All the players in the game put in plenty of effort and tried to keep diploming throughout. In an adjacent game HOWAY THE LADS subscriber Jeff Edmunds tried the novel tactic of attacking Pete Birks with a broken glass; now that's what I call a real stab! The tournament was very well organised by Shaun Derrick and my thanks go to him for his efforts. Which team won? Er, I dunno.

Birks, Woodhouse and I plan what to do next -- strange city, 6pm on a Saturday -- only one thing to do. Woodhouse asks the assembled multitude if they fancy coming down the pub for a game of darts and is met with hoots of derision and a chorus of falsetto 'no's, even Walkerdine was playing Acquire and Hammon had gone to clean his drain or fall in his septic tank or something equally inappropriate for a Saturday night. We wander off with Birks moaning about how the hobby has changed and wondering where all the characters have gone. Maybe they're still there but somewhat submerged. In the past Richard Sharp and his clique, the 'hardcore', set the standard of



behaviour at cons (darts, drinking, poker intermingled with serious games playing) and this was copied by others to a certain extent. The 'hardcore' is now diminished in numbers and their behaviour is not the norm at hobby gatherings. This is the games hobby and if people want to play games then so be it, but don't expect me to be so single minded.

On leaving the Manor House Woodhouse and Birks, for reasons not unassociated with strong drink, show all the sense of direction of a headless chicken and try to lead me alternately back to the Manor House and across a lake. The search for a pub in Selly Oak becomes slightly more difficult than England winning a Test Match. In desperation we leap on a bus and give a lesson in total incompetence dealing with the ticket machine. The female population may be disappointed to know that we were not leering at them out of the bus windows but manically searching for a pub; I think they would be more relieved than disappointed. The unimaginatively named 'Station' was finally sighted. This was a strange, dark place full of 'characters' and resembled a scene from a Holbein, hell, Rembrandt would have come in his pants seeing that lot. The barman looked like a sparring partner for bare knuckled boxers and actually wore braces under his jacket, no doubt keeping up his long johns. Whilst leaning against the bar I became aware of a disturbing phenomenon -- Birks was taller than me. If this had been the last rather than the first pub visited this would have been an even more difficult concept to grasp. The explanation was simple, the place had a sloping floor. Eh? The beer was palatable M&B which did nothing to assist the appalling standard of darts. I had an easy excuse, I was using the Birks second string, 23gms, to my own darts, wherever they may be, 28gms. Strange things started to happen; this enormous bloke with one massively muscular arm, emblazoned with elaborate tattoos, picks up an old scruff, slings him over his shoulder and carries him out. The old man reappears and is carried out again, this time having his skull sickeningly bashed against the door lintel. Time to leave.

I don't know if you have been to Selly Oak but it is obviously built by and for sober citizens as pubs are as frequent as issues of DON'T SHOOT ME. This is not really surprising as every other major building seems to have been built by Quaker families famous for making chocolate. The next pub we find, after having managed to keep Woodhouse out of massage parlours and sex cinemas, is even called the Bourne Hotel. We enter a doorway marked 'skittle alley' 'cos we couldn't resist it, but never find it. The pub is barn-like, scruffy and as lively as a dentist's waiting room. Desultory pool, Ansell's Bitter and Pils follow. We chat to the barman, who is still true to the spirit of the sixties, and Birks' habit of buying bar staff drinks pays off as he accepts increasingly manic behaviour from Birks and Woodhouse with equanimity, whereas the constipated basilisk in the Station might have reacted differently. My companions play pool with the locals, almost winning on occasion. Woodhouse plays 'Jessica' by the Allman Brothers repeatedly on the juke box, saying "I don't know who she was but she must have been bloody special to get this written after her!"

Food becomes a necessity as things slide downhill; some kamikaze road crossing sees us in a chippy with a rather exotic smell. Birks boringly has chips, saveloy and two pickled onions which we think should be called genitals and chips. Woodhouse and I choose the source of the exotic smell, kebabs and experiment with something I couldn't pronounce then and can't spell now but which turned out to be like cucumber raita. The kebabs turned out to be marvellous value for 95p. We sit and eat them in the porch of an estate agent; just like a picnic, we even have some greenery to look at -- a tree with Dutch elm disease. For some reason Birks refuses to stay with

us and swans off back to the pub. He later reveals that he expected us to get arrested. What for -- eating an offensive kebab within sight of the highway? We follow him towards the pub and Woodhouse has to run back across the road for his cigs and lighter, only to drop his expensive shades which are promptly run over. Locals drinking outside find this hilarious and I think it politic to join their laughter. Mike has the last laugh, the shades are still intact! "Are they unbreakable ones?" ask the awed locals. "No," replies Mike!

Rambling discussions follow ranging from Paul Young's hit single (in my opinion a poor Marvin Gaye ripoff) to Mike's girlfriend's gynaecological problems. As Birks said, when Mike has a story to tell he is as persistent as a Rugby League forward two yards from the line with the seventh tackle coming up. We also have a tricky moment when Mike says to the barman "This might be a poxy pub but these are bloody good shades." A taxi takes us back to the Manor House with Birks overtipping. Somehow the previous drinking is dissolved by the steady atmosphere of the Con. We enter full of alcoholic bonhomie and find games still being as avidly played as when we left. We calmly assess the situation and a bespectacled Liverpudlian gobshite called Oakes gets right up my nose. He indulges in an expletive ridden attack at my expense, accusing me of being, amongst other things, "boringly sober". My first impulse is to give him a smack, shit, I probably spill more down my shirt in a night than he drinks. I do nothing and stay silently annoyed. Pete and Mike shamle off to bed and I end up playing a 9-handed game of Nuclear War during which I have the pleasure of meeting HtL subber Pat Lenihan.

I shared a room with Keith Loveys for my sins, shit, he snored louder than Etna erupting. I'm up early due to a full bladder and bowels and trot off for breakfast. This proves to be, erm, different; scrambled eggs the consistency of putty, tinned tomatoes and the most appalling dried mushrooms. The canteen staff throughout the weekend were very friendly and somehow I didn't have the heart to refuse it. I breakfast in the convivial company of Geoff Hardingham, Brian Williams and Nick Kinzett and discover they played, to completion, a game of 1829 and Civilisation; surely this is some kind of masochistic record. I also discover that the previous day was David Watts' silver wedding anniversary -- spent inveigling people to play Railway Rivals, not many husbands could have got away with that. (There's an example for you, Dave Thomas).

Woodhouse arrives looking like a dead orangutang. He informs me that, true to form, Martin, who had shared his room, had thrown up during the night. It was soon obvious what he had used to clean it up with -- John Dodds' tie! I join Gary and Niall Litton and we ramble, giving the occasional veteran's sneer, over the individual Diplomacy tournament now in progress. We see PC John Wilman practising his interrogation technique, well, he was punching someone in the ribs. We comment on Simon Billenness's appalling behaviour with his cantilevered-fronted girlfriend; perhaps by Midcon Simon will be sufficiently mature to realise that it is not necessary to maul each other constantly and generally behave like a pair of Siamese twins joined at the groin. Gary and Niall insist on recounting their exploits in winning the five-a-side football -- Gary thought he was playing Rollerball and his prehensile toes proved rather a handicap.

I take Martin a cup of tea and find that he looks like a plague victim. He rallies sufficiently to buy me a drink and to down a gin and tonic, merely for the vitamin C in the lemon. Martin blames his technical colour yawn on a bad Chinese meal. He recounts the act in lurid

detail, but I will not pass on such horror to you, dear reader; suffice to say that it involved standing on Woodhouse's head and not being able to find a towel.

Martin and I fill up the car with water and broken furniture, making full use of two splendid buckets with sealing lids that Gary, through the use of his marsupial charm, obtained from the kitchen staff. Lunch was very good indeed, assorted cold meats, imaginative salads and palatable Stilton all for £1.50. Then it was prise Loveys from Railway Rivals, get steam up and chug away. We only broke down twice on the way back, how boring.

A reasonable weekend but a somewhat subdued con. Full marks to Pete Calcraft for making it the success it was and putting effort into organising the event; no marks to Gooch and Benvon for disorganising it. If I've missed out any Htl subscribers met over the weekend (and I'm sure I have) then please accept my apologies. Thanks are due to Stoker LeFevre, who is currently fitting sails to his Skoda; GAZZER PIER, the thinking man's aborigine; and to Keith 1929 Loveys (as the condemned man his last request would be to play 1929) for their good humour during the journey. See you at Midcon?

(First published in Howay the Lads 34, August 1983)

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I hope y'all enjoyed that blast from the past. More will follow in future issues.

If the above has awakened your interest in conventions, Manorcon 1993 has been sending out flyers. It's back to High Hall, Birmingham University, this time round, which being smaller than Lake Hall may mean a squash and even there being no room at all for latecomers; so the great and good Mr Walkerdine advises early booking to ensure satisfaction. It will of course feature the National Team Diplomacy Championship, famous for my team doing abysmally no matter which bunch of poor sods I manage to palm myself off onto, and the individual title also up for grabs. Will it be Toby Harris? Steve Jones? Phil Dav? Or will a dark horse grab the laurels (and mix the metaphors?) Time will tell.

However, as I said, I won't be there. Now, now, dry your eyes, it can't be helped, it's just one of those things, I'm sure you can go and have a good time even if I'm not there bringing merry smiles to the faces of all and sundry.

Right, you'll want the details, won't you. As per usual, the head honcho is Richard J. Walkerdine, of 6 Honeybourne Way, Wickwar, Wotton under Edge, Glos. GL12 8PF. (Old timers are reminded that that is not where he lived when last year's flyers were going out).

The dates of this eleventh Manorcon are Friday July 23 to Monday July 26, 1992.

Cost? Ah, now, if I have deciphered the hieroglyphics and grids correctly, it will cost you £10 for the full do or £5 for a single day. Rooms in the infamous Grotty University Tower Blocks may be obtained for £20 per night single and £38 double. Despite the protestations of Mr Denis Jones, torture chambers are not yet provided en suite (unless you count the infamous showers).

[[ARMSTRONG]]

Launch #2 in September 1958 of a Sub-Orbital Single Person Capsule. A excellent lift followed by an absolutely perfect re-entry and very good recovery results in General Sassone being the first man into space, even if it was only for 15 minutes! +24MBs on Budget. Increase safety factor of both Single Stage Rocket and Single Person Capsule by 1%.  
Launch #3 in 1959 ignored.\*\*

B/F 65      New Budget 112      Available To Spend 177

Espionage Your spy in an enemy country has returned with valuable information. You may move the safety factor of one of your programs to equal to that of the same program in another country (choose the country and the program that you already own).

+1 on Budget = 113 MBs.

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Rob Moore      Termight 89 MB's  
Purchase of Second Launch Facility  
Purchase of EVA Suit Program  
R&D for Single Stage Rocket = +15%      @ Max R&D = 85%\*  
R&D for Single Person Capsule = +35%      Current R&D = 62%  
R&D for EVA Suit Program = +34%      Current R&D = 64%

A textbook launch #2 took place in December 1958. Not even a hint of problems during the mission results in a second message from the ruler of Termight. Subsequent mission bonus of +2MBs = 91MBs. Add 1% to both Orbital Satellite and Single Stage Rocket safety factors.  
Launch #3 & #4 in 1958.

B/F 08      New Budget 91      Available To Spend 99

Fortunate Accident A fortunate accident has allowed you to foresee a problem in your most advanced rocket program. This nullifies your next rocket failure. +5 MBs on Budget = 96 MBs.

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John Breakwell      U.S.S.R. 72 MB's  
Purchase of two Orbital Satellites  
Purchase of two Single Stage Rockets  
Purchase of Single Person Capsule Programme + 1 capsule  
Purchase of Astronaut & Training including astronaut Kaspárov  
Purchase of Astronaut Food  
Purchase of Second Launch Facility  
R&D for Orbital Satellite = +19%      Current R&D = 79%  
R&D for Single Stage Rocket = +23%      Current R&D = 60%  
R&D for Single Person Capsule = +24%      Current R&D = 34%

No launch planned for 1958.  
Launch #2 planned for 1959. Launch #3 ignored.

B/F 23      New Budget 70      Available to spend 95

Fortunate Accident A fortunate accident has allowed you to foresee a problem in your most advanced module. This would have nullified your next module failure, but you don't have one.

-2 MBs on Budget = 70 MBs

[[This page of 'Armstrong' should be in the middle of the games; sorry!]]

**STICHOMYTHIA**  
the usual gang of idiots in the letter column

In which I take the pile of unanswered letters, type them in as they come to hand, and retire immediately (surfacing occasionally in [[double square brackets]] to be rude to people).

**Paul Slade**                    Anyway, congratulations. If there were a prize for 'Best Opening  
**Cowes**                            ing to a Zine in 1992' I'm sure **U-Bend 15** would have won it. I  
think you should have a competition based on it - match the  
crimes to the subbers.

I have been very interested in the correspondence on Spanner.

I fail to see how anyone can argue that any form of sex between consenting adults should be an illegal act. Consider the following cases:

- 1) Two consenting adults enter a totally private room. They emerge some time later and agree they have enjoyed themselves and have no objections to anything that happened in that room. [They engaged in sadomasochistic sex].
- 2) Two consenting adults enter a totally private room. One emerges some time later, the other is unconscious with head injuries. [They had a boxing match].
- 3) Two people enter a totally private room and emerge some time later. One is obviously very upset and has a black eye. [They were two children and argued over a toy].

If anyone can provide a logical reason why case 1 should be considered illegal whilst 2 and 3 are permitted, I shall be interested to hear it. Could any such argument be sustained in the absence of the explanations in brackets? Should the explanation matter?

How come the police spent £3 million investigating what amounts to case 1? There are enough real crimes for them to look at.

Finally, I am happily married with three young children (and don't mind who knows it! I agree that this is telling you more about my sexuality than your statement of bisexuality tells me). How about opening a discussion on the moral implications of the following snippet from the children's BBC 'Noddy' video:

GOBLIN: We want your car for ourselves.

NODDY: You wicked goblins. That's stealing!

GOBLIN: We're only borrowing it. It's the only way we can have a drive. Goblins aren't allowed to own cars.

NODDY: I should think not if this is how you behave.

Enid Blyton has a lot to answer for.

[[Quite so. What's the betting they were golliwogs in the original text?]]

**Zorro**                            Lately I have been experiencing serious doubts over the whole-  
**postmark Croydon**            someness of the pastime of postal gaming, these concerns have  
been brought on by having now actually met some of the people  
with whom I have been corresponding over recent years. I have been forced to the  
conclusion (not hasty by any means) that people who indulge in competitive games  
by post are almost to a man (because they are, after all, almost all men) social  
and sexual inadequates whose idea of excitement is a particularly heavy postbag.  
Such individuals practice their vice in private and receive their communication  
via the written word (rather than through real interpersonal relationships). Over  
the years these degenerates have come out from under the duvet and now boldly  
proclaim their brand of sexual politics from the very heart of the Hobby itself.

The most serious cases are undoubtedly the 'editors', many of whom are obviously so impotent that it is only by having a large letter column or a quick turnaround that they can hope to achieve meaningful stimulation. There's Haz Bond, the young lad who only produces his zine in order to air his S&M fantasies in public and thus obtain some exhibitionist gratification. There's Toby Harris, whose obsession with quick turnaround is probably just some sort of displacement activity hiding a more serious sexual neurosis (though he was too repressed to admit it up front!). There's Iain Bowen, always alternating between coyness and brazenness, yet forever seeking to titillate his readers with suggestions of lewd behaviour. And I could go on... Richard Sharp's alleged fondness for jackboots and whips, Stephen Agar's admitted preference for small furry creatures from SW London, Mark Nelson's masochistic desire to be shunned and castigated by all, etc. This has become a hobby for deviants run by deviants.

What is to be done? How can our dear Hobby be made clean and wholesome once again, so that we and our children can safely subscribe to a postal games magazine without fearing that the contents would be more suited to the top shelf of some seedy newsagent? It wasn't always like this. We must cleanse ourselves and cast out this filth, so that nothing more provocative than self-standoff remains in the place of all this ritualistic self-abuse. Sex should be kept for the bedroom, perversions should be dealt with by the courts, and postal gaming should once more be a haven for normal, repressed, middle class professional males with zip-up cardigans. Stand up for sobriety and subscribe to **Electric Monk** and **Arfle Barfle Gloop** today!

[[Right, Agar, come out from behind that pseudonym with your hands up. A little detective work reveals that other editors have had letters from you with the same postmark. I shall treat your actual subject with the contempt it deserves; I would only ask that next time you don't practice hoaxing at the expense of sending me your actual orders. Capische?]]

[[Anyway, if you draw such conclusions from such very mild evidence in various people's publications, I shudder to think what inferences might be drawn from your continued publishing of material on kittens. Perhaps the RSPCA should be informed.]]

**Allan Gordon** Youth will be served, I guess, and it's only natural (and  
**Chingford** healthy) that at this stage in your life you are obsessed with bonking. God willing, you will be granted the longevity and health to inevitably come to realise that sex is far and away the most over-rated of human activities... and then you'll look back and cringe at the way you were. Have a patronising pat on the head, laddie!

[Watch it or I'll bite your hand off, grandad. Seriously, I am actually in full agreement with you on the male ejaculation, which is surely the most over-rated thing in this world; but a) that isn't the same thing as sex, and b) since we weren't talking about sex but politics (a frequent and easy error to make) I fail to see that your point is valid. It's personal liberties, boss; to speak his mind is every person's right, at home, at work, on the bus or when he's tight.]]

**John Breakwell** Sex -- this is as much a special case as the political  
**Reading** party you support, what part of the country you come from or what you do for a job. 'Sex is different because it's sex' is crap and merely important if the people discussing it think it is. Sex is just one of many things people find important.

Great that you got off your arse and sent a letter of complaint to the LHC -did you get any reply?

[[Form letter, boss. But my point was that there are quite a few people who don't see politics as a special case (whether or not this is a good attitude

is another question), whereas sex is, almost universally.]]

**Damien Cosgrove** As to my 'Sin' being Profanity, I say you are rather direct  
**Newcastle upon Tyne** in your accusation but that you are no more than a hair's  
breadth away from the true Bull's Eye. I have an aversion to  
'clouding up' what I mean with language that would be fit to air before a 'lady'  
(whatsoever that may be). 'Calling a spade a spade' has rather unsavory aspects to  
it, but I do believe that by attempting to give an honest opinion of a  
situation/someone's actions/etc, I am 'playing fairest' and allowing said person  
the greatest possibility of true self determination.

Gosh, and all because you implied I swore a lot.

'Several pages of sadomasochistic crap' was both of interest and 'of feeling'. I'm  
afraid the manner of your writing seemed to convey one long breath being let out.  
Not so much something off your chest, but more words that you'd been wanting to  
air for a considerable time.

'King of Pain' by **Police** in the background. I find myself reflecting as to whether  
the music dictates the mood, or the mood the music. Why both of course, but the  
smart answer is never the one that is of use. Here I am, feeling quite 'blue',  
with Sting's rather whining voice in the background, and I write of reflections  
and interpretations. William Whyte would of course say that it's all in the  
chemistry, [[Well, he would, wouldn't he?]] and that the conscious decision that I  
now make to be more upbeat is due to an increased concentration of compound A at  
point B in my cerebral cortex. Ah well, it would be a whole lot worse, anyhow. I  
could be living in a country where the electorate re-elects a government which has  
proved its ineptitude at dealing with the over-riding problems of the day (well,  
that counts out the USA, thankfully). Oh shit. I am. Arghh!!!

On music, still. I've tickets to **The Disposable Heroes of Hiphoprisy** gig up here  
in Newcastle. They're a very interesting band/rap group. The main thrust is that  
the hard hitting beats of rap music need a suitably 'forward' message. They are  
not scared to deliver it, not all all. To say that it had the most politically  
'correct' lyrics I'd heard wouldn't be strong, but also that certain something  
which made it rise above the mere politics. I know what it was, the words were not  
merely spoken, they were 'given', as if the 'message' was being imparted. Well,  
I'm looking forward to the gig anyway. If you'd like a copy of the album, just  
say so!

[[So.]]

**Gary Lyon** I sometimes wonder if zines such as **U-Bend** are scrutinised by  
**Great Yarmouth** the powers that be. With you sending letters of "complaint to  
the Lord High Chancellor I wouldn't be surprised. This could  
mean that all contributors to **U-Bend** have a file opened for them somewhere. Yes, I  
know I'm paranoid. But the question is, am I paranoid enough?

[[You're a big jessie, aren't you, Lyon? What makes you think the Thought  
Police are gonna come knocking at your telescreen? Got something to hide, eh?  
Come off it. First off, they have better things to do. No doubt the  
Chancellor's office gets a ton of mail every week from cranks, and I fear  
that mine may have been slung into that category. Second down, even if that  
missive did get the men in white coats bugging my mail, do you really think  
they are going to waste time on the entire (80+) circulation of **U-Bend**? Third  
along, even if they put surveillance on you, would you let that deter you  
from acting on principle? In the early days of **CND** its top brass (including  
author John Brunner and his wife Marjorie) used to get their mail intercepted  
regularly. ("I hope they enjoyed reading all those zines as much as me," he  
said later). Despite which **CND** is now almost redundant and the Cold War has  
every appearance of being near its end, and thank heavens, say I.]]

**Mark Stretch**  
**Birmingham**

I don't fancy your chances in the chess. I play chess for Oxford University, and Nick Parish is a competent player. I hope that it is you whom we are playing, not a chess computer

of yours.

[[Oh dear. Given that we have Wilman too, your fears will doubtless be proved groundless when I resign on move 10. I won the school chess cup six times running, and played for London University, but am shockingly out of practice and behind on theory.]]

**David Oya**  
**Banbury**

I've had a rather good (I think) idea for a New Year quiz, in which you have to identify various quotes taken from zines published in 1992. I've even done the blurb for you. Feel free to use it in **U-Bend**. If you've no room or whatever, feel similarly free to pass it on to any other zine-ed-type-being who may be interested. I'm in two minds as to whether **U-Bend** or the new improved **OMag** is going to fill the gaping void at the centre of mainstream Dipdom left by the lovely Steev's departure, although you've managed two very Howesque touches lately. First, two really stupid deadline dates in a row. Second, you change to computer print and end up with something even less legible than usual. Carry on at this rate and you'll get a 9.5 from me in next year's Zine Poll, no problems. You didn't get a 9.5 this time, I should add. Nobody got a 9.5 from me this year. Why have all the zines that were so good a couple of years ago either gone stale, folded or become unreliable? It really says something very worrying indeed about the state of the Universe when you're forced to give **Gloop** a higher ZP vote than the **Monk**. I say: something must be done. I say: Haz Bond for Absolute Dictator of Dipdom. Give 'em hell dude. I hope Father Secular Festival brings you lots of ChristmasNOT presents. Ahem, I wonder if you can work out which video I've just watched? That's right. Mel Gibson's **Hamlet**. I though Rosencrantz's skateboarding scene was very well handled. Ah yes, almost forgot, if there's still room, please put me on the RR list. I'd vowed to wait until 1993 before going on any more lists, but I can't resist one with John Colledge's name on it. Payback time starts here for Johnnybaby.

[[Oya, you little excrescence, do you know what happens to people like you who put requests for RR in the middle of their letters where I don't see 'em? I miss 'em, that's right. And the page with the 'Yavilland' gamestart has already been photocopied. Okay, okay, luckily for you your Uncle Haz possesses the gift of Foresight, and when ordering maps from Grandpa David, he specified a map that could take 4-5 and an extra copy in case of just such a late application. So you're in, and I hope Colledge thrashes you into a bloody pulp.]]

[[Hey, do you know what that means? I just won this issue's 'Beeching' myself. I hereby award myself a free next issue. Bad luck, Dunnett.]]

**Rob Moore**  
**Cumbria**

Very stylish, shame about the centre pin falling out! And what a horrendous deadline!! Christmas Eve... Still, the new technological **U-Bend** looks very nice. [[Someone buy this guy some new glasses. It looked awful.]]

I nearly gave you a high mark in the Zine Poll, but didn't want to upset you so 1.0 it was. I bet you don't come last. Not far off mind, but it won't be last. As opposed to upper mid table which you might have managed otherwise. May I add that Chaos II can only enhance your reputation (and you can take that as a compliment or insult!) Have you thought of running Geophysical Dip? (as outlined by Mike Clark). Dead easy! (suppressed mirth!!)

Gold\*ol' John boy has saved the Danish bacon! Yowzer!! What a star! I must remember to change the Nationality box on my CV to 'European'. I think I'll emigrate to Ireland where they at least make a profit from the EC even if they have got their heads up their arses about contraception and abortion. To be sure



25 pints o' Guinness is a good enough precaution for anyone tho'.

And our beloved leader has vowed to strengthen action against Serbia as well. Well done John, prompt, decisive action, that's what we need.

But it'll soon be 1993. Will David Mellor have a better year of it? Will someone explain what they saw in each other anyway? Will Charles be next on Antonia's list? Or will he stick to the begonias?

I can't wait.

[[Different letter:]] I don't mind you going on about Spanner at all. If I did, I'd have a Bowen-esque sulk, cut my sub and denounce you to the hobby as a fiend and a traitor.

About these 16 blokes. Refresh my memory on the case. How did they get nicked to start with? It strikes me that most people can do what the hell they want in private without being nabbed by the police. Let's face it, enough people are indulging in S&M without the police knowing, or indeed, giving two hoots about it. Outside of the case, do you think the ruling will make any difference to the lives of S&Mers in the UK? Probably not, hence the apathy with which the S&M community has greeted the verdicts. Yes, it will affect the couple who have a partner die mid conflict but that brings in that bogeyman, consent.

[[The original defendants were nicked after a video tape of their activities got into the hands of the police. After investigating and finding that no-one was being murdered (which was entirely the right thing to do, since the video apparently bore resemblances to -- shut your eyes, Howe -- a snuff movie), the police had three choices. The sensible choice, to cut their losses and catch some real criminals instead. The expected choice, to bring charges under current laws: public indecency (there were more than 2 men present), explicit things through the post, etc. Their choice, to make up some new laws to charge these people under.]]

[[Subsequent to the precedent (a) a straight S&M crowd in Yorkshire have been convicted under it (b) a straight couple returning from abroad had their S&M purchases confiscated at customs on the grounds that such implements were now illegal (c) a raid on a gay male boutique led to the confiscation of leather jackets on the grounds that they are S&M paraphernalia and as such, illegal.]]

[[I imagine things will be safer for people who are within the 'natural order' than for the rest. The 'natural order' consists of male dominant/female submissive couples (for everyone knows it's perfectly natural for a man to slap his wife around a bit, nu?) and those where the male is submissive and the female is a whore (if the police really wanted to get off their arses and arrest people, they could always try ringing the numbers on the cards advertising "Slinky Black Dominatrix" that you find stuck in all the phone booths down the Tottenham Court Road). Truly female-dominant couples gay couples and all groups, will be at a higher risk of prosecution because of the perceptions of sex as something private, heterosexuality as normal, and submissiveness as feminine.]]

[[The S&M community, on the whole, has greeted the precedent not with apathy, but with fear. Sad to say, having one's sexuality made illegal, with all the implications for job prospects, child custody, adverse publicity and arrest, incline one to get in the closet and lock the door behind one, rather than to demand one's rights. I mean, I don't actually go to work in leather jacket, chains and straps; I don't think it would fit in with the decor in the library. Given this, the numbers of S&Mers actively resisting the precedent was quite impressive.]]

Hence lies the big problem for so many controversial issues today. A lot of things

can make people say yes when they mean no. I'm sure Judge Pickles idea of consent won't match yours, but who's to say which is right. A partner may apply considerable emotional pressure to the weaker other half to make them do things (mind the kids, wash the pots, S&M) they might not want to. It happens. And who protects the emotionally and mentally handicapped who can be made to consent.

[[This is a complete red herring, doubtless brought about by a misunderstanding of the original case. Some of the 16 defendants were pure submissives. Their dominants were convicted of assaults, and they were convicted of aiding and abetting assaults on themselves. They could have escaped these charges by claiming not to have consented. None of them did, which, inter alia, shows the degree of loyalty and love within the group. No-one is suggesting that people who don't consent, whether they express this refusal before, during, or after the event, should be forced into abusive situations, or that their abusers should escape unpunished if the event has already taken place. ]]

What we need is a justice system that we can trust to make a fair judgement in these cases. The law has to be quite specific these days because the individual judgement of many judges is a good thirty years out of date. And, by protecting one group, it imposes on another. It's difficult to see a way around it. S&M like euthanasia and abortion is a victim of our society. Should people have the right to do as they want? I'm not sure we're ready for that by a long way yet. The problem is, 70% of people are homophobic (to some degree), 80% anti-S&M and 95% don't understand anything about either.

[[Where do you get these figures? The first one doesn't quite gel with the usual 60-70% of people who favour legalisation of homosexual sex on the same terms as heterosexual acts, and I wasn't aware of either of the other studies. Sources please.]]

Face it, the gay leather man is a figure of fun to most people, and until you sort that out, you will always be discriminated against en masse. The Spanner Appeal can lay down its case in cast iron intellectual arguments but it won't achieve much until S&M is accepted by the common 'man' on the street.

In the same way that role playing games could be banned under a deluge of religious sanctitude without too much of a struggle.

Yes, I accept that this appeal is a step towards that goal of acceptance but I can't say I've noticed an overwhelming response. I noticed the 'Coal not Dole' march, I noticed the US election, I noticed Charles and Di, but I haven't seen Spanner on the front page.

[[Surely you're not naif enough to believe that there's any fairness about what gets covered in the press? The tabloids were happy to cover the original case, with lots of lurid lies, but won't cover the appeals because there's no new scandal. The real papers are hardly better, though that haven of liberal hypocrites, **The Guardian**, carried a feature on SM Pride and has run bits on the Spanner appeal.]]

As a thinking adult I should be supporting any minority against discrimination. So why aren't I? Because I'm too bloody apathetic like the rest of the uncouneted millions out here. And I'm reasonably aware: you need a bloody good campaign to get us going and Spanner hasn't.

[[The state of the Spanner campaign is irrelevant. The point is that you wouldn't have heard about it because practically no newspaper, magazine, television or radio programme mentioned it. Except the gay press. Even straight S&Mers outside the 'scene' wouldn't have heard about it. This is called censorship. Why do you think 'newspaper' is so frequently abbreviated to 'paper'? Because there's never any bloody news in the things. I refer you

to Ben Elton's seminal/ovular (hi Iain!) routine on 'Why Newspapers Are Full Of Shit.']]

**David Tittle**           The phrase 'reasonable objection' may leave a large grey area  
**Edinburgh**           but it does at least clarify my views on Spanner. Who could  
reasonably object to whatever consenting adults do in private,  
provided that they are not preparing some plan or object for use against unwilling  
victims? Neighbours kept awake by squeaks from thoughtlessly unoiled handcuffs,  
perhaps? Forgive me, I mock.

My idea of a game gathers more weight with the boxing references. Perhaps you  
could organise an annual National Sadomasochistic Championship, in which two  
volunteers slap each other gently for ten seconds. Anyone who wished to indulge in  
S&M could then legitimately spend the year training for this prestigious sporting  
event with like minded friends.

Sorry, I just don't understand the **Smodnoc** references. At least I know what the  
words means, which is more than can be said for the Latin headings. Am I the only  
**U-Bend** reader without a classical education or is your erudition lost on most of  
us? Whilst on the subject, how about 'polystichomythia' to describe a page on  
which alternate writers are given several lines in turn?

[[Youse are aal a bunch of pig ignorant illiterates, and that includes the  
mob who've been getting steamed up in the Smodnoc lettercol. Is it so long  
since the big debate which took over the pages of **A Step Further Out, Y**  
**Ddraig Goch**, and (I seem to recall) **Variable Title**? Philip K. Dick, people,  
Philip K. Dick. Go out, the lot of you, and buy a copy of **Ubik**, then wonder  
no more about the headers in **U-Bend** 15.]]

**Joy Hibbert**           Opinions on sex are generally less 'deep-seated' than 'knee-  
**Stafford**           jerk', and characterised by an inability to tell the differ-  
ence between what excites or disgusts an individual and what  
should be legal or illegal. This is particularly obvious in rape/child abuse  
cases, where a defendant is more likely to be convicted (and given a harsher  
sentence) if the judge and jury cannot understand why anyone would want to have  
sex with, say, a girl under 13 or a woman over 50, than if the victim was vaguely  
nubile.

But it's also clear where gay issues are concerned: breeder bigots are, in my  
experience, more disgusted by homosexuality of their sex than of the other sex.  
Something that they're disgusted to think of themselves doing is more disgusting  
than something they cannot be involved in.

[[I don't think that's all that surprising, isn't it reasonable to be  
disgusted more by something you can imagine yourself doing? Not, of course,  
that I condone for a moment homophobia.]]

It's interesting to consider the amount of gynephobia that must be running in the  
games hobby for people to assume that any writing on sexual politics is actually  
from me instead of you. After all, I am a submissive, and you are my dominant, and  
we make no secret of this. Surely more reasonable to assume that I write what you  
would want me to say? But that's gynephobia for you - give a woman an inch/two  
brain cells and she'll take a mile/the world.

Of course, the assumption of heterosexual matrimony can make life queasy for  
people sharing a surname for more sensible reasons. When I lived with my parents,  
for example, my brother and I had some hobbies in common (such as the Derby Rail  
Society and sf conventions), and it was quite nauseating to get letters either  
addressed to 'Mr & Mrs D Hibbert' or which implied as much in the body of the  
letter.

For most people, education reduces disgust. To understand all isn't to forgive

all, but it does make the red haze harder to pull across your eyes. Many breeder bigots believe that homosexuality is more powerful than heterosexuality - presumably because people continue to practice it even if it's illegal or stigmatised (people do the same with heterosexuality, of course, but no-one can remember that). Many people think that S&M is more powerful than vanilla sex, either for the classic reason that the older, jaded sensualist requires stronger stimulation, or because they've done both and observed this for themselves. If you assume these things to be true, then it follows that to educate people about sexual minority interests is to reduce their level of disgust, which is to reduce their reasons not to try it, which will lead to them becoming unable or unwilling to practice 'normal' sex. There are still those who believe that a nation of homosexuals would be an ex-nation in a few generations, contrary to the obvious biological facts, and I would imagine that there are those who see S&M as a slippery slope to real violent sex, and for those reasons would object to a nation of homosexuals or S&Mers. However, it's unlikely that most people who think this way have thought it through - the red haze is easier.

I did read in the paper today of a more recent case of retrospective legislation. Unfortunately, I can't remember the details, but it involved something illegal the government had done, which they held up in the courts long enough to pass a law making it legal. Westland, perhaps? Expect another such law in the near future making it legal to close down the pits.

Stephen Agar misses the point that under the Spanner precedent the 'victim' can be convicted of aiding and abetting an assault upon himself. This makes it substantially more stupid than it looks at first sight.

What's a little homophobe like Parish doing supporting S&M? Is there something he isn't telling us? Or is it just that his vicious deity doesn't say anything on the subject?

[[Doesn't he? Most unlike the Xtian deity. Though knowing the King James bible, it's probably buried under five feet of euphemisms and nobody realises it. {"Although they covered King David with clothes, he could not get warm"}. Did you hear about the bloke who objected to (I think) the Good News Bible by saying "If the King James version was good enough for Jesus, it should be good enough for us"?]]

A point he misses is 'intent'. Is consent a defence for intentionally paralysing someone for life. No. Is consent a defence for unintentionally etc? The answer would seem to be yes. Operations that go wrong, trainee soldiers who fall off things, sportspeople (including children) who get kicked in the wrong place. The same sort of things apply to unintentional murder, at least, outside the S&M environment. By contrast, a man was recently given 3 years for accidentally strangling his partner of several years. My own experience of erotic strangulation suggests that he must have been either totally stupid or under the influence, but even so, if you compare it, say, to the sort of sentences given to men who intentionally murder women they're bored with, it seems excessive.

Your final comment misses the point. That scenario (btw Jehovah's Witnesses don't object to surgery, just blood transfusion - you mean Christian Scientists) could happen anyway, if the surgeon operates without the consent of patient or next of kin. The Spanner precedent makes it possible for a 3rd party, such as the mother of a lapsed Christian Scientist, to take out a prosecution against the surgeon for operating on her adult offspring (and, presumably, against said offspring for aiding and abetting). It's hard to imagine any court giving a conviction, but less hard to imagine for more controversial surgery, such as abortion, sterilisation and gender reassignment.

[[Thank you, I wrote that lot in a rush and didn't make it as clear as I might've.]]

As for Damien Cosgrove, a quote from **Kit and the Widow** seems appropriate: 'The Sergeant said, he wouldn't call me arsehole/Because an arsehole serves a certain useful little role'. That, in case you couldn't guess, is my reply to his characterisation of Lord Lane as a cunt. Note, I'm not arguing with his meaning, only with his terminology. [[Quite agree]]

The final **NMR** got up my nose by starting a controversy that I couldn't join because the zine was no more. Brian Creese (I think) referred to my argument that expecting a child to welcome a junior sibling 'because we love you so much we're having another just like you' is odd. The reason I think it odd that anyone thinks that is by analogy with how you would expect your spouse to feel if you 'love her/him so much you're getting another just like her/him'. Ie, you'd be lucky to escape with your life. He argues that my argument is invalid because it implies that having a first child is tantamount to adultery. Or words to that effect. Two problems with that. Firstly, an adult is not a child. Having a child is not the same as having another adult. Secondly, it is tantamount to adultery. Or that, at least, is the conclusion I draw from the advice given to women expecting their first child, much of which seems to revolve around the fact that the man in the case is expected to be jealous, and that great care must be taken, before and after the birth, to make sure he doesn't feel left out, to make him feel attractive and sexy (even if she does have a great fat foetus sticking out in front/stitches in unfortunate places/etc) and so on. Interestingly, this is very similar to the advice given to people with cats who want to adopt another one, and we all know how possessive cats are.

I wish I could really do witty repartee like Pint Sized Hibbert. Lady Penelope's ok, but she's a bit blonde. Can you get me a dark-haired woman?

[[Not in the letter column, dearest, it might frighten the horses.]]

Please get it out of your head that I am any good at chess. I'm not.

Dave a little stricter than you? Fnarr.

[[Oh, be quiet.]]

[[This is far from all the letters, there may be more next time, there may even be more this time in another place and on a different word processing package. Nobody can say I don't bring you lots of variety.]]

\*\*\*\*\*

We're going to have a housecon in February/March sometime, so anyone interested, tell us which dates suit you and we shall try and accommodate to suit as many as poss.

It is almost as certain as anything in this uncertain world ever is -- aye, as certain as a very certain thing indeed -- that I shall be unable to attend Manorcon this year (\*sniff\*). (\*PEDANT ALERT\* Yes, I'm referring to 1993 when you lot will be perusing this, not 1992 whose dying throes are all around me as I write). If anyone wishes to organise a **U-Bend** team to uphold the Honour Of The Alma Mater I ~~will be amazed~~ will be happy to give my blessing, supply Team Badges like in 1992, &c &c. I may try and make Midcon instead but don't count on that either. If you really want to see my jolly, smiling face, you will just have to turn up to the above housecon (advrt.)

I may (since this issue will be photocopied) see how the machine copes with photographs. If there is a page of them somewhere in this issue, you will know that it copes well. If there isn't, or if there is a page full of black blodges, you will know that it doesn't. Of such uncertainties is zine editing made.



oimoi, peplegmai kairian plegen eso  
(the games section)

NOTA BENE: I apologise for the deadline last issue being so tight, but it was that or an eight-week gap. This being so, I am prepared to offer a form of NMR amnesty in that NMRs this issue do not count towards anarchy, save for persistent offenders and debtors.

YAVILLAND

RR map LE

Gamestart

I know you're travelling, but I don't know where

On the starting line are:

John Colledge, Dunorroch, 24 Brunstane Bank, Edinburgh EH15 2NR  
Duncan Adams, 5 Hedge End, East Hunsbury, Northampton NN4 0SW  
Steve Guest, 3 Becket Street, Oxford OX1 1PP  
Paul Slade, 164 Park Road, Cowes, Isle of Wight PO31 7NE

Maps are enclosed, unless I've forgotten, and since I have them right by the side of my chair even I shouldn't have too much difficulty. Right then, may I have start preferences, company names and preferred colours for next deadline, if you please.

#####

XIMENEZ

Chaos II Diplomacy

Winter 1900

Now war is declared, and battle come down

Would you hate me dreadfully if I omitted the addresses for once?

|                             |              |                              |              |
|-----------------------------|--------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| ANK (John Miller)           | : A(Ank)     | BEL (Peter Ritchie)          | : F(Bel)     |
| BER (Steve Guest)           | : A(Ber)     | BRE (John R Todd)            | : F(Bre)     |
| BUD (Ian Harris)            | : A(Bud)     | BUL (Vick Hall)              | : A(Bul)     |
| CON (Nicholas Parish)       | : F(Con)     | DEN (Peter Dunnett)          | : F(Den)     |
| EDI (Denis Jones, see COAs) | : F(Edi)%    | GRE (Paul Slade)             | : F(Gre)     |
| HOL (John Breakwell)        | : F(Hol)     | KIE (Duncan Adams, see COAs) | : A(Kie)     |
| LPL (John Morgan)           | : A(Lpl)%    | LON (Gary Lyon)              | : A(Lon)     |
| MAR (Guy Thomas)            | : A(Mar)     | MOS (Paul Dunning)           | : A(Mos)     |
| MUN (Mike Allaway)          | : A(Mun)%    | NAP (Keir Hodgson)           | : F(Nap)     |
| NWY (Toby Harris)           | : F(Nwy)     | PAR (Damien Cosgrove)        | : A(Par)     |
| POR (Mick Haytack)          | : F(Por)     | ROM (Alex Richardson)        | : A(Rom)     |
| RUM (Bill O'Neill)          | : A(Rum)     | SER (Mike Clark)             | : A(Ser)     |
| SEV (Sean Weir)             | : A(Sev)     | SMY (Neil Duncan)            | : F(Smy)     |
| SPA (Edmund Morgan)         | : F(Spa/sc)% | STP (Paul Norris)            | : F(StP/sc)% |
| SWE (Stephen Agar)          | : F(Swe)%    | TRI (Robin ap Cynan)         | : A(Tri)     |
| TUN (Rob Moore)             | : F(Tun)     | VEN (William Whyte)          | : A(Ven)%    |
| VIE (Allan Gordon)          | : A(Vie)     | WAR (Peter Charles)          | : A(War)     |

% indicates an NMR and default build; if the somniacs were to awaken, I would be gratified (this is what we Greek scholars call a future indefinite conditional). Morgan E., the wretch, compromised my default rules re builds; I tossed a coin for coast. Two new addresses,

Denis Jones to 81 Fishponds Road, London SW17

Duncan Adams to 5 Hedge End, East Hunsbury, Northampton NN4 0SW

Of course some of you can't resist writing \*PRESS\*:





Midnight on the water, I saw the ocean's daughter

AUSTRIA (Paul Norris, Top Flat, 53 Ashley Hill, Montpelier, Bristol BS79BE)  
NMR! F(Boh)\*, A(Tyr) H u/o.

ENGLAND (Tony Sait, 15 Alphington Green, Frimley, Surrey GU16 5LQ)  
F(MAR)-Spa\*, F(Bur) S F(MAR)-Spa (nsu), F(SKA)-Nwy,  
 F(GAS) H u/o.

FRANCE (David Tittle, 41 Braehead Drive, Edinburgh EH4 6QW)  
 F(Swi) H, F(Spa) H.

GERMANY (Nicholas Parish, JCR, Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford OX2 6QA)  
 F(NWG)-Edi, F(BAL)-Swe, F(Bur) S English F(MAR) (unit moved),  
A(Mun)-Tyr, A(Sil)-Boh, F(VIE) S A(Sil)-Boh, F(NTH)-Nwy, F(UKR)-SEV.

ITALY (Allan Gordon, 3 Forest Avenue, Chingford, London E4 6AR)  
 F(GOL)-MAR, F(Pie) S F(GOL)-MAR, F(VEN) S F(Pie), F(RUM) H,  
 F(ADR)-ION, A(Tri)=F(Tri/wc), A(Ser) S A(Tri)=F(Tri/wc).

Retreats Austrian F(Boh) and English F(MAR) both disband NRO.

#### Slate of Tay

AUSTRIA: Fri-Vie Tyr = 1 n/c  
 ENGLAND: Edi Wal Mar = 1 Disbands F(SKA)  
 FRANCE: For Spa Swi = 2 n/c  
 GERMANY: Ber Mun Ruh Swe Nwy Ukr War Mos Edi Boh = 6 Disbands  
 F(Swe), F(Edi)  
 ITALY : Rom Smy Ank Con Tun Gre Pie Ser Bat Tri = 7 n/c

Alb, Cly, Con, Swe, Tri, Wal and War now do the vanishing act, leaving German F(SWE) afloat but not catching any armies. Silesia is flavour of the year as regards new supply centres.

#### Press

Wop - Frog: Sorry if this turns out crappy. I couldn't contact the Unreliable One, so the plan is down the toobs... and it looks like your worst fears could be realised, in which case I can't do anything to stop it. No time to get back to you -- no time for anything but a finger in the dyke. If it screws-up... blame Dim Ladd.

France - Germany: Cuc-koo!

Green Slime: He sighed as he globbed-over the last of Croatia. A muck's gotta do what a muck's gotta do, and it was one way of putting an end to the humans' stupidity..... and at least they didn't rot away with Black lumps in their armpits like the sad little Waltzers!

Judge English: This was last issue's adjudication, which went out on a player-only sheet for sundry tedious reasons. This issue's follows immediately:

Spring 1906

AUSTRIA (Paul Norris, Top Flat, 53 Ashley Hill, Montpelier, Bristol BS79BE)  
NMR2! A(Tyr) H u/o.

ENGLAND (Tony Sait, 15 Alphington Green, Frimley, Surrey GU16 5LQ)  
 F(GAS)-Bur.

FRANCE (David Tittle, 41 Braehead Drive, Edinburgh EH4 6QW)  
F(Swi) H, F(Spa)-GAS.

GERMANY (Nicholas Parish, Monkmoor, 10 Beechwood Ave, Weybridge KT13 9TE)  
F(Bur) S French F(Swi)\*, A(Mun) & A(Boh) S F(VIE)-Tyr, F(VIE)-Tyr,  
F(NTH)-BEL, F(SEV)-ARM.

ITALY (Allan Gordon, 3 Forest Avenue, Chingford, London E4 6AR)  
F(MAR) S English F(GAS)-Bur, F(Pie) & F(VEN) S A(Ser)-Tyr,  
F(RUM)-GAL, F(IDN)-Tun, F(TRI) FF A(Ser)-Tyr, A(Ser)-Tyr.

Retreats German F(Bur)-RUH

Press

Green Slime: He toyed with the idea of saving the beautiful, green expanses of what was once Turkey from the ravages of the Black Death. But, nah!.... it was too negative.... too far from where the real action was.... only a mega-dork would go there at this time. What the hell, anyway -- he'd already promised a plague-free Switzerland to another.

Jim Ladd, a Cautionary Tale: After many days adrift in the longboat, Jim came out of the coma. Life had been very, VERY strange recently. He kept having these recurring dreams (well, if they were recurring, he would keep having them, I suppose). In them, a strange, shadowy figure was throwing a line to him in his little boat, and each time he reached out for the line, it was cruelly snatched from his grasp. What could it mean?

He struggled out of the bottom of the boat and looked around. His throat was dry and parched. What he wouldn't do for a cool shandy! But all there was in the pitiful vessel was seawater, seagull droppings, a souvenir of Torremolinos and... a pint of Holsten Pils!! Jim reached out for the magical liquid, just to see it disappear before his very eyes. Shit! A mirage. And I suppose that the piece of rope, attached to a lifebelt with 'Wopbasher' on it, which had just landed at his feet, was also a figment of his imagination -- or was it?

#####

DREDD

Diplomacy 91DC

Spring 1907

You better stop, look around -- here it comes!  
(To add to my other sins I can't count: France does not lose A(Mun))

AUSTRIA (Allan Gordon, 3 Forest Avenue, Chingford, London E4 6AR)  
A(Boh) S A(Sil)-Gal, A(Sil)-Gal, A(Rum)-Sev, A(Ven) S F(Tus)-Pie,  
A(Tyr)-Mun, F(IDN) S Italian F(TYS), F(Tus)-Pie, F(Tri)-Alb.

FRANCE (Peter Dunnett, 328 Old Road, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex CO15 3NU)  
A(Lpl)-Edi, F(MAD)-NAD, F(ENG) S F(NTH), F(Hol) S A(Mun)-Kie,  
A(Mun)-Kie, A(Ruh) S A(Mun)-Kie, A(Bur)-Mun, A(Mar) H, F(GOL)-Spa/sc,  
F(WMS)-MAD, F(NTH) S A(Lpl)-Edi.

ITALY (Toby Harris, 6 Durham Terrace, Silksworth, Sunderland SR3 1BW)  
F(Con)-BLA, F(TYS) S A(Rom), F(Tun)-ION, A(Rom) H.

RUSSIA (Vick Hall, 49 Vartry Road, London N15)  
F(SKA)-Den, F(Edi)-NWG\*, F(NWG)-Nwy, A(Ber) S A(Den)-Kie, A(Pru)-War,  
A(Arm)-Smy, A(Ank) S A(Arm)-Smy, F(Nwy)-SKA, A(Den)-Kie, A(War)-Ukr,  
F(Sev)-Rum.

Dredd Retreats Russian F(Edi)-Yor

Press

Brownie - Smodnoc Twosome: I wouldn't have believed that you guys could so easily be panicked.... and in different directions, yet!

The Gingerbread Man: He looked at the Green Stump and sadly shook his head.

"Oh, Stumpy, Stumpy! -- you're right about the 'Big'

Bad Wolf, of course, but you really are a Greeno if you think ol' Wide-Mouth wishes us anything but bad. So I gotta save you from yourself, if you know what I mean..... here, have a friendly crutch."

Judge English - Ginge: The ungrateful sod appears to have kicked it away...

#####

JACK

Five Italies Dip

Autumn 1906

There he goes, with his nose in the air

ITALY A (James Nelson): F(Tun E) H\* (dies nrp)

ITALY B (Toby Harris): NMR! A(Ven A), A(Swi), F(Apu A), A(Ven E), A(Ven C), F(ION A), F(ION B), F(Tus B), F(TYS B), F(ION C) all H u/o (!).

ITALY C (David Tittle): F(TYS C)-Nap C, F(Tun C)-TYS C, A(Rom C)-Ven C, F(ION D)-TYS C, F(Nap D)-Rom D, A(Ven D)-Rom D.

ITALY E (Simon Cutforth): F(Tun D)-ION E, A(Tus D)-Pie D, F(ION E)-Tun E, F(TYS E) S F(ION E)-Tun E.

Game-end proposals are irrelevant because...

Adjustments

|                                                                       |      |         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|------|---------|
| ITALY A: <del>FunE</del>                                              | = 0  | Out     |
| ITALY B: RomB NapB VenB TunB RomA TunA VenC VenA NapA Swi <u>VenE</u> | = 11 | & WINS! |
| ITALY C: RomC NapC TunC VenD RomD NapD                                | = 6  | n/c     |
| ITALY E: RomE NapE <del>VenE</del> TunD <u>TunE</u>                   | = 4  | n/c     |

Press

Italy B - Others: I think I'll NMR and claim my 11-centre victory!

Judge English - Italy B: I begin to realise why some people dislike you, Toby. Ah well, so ends a major contender for two titles: "Worst Variant I've Ever Run" and "Game I've Mishandled Most Shamefully". I know one person has decided to terminate their subscription due to the way I messed this one up, and I can only thank you all for sticking with it to the end. Game end summaries are welcome from y'all, and I promise not to edit out all the cursing before printing them. Buy SMODNOC for better GMing (adv.t.)

#####

BEECHING

Guess who's the winner again? Not Peter Dunnett? Yes, Peter Dunnett! Look here, Dunnett, you're a better GM than me, a better player than me, for heaven's sake go and start your own zine. For the record; yes, I cocked up the disbands in Dredd, and Peter has a free issue. At this rate he will soon have enough to wallpaper his room. (Actually, thanks, Peter.)



FARADAY

Atlantic Airlines

Turn 10

Seven-forty-seven comin' out of the sky

| Company/Base   | Aircraft/ | Starts  | / | Via                | / | Ends       |
|----------------|-----------|---------|---|--------------------|---|------------|
| LAKER/New York | A300 /    | M70     | / | London, Casablanca | / | Las Palmas |
| David Tittle   | 707 /     | M70     | / | London, Casablanca | / | C63        |
|                | DC8 /     | Caracas | / | sits on the ground |   |            |
|                | 747 /     | Belem   | / |                    |   | N17        |

Account +101 +120-32-24-14-50-20 = +81

|               |          |       |   |                    |   |            |
|---------------|----------|-------|---|--------------------|---|------------|
| CLAY P/London | 747 /    | J46   | / | Toronto            | / | New York   |
| Steve Guest   | 707 /    | Paris | / | sits on the ground |   |            |
|               | Tristar/ | 19    | / |                    | / | Las Palmas |
|               | DC10 /   | G32   | / | Accra              | / | H74        |

Account -379 +216+240-50-44-20-24-20 = -81, -20% = -98

|                 |          |        |   |                                |   |         |
|-----------------|----------|--------|---|--------------------------------|---|---------|
| AIR CRASH/Paris | DC10 /   | M2     | / |                                | / | D64     |
| David Oya       | 747 /    | D56    | / |                                | / | Tunis   |
|                 | Tristar/ | Bogota | / | sits on the ground             |   |         |
|                 | A300 /   | J61    | / | No fuel, CRASHES on Montreal!! |   |         |
|                 | 767 /    | J47    | / |                                | / | Toronto |

Account -1528 +62-44-50-20-32-36-20 = -1668, -20% = -2002

|               |          |         |   |                   |   |     |
|---------------|----------|---------|---|-------------------|---|-----|
| HYMEN/Atlanta | Tristar/ | H54     | / | New York, Atlanta | / | D47 |
| Dave Rowley   | DC10 /   | Chicago | / | Havana            | / | H46 |
|               | 767 /    | Chicago | / | Gander            | / | L62 |
|               | A300 /   | Atlanta | / | Chicago           | / | L53 |

Account -930 +168-40-44-36-32-20 = -938, -20% = -1126Loads Landed

| From    | To                                                            | Carrier                | Load | Size/Distance/Value |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|------|---------------------|
| Tunis   | London                                                        | LAKER/A300 (part load) | 7    | / 10 / 120          |
| Tunis   | London                                                        | LAKER/707 (part load)  | 5    | / 10 / 120          |
| Miami   | Accra                                                         | CLAY PIGEON/DC10       | 6    | / 36 / 216          |
| London  | Toronto                                                       | CLAY PIGEON/747        | 10   | / 24 / 240          |
| Atlanta | Tunis                                                         | AIR CRASH/747          | 2    | / 31 / 62           |
| London  | Toronto                                                       | AIR C/767 (part load)  | 8    | / 24 / 264          |
|         | (no payment as rest of load in little pieces all over Canada) |                        |      |                     |
| Paris   | New York                                                      | HYMEN/Tristar          | 7    | / 24 / 168          |

Loads Deceased

|        |         |                        |   |            |
|--------|---------|------------------------|---|------------|
| London | Toronto | AIR C/A300 (part load) | 3 | / 24 / 264 |
|--------|---------|------------------------|---|------------|

Loads in Flight

|            |          |                         |    |            |
|------------|----------|-------------------------|----|------------|
| Atlanta    | Rome     | CLAY P/DC10 (part load) | 3  | / 33 / 264 |
| Havana     | London   | AIR CRASH/DC10          | 3  | / 34 / 102 |
| Atlanta    | Dakar    | HYMEN/Tristar           | 2  | / 28 / 56  |
| Havana     | Montreal | HYMEN/DC10              | 10 | / 12 / 120 |
| Chicago    | Rome     | HYMEN/A300 (part load)  | 4  | / 33 / 396 |
| Chicago    | Rome     | HYMEN/767 (part load)   | 8  | / 33 / 396 |
| Casablanca | New York | LAKER/A300 (part load)  | 7  | / 24 / 192 |
| Casablanca | New York | LAKER/767 (part load)   | 1  | / 24 / 192 |
| London     | Miami    | LAKER/767               | 4  | / 32 / 128 |



|                                                                                      |      |                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| AUSTRIA: Vie Fri <u>Bud</u>                                                          | = 2  | nbp! 1 short                                        |
| ENGLAND: Ept <u>Lon</u>                                                              | = 1  | n/c                                                 |
| FRANCE : Par Mar <u>Bre</u> Por Spa Edi <u>Lpl</u>                                   | = 5  | Build A(Par), nfbp, 1 short                         |
| GERMANY: Kie Ber Mun Bel Hol Den Swe Nwy<br>Kon StP <u>Edi</u> <u>Bre</u> <u>Tri</u> | = 12 | Build A(Mun), F(Kie), A(Ber)                        |
| ITALY : Rom Nap Ven Tun Gre                                                          | = 5  | Build A(Ven), A(Rom),<br>F(Nap), but still 2 short! |
| RUSSIA : Sev Mos Bed Rum <u>Ser</u>                                                  | = 4  | nbp! 1 short                                        |
| TURKEY : Ank Smy Bul War Con                                                         | = 5  | Build three armies                                  |

And now, gang, it's time for the Press

(Press... gang... geddit?... please yourselves...)

Bobby 'Scrooge' Moore: drifted aimlessly down the snowy main street, grubby mittens clenched tight around a small bag of coloured pieces. Sharp eyes stared from his weasel-like features and flickered across the shop windows, calculating a discount here and a bargain there. Window shopping was always easier if the shops had long since shut for the night. Suddenly the roar of an engine and the screech of brakes caught his attention. Barely a hundred yards away a car had skidded to a halt outside Wilman's off-licence. Before his astonished eyes, two figures leapt out, smashed through the window and started to pile bottles into the back of the car. Torn between greed and his diminished conscience, Bobby hopped from foot to foot as he watched the scoundrels speed away with a boot load of booze. Finally the inevitable happened and he scampered over. But as he scooped a four pack of Boddies under his parka, a firm hand fell on his shoulder and a masterful voice spoke above the howling alarm. "Excuse me, sir," it said, and he turned to see the smiling face of the man from the kebab van and the smiling man's clenched fist which connected crisply with his nose. "Bloody United fans," said the man, and Bobby realised that, of all his sins, that was truly the worst.

A little later, still in Sarajevo: The first faint glimmerings of dawn were lightening the horizon as the MiL gunship flew low towards the heart of the city. Inside, Walkerdine and Ulrika sat hunched over the controls, their faces grim. It still seemed almost impossible, yet all the evidence pointed to Kate Adie as the mastermind behind this enormous charade, and they were determined to find her.

Eventually Ulrika spoke. "Thermal imager shows something a mile to the east. Looks about platoon size. Could be perimeter guards."

Walkerdine nodded. "And a mile beyond that is the Europa Hotel, where all the westerners stay. She's certainly prepared a deep defence -- better activate the weaponry."

"Activating weaponry," came the reply. And a few seconds later, "All weapons are now go." With probable action now imminent, every second could be vital, and both had dropped automatically into the clipped speech of the military.

Moments later Ulrika spoke again. "Movement to the west, 2000 yards. Looks like artillery."

"Got it," replied Walkerdine, making a slight adjustment to their course.

"Flak ahead, 1500 yards." They had been spotted!

The gunship lurched as Walkerdine took immediate evasive action, but no sooner had he done so than Ulrika shouted the next warning. "Two SAMs, bearing 490, two miles! Chaff ready."

Walkerdine rapidly gained height and watched the image of the missiles on the radar as they rose towards the gunship, a sitting target in the cool morning air. Then he calmly said "Fire chaff," and immediately dropped the MiL like a stone towards the rooftops below. The missiles'

radar, locked onto their previous position, mistook the cloud of tinfoil for the real target and seconds later the helicopter shook as the two SAMs exploded harmlessly above them.

But there was no time to think about the missiles, as they were now almost at ground level and only a few hundred yards from their objective. "Small arms ahead," cried Ulrika, and almost immediately they heard the patter of bullets on the armour plating beneath their feet. Walkerdine threw the MiL into a sideslip to evade the hail of lead, while Ulrika fired back towards its source; then he spun it around and sent it hurtling along a narrow alley. At the far end they emerged into an open square filled with military vehicles, behind which there rose the massive edifice of the Europa Hotel!

More small arms and flak greeted them as they flew across the square and Walkerdine had to duck and weave as Ulrika used the MiL's cannon to take out specific targets, then launched several smoke grenades to hide them from the remaining defenders. In less than a minute they had silenced the main opposition and, as the thick black smoke obscured their position, he flew above the hotel and quickly landed the gunship on the roof.

Cruising across the Atlantic: "Cracketty" Jones' message had me both puzzled and worried. Could it be possible that Walkerdine was not, after all, in charge of whatever nefarious activities were going on in Bosnia? And if so, who on earth could be the culprit? I shook my head and applied myself to emptying a glass of rye.

Quinceyette Tallulah Pye appeared at the doorway to my cabin. "Hank?" "Mmmm?"

"News from Bosnia. Walkerdine's there. Secret Service have sent some operative out there to try and find out what the hell is going on."

"Right," I mused. Then the penny dropped and I gasped "And how come you know all that?"

"Lady Penelope has been monitoring their frequency on the yacht radio."

This Penelope broad was starting to appear to me as though she had more to her than met the eye (which was not bad going, considering what did meet the eye). "I think I may need a word with her," I said, abandoning my rye and getting up.

Though I found Lady Penelope on the bridge, she hardly needed to be there; she was relaxing and looking decorative, and letting FAB 2 take care of itself, which it seemed well able to do.

"Lady Creighton-Ward, I reckon we've got some talking to do. Just how do you account for the presence on this yacht of monitoring equipment sufficient to fill a Russki tracking station?"

"I don't, Mr Janson. Or rather, I choose not to. For now. I'm sure you understand."

A wealth of emotions followed one another through my mind, ranging from drawing my gat and blowing the impertinent little bitch away to diving at her feet and worshipping her. It's not often that Hank Janson undergoes a totally new experience, but I can safely say I've never had a dame talk to me that way.

"Gee...." I managed to articulate. "Well, at the very least, can you let me know when you get any more news from Bosnia?" And I headed back down for my cabin and the comfort of the bottle of rye.

At the Europa Hotel: With the rotors still spinning, they jumped out of the MiL and ran to the stairwell. They had planned this part of the operation before taking off and knew they had no more than three minutes to reach the penthouse suite -- which they both agreed was the almost certain location of Kate Adie -- before the defenders could regroup. A lone guard was quickly despatched by Ulrika's Kalashnikov, and then they were hurtling



down the stairs.

Not a word was needed as they carried out their pre-set routine. At the door of the penthouse, Walkerdine crouched as Ulrika fired a short burst at the lock. Then he dived through, throwing a stun grenade into the room as he rolled to one side. Ulrika followed, firing into the air to give her partner cover while he rushed the bedroom door. A stun grenade from Ulrika followed him into the bedroom and then they were both facing the bed, guns at the ready as they removed their earplugs.

But there were no surprises. Kate Adie lay there before them, temporarily deafened by the grenades, still barely awake and with an expression of total bewilderment clouding her usually impassive features.

Still following their plan, Ulrika rushed to the bed and, before she could protest, trussed their victim in a blanket. Walkerdine threw the squirming bundle over his shoulder and, with Ulrika leading the way, they left the suite and ran back up the stairs to the waiting helicopter.

Kate Adie was thrown unceremoniously into the cabin and, as Ulrika fastened the door and took her seat at the weapons console, Walkerdine fired up the turbines and lifted the MiL from the hotel roof. As he did so he glanced at his watch.

"Two minutes forty," he grunted. "Who says we're getting rusty?"

"Save the applause for later," replied his partner. "Just get us out of here!" But she smiled at him as she said it.

With an answering grin he dropped the machine back to ground level and sent it hurtling along the twisting path of streets and alleys that would take them out of the city.

Meanwhile, in London: Agent Tangerine, known to his friends and family as

Edmund Morgan, had packed his bags; a large bag with clothes in, a small bag with a large radio in, and a tiny bag with various guns, knives, knuckledusters, and a packet of sandwiches in case he was stranded in the heart of Bosnia without any shops nearby. Agent Tangerine believed in playing on the safe side.

He had known for a while that things were getting hairy; that there was something very wrong in the former Yugoslavia, that there was an ominous silence from the North Pole, that Pint Size Hibbert's operation in the US was under attack. And then came the news that Walkerdine and Ulrika were in Europe. That had, apparently, been the final straw; he had been summoned and told that he was to be parachuted into Bosnia, and bloody good luck to him.

The rotors started to whirl above his head. Despite all his training, Morgan had never quite lost the habit at the beginning of a mission of imagining that his exploits were being written down for the delectation of grubby schoolboys and escapism-seeking executives, rather than being the genuine article. He imagined how he would be described in the pages of such a novel; handsome, clean-cut, aquiline, dark. In reality Agent Tangerine was a nondescript young man who resembled nothing so much as a myriad other nondescript young men; which was part of his cover, of course. In reality handsome, clean-cut, aquiline, dark features were more likely to belong to dentists or used car dealers.

The chopper flew onwards towards the first transfer point. Agent Tangerine bit into a Mars bar with the thought that this might be his last one ever. It was not the first occasion that he had had that thought.

Later that same morning: An area of woodland some thirty miles north of

Sarajevo provided a perfect hiding place for the MiL. Kate Adie, now dressed in combat fatigues from the helicopter, sat with her back to one of its wheels. Though she now looked more like her TV persona, the steely glint in her eye and the cool, commanding voice were missing. Her eyes darted from side to side like those of a frightened rabbit, and her voice betrayed her emotions as she confronted her captors.

"Wha... what are you going to do?" she asked, as her eyes strayed to the Kalashnikov in Ulrika's hands.

"Get some answers," replied Walkerdine, crouching in front of her. He held up a hand and counted on his fingers. "One. Why the charade of a terrible war when none existed? Two. Was it your idea or did someone put you up to it? Three. How could you expect to keep it going without someone rumbling you? And four. What's happened to all those UN aid convoys the West has been sending in?" He dropped his hand, but the grim expression remained.

Her eyes met his for a brief moment, then she looked away and her shoulders sagged. "Oh god, what's the point any more? It's all over now anyway." She brushed away a tear, then took a deep breath as she composed herself. Eventually she looked him in the eye again, and though her face had still not regained its usual assured expression, her voice was now more like that of the highly trained reporter known the world over. "All right. I'll tell you the whole story."

#####

PEPPER Sopwith T178UB Turn 11

It's a shame them slugs ain't real

| Pilot                    | Starts                 | Moves            | Ends    | A :D :P  |
|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------|---------|----------|
| <u>Retaliator</u><br>ACE | P9-Q9<br>Mark Wightman | LT f-L&A,0 f-L,0 | Q10-R11 | 07:12:02 |
| <u>Atsuko</u><br>ACE     | R12-Q12<br>Dave Lomas  | RT,I f-A,0 f-A   | R14-R13 | 13:05:22 |

Clouds loom E to: (G14,G15,H13,H14):(L16,L17,M17):(M10,M11,M12):  
(O18,P17,P18,P19):(P14,P15,Q13,Q14,Q15).

Damage Miraculously, none (yet).

Press

Ret - At: I need every advantage I can get!

#####

BARRETT Railway Rivals map Y0 Round 10

She said no no no, you're wrong

John Webley does seem to have done a vanishing act, so THEE's track is now available for hire at half price.

Race Results

- 19) York - Castleford: NUTS 20+1, AE 5-2+1, LUST 5-3, IYI 0-1, (THEE +2).
- 20) Rotherham - Selby: LUST 20-1+1, NUTS 10-1+1, IYI 0.
- 21) Hull - Keighley: LUST 20+7, AE 10-7.
- 22) Leeds - Harrogate: AE 20.
- 23) Hebden Bridge - Sheffield: IYI 20-2+4, LUST 10-4, (THEE +2).
- 24) Mexboro - Brid'ton: IYI 20-9, AE 10-1+7, NUTS 0-1, LUST +1, (THEE+2+1).

Builds None, though IYI's build last time should've been printed as A60-A68



English Builds

Nary a one

Races (enter up to 5, build up to 4 physical)

- 37) AC-BS Michigan - Chillicothe
- 38) KS-5H W.Virginia - Springfield
- 39) 4H-JD Piqua - Steubenville
- 40) TH-KS Newark - W.Virginia
- 41) 8D-7H Canton - Columbus
- 42) 7S-KC Dayton - Lk Erie Port
- 43) JC-7D Ashtabula - Akron
- 44) AD-8C PA - Cleveland

Running Totals

- OSCAR (Bowen/pink): 136 +33 = 169
- ORNATE (Charles/blue): 156 +59 = 217
- CCI (Lomas/purple): 150 +46 = 196
- FRIENDLY FASCISM (Jones/black): 199 +5 = 204 (NMR2!)
- IDLE (Ritchie/red): 131 +64 = 195
- ANNE'S CLIQUE (Parish/green): 140 +64 = 204

Well, well, do we have a five-way marginal or do we have a five-way marginal? Even OSCAR stands a chance if some good runs fall his way. I do hope Denis will stop moving houses long enough to order next turn (COA: 81 Fishponds Road, London SW17).

#####

TEX Diplomacy 92?? Spring 1903

There is no future in England's dreaming

AUSTRIA (Peter Dunnett, 328 Old Road, Clacton on Sea, Essex CO15 3NU)  
A(Bud) S A(Vie)-Gal, F(ADR) S Turkish F(AEG)-ION, A(Gre) H,  
A(Tri)-Ven, A(Vie)-Gal.

ENGLAND (Edward Ainsworth, 4 Park Avenue, Bedford MK40 2JY)  
A(Lon)-Nwy\*, F(NTH) C-A(Lon)-Nwy, F(Nwy)-SKA, F(BAR)-StP/nc

FRANCE (Ian Harris, 3 Abbotside Close, Urpeth Grange, Chester le Street, Co Durham DH2 1TQ)  
F(MAO)-IRI, A(Por)-Spa, A(Wal) S A(Bel)-Lon, F(ENG) C A(Bel)-Lon,  
A(Bel)-Lon, F(Mar) S A(Por)-Spa.

GERMANY (Mark Stretch, 2 Over Mill Drive, Selly Park, Birmingham B29 7JL)  
A(Ruh)-Bel, A(Hol) S A(Ruh)-Bel, F(Den)-NTH, F(Swe)-Nwy, A(Sil)-War,  
A(Mun)-Bur.

ITALY (Keir Hodgson, 37 Shanklin Drive, Leicester LE2 3RH)  
A(Pie) S A(Apu)-Ven, A(Apu)-Ven, F(ION)-ADR\*, F(WMS)-Tun.

RUSSIA (Chris Sutton, 62 Ashbrook Road, Stirchley, Birmingham B30 2XB)  
NMR! A(Mos), A(Ukr)\*, A(Gal)\* H u/o.

TURKEY (Mark Underhay, 65 The Chase, Holland on Sea CO15 5PZ)  
A(Sev)-Ukr, F(BLA) S A(Arm)-Sev, A(Rum) S A(Sev)-Ukr, F(AEG)-ION,  
A(Arm)-Sev, F(Smy)-AEG.

Retreats English A(Lon)-Yor; Italian F(ION)-Apu; Russian A(Ukr), A(Gal) die

Press

English General - Father Christmas: All I ask for is Wales.



LUTON

Atlantic Airlines (GM Dave Rowley)

Setup

Somebody told her that there was a place like heaven  
Across the water on a seven-forty-seven

RAC                      TriStar        / Paris on the ground  
Alan Harvey 300 - 200 = +100

SANTA CLAUS            747            / Madrid on the ground  
Rob Cullender        300 - 280 = +20

BNS                     707            / Madrid on the ground  
John Colledge        300 - 140 = +160

PUSSYCAT              747            / New York on the ground  
Haz Bond              300 - 280 = +20

RAC = Round Atlantic Commercially

SANTA CLAUS = Spanish Airlines (Now Trading As Catalonian Luxury Air United Services)

BNS = Blue Nose Special

PUSSYCAT = Planes Under Severe Stress Yet Continuing Always Toughly

Runs Available

| From       | To         | Size / Dist / Value |
|------------|------------|---------------------|
| London     | Tunis      | 2 * 10 = 20         |
| Algiers    | Amsterdam  | 3 * 9 = 27          |
| Caracas    | Atlanta    | 5 * 12 = 60         |
| Milan      | Pittsburgh | 7 * 30 = 280        |
| London     | Dakar      | 9 * 18 = 162        |
| New York   | Havana     | 11 * 10 = 110       |
| Paris      | Havana     | 2 * 34 = 68         |
| New York   | Paris      | 4 * 24 = 96         |
| Caracas    | Casablanca | 6 * 27 = 162        |
| Las Palmas | Chicago    | 8 * 27 = 216        |
| Belem      | Paris      | 10 * 29 = 290       |
| Madrid     | Montreal   | 12 * 22 = 264       |

Air Traffic Control to All "Please note that I do NOT even out the run distribution like Haz does with Railway Rivals."

~~~~~

ARMSTRONG

Lift Off! (GM Dave Rowley)

1958

God's gonna buy you a satellite

Opportunities Missed All Round

Ian Harris United States 98 MB's
Purchase Astronaut Training Programme (inc Gen. Sassone)
Purchase 2nd Astronaut (Col. Kishida)
Purchase 2 Single Stage Rockets
Purchase Liquid Fuel Strap-On Programme
R&D for Single Person Capsule = +35%
R&D for Single Stage Rocket = +35%

Current R&D = 62%
Current R&D = 71%

A GAME YOU CAN ALL PLAY AT HOME

There was an episode of YES PRIME MINISTER once where Jim Hacker told his current plan to Sir Humphrey, who told him with a sorrowful face that it showed that he had an independant mind. An independant mind? "Yes, Prime Minister. It's one of those irregular verbs; I have an independant mind, you are eccentric, he is round the twist".

Being a grammatician at heart irregular verbs appeal to me, and remembering what fun we all had slandering half the hobby with Clerihews last year, I invite you all to send in similar irregular verbs. Below is a bunch Joy, Dave and Myself came up with in a giggle-filled half hour:

I wear comfortable clothes; you are out of fashion; she is scruffy

I like to be in charge; you are power-crazed; he runs ManorCon

I do advanced driving; you are on the wrong side of the road; he is a traffic hazard

I am on a clear road; you are going too fast; she is a raving maniac.

I cherish novices; you are overprotective; he runs Springboard

I dabble in computer games; you play Wing Commander; he is a social cripple

I have been busy; your zine is late; he edits Froggy.

I use good English; you are petty; he is pedantic

I have an open relationship; you are a bit of a lad; she is a slut

I am a libertarian; you are a fascist; he has just invaded Abysinnia

I am artistic; you are somewhat limpwristed; he is a raving poove

I am attracted to men; you are queer for fellows; he hunts down cock like it had gold plate

I run many games; your zine is huge; he has decimated rain forests

My zine is the backbone of the hobby; you could smarten up your act; he has come bottom of the Zine Poll

[[I should make it clear that all these have no relationship to any person living, dead or at any point in between, no matter what people may tell you about who inspired the last four.

Let's be having your entries!]]

QUID IN ALVEOS ACCIDET
hobby news with yr ed.

What's been going on while my back's been turned with this sodding printer? Why, quite a lot. So why don't I get right down to it and tell you all the gen.

The CGS/Springboard debate recently reported in these pages appears to be coming to a close. There was a meeting at Midcon where the subject was chewed over and spat out; some people seem dissatisfied with the conclusions reached (notably dear old Iain) but, in effect, Danny and Kath will keep on with Springboard and the Dippy box flyers, Stephen Agar will continue to advertise outside the hobby proper (in wargaming magazines etc.) and will receive funding for this process from the Hobby Development Fund (i.e. Walkerdine's slush fund). Spring Offensive being as full of games as U-Bend if not fuller, he is going to farm out novices thus acquired to other zines who want them, using them to fill gaps in ordinary lists. This appears to me to be Nick Kinzett's Central Gamestart System in all but name, but if Agar doesn't want to call it that I suppose it's up to him. I am pleased to relate that Tom Tweedy does not figure anywhere in the setup. Anyone running a zine who wishes to get some new Dip players and who hasn't already had a copy of his update may find Stephen Agar at 79 Florence Road, Brighton BN1 6DL. SpOff is available at 90p an issue from the same address, though due to overcrowding waiting lists are currently few. It's a damn good read, however, and has found its way to the heart of the hobby in surprisingly few issues. One gripe; in the current issue Stephen says words to the effect of "If you get weird stickers on your U-Bend envelope blame Joy Hibbert, who does the mailing." Listen, Agar, you dweeb, if I didn't want Joy to put stickers on I'd tell her not to; I am quite happy to stand by any action of Joy's. This sort of talk only encourages the likes of Mark Nelson to claim that Joy really edits all of U-Bend and uses my name to hide behind.

All this appears to have lifted a weight from Danny Collman's mind, for the current Springboard is quite the jolliest I can remember receiving, despite Danny being taken ill and burgled in the space between deadlines! He even lets rip with some personal memoirs, and admits to being a Frank Ifield fan. All together now: "Oh, the way-ha-ward wiiiind. Ah-his a restless wind..." Danny has discovered a rather old ink duplicator which he is offering for £50; anyone thinking of starting a zine but deterred by the cost of copying might do well to enquire (14 Westover Rd, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham B20 1JG). Under the circumstances I shall forgive him for describing U-Bend 15 (you know, the enormous one which I did entirely on a manual typewriter and broke my back running off on my Gestetner) as "word-processed photocopy". It (Springboard, that is) also runs a very odd letter from Toby Harris, who doesn't seem to realise what zine trading is about at all (i.e. making other editors aware of your presence so it is instantly evident if anything goes wrong, and being aware of other zines to provide a good hobby news and review service to your readers).

The current Mission from God is out, and while the frequent criticism of its reviews for being too nicey-nicey is still valid, I will overlook a lot for the new feature in which Madi and Andy provide a potted review for every game currently run or listed in a zine reviewed, with a key to who's offering it. Now, this is the sort of new direction we wanted when the new editors came in. All it requires is a little more knowledge of the actual games and this section of MfG would be worth its weight in gold. Get a copy for £1 from Madelaine and Andy Key (144 Perrinsfield, Venymore, Lechlade, Glos GL7 3SE) by all means, but take any review with a pinch of salt. Especially mine, since it isn't very favourable (justly so, though, I admit).

Madi and Andy, meanwhile, have swanned off to Australia and left Walkerdine to publish Electric Monk for them. What their reactions will be when they get home and see what he made of it (i.e. call it Mad Policy and fill it with stuff about Mad Policy, Walkerdine, Mad Policy, Ulrika Meinhof, model aeroplanes and Mad Policy) I cannot foretell. I jest; Mad Policy 161 (for so it was titled) was a pleasant read, but nothing too earth-moving. Walkerdine drops heavy hints that a third run of the zine is not on the cards.

Pete Sullivan, in the current C'est Magnifique, reveals that there is to be a triple return to the old values; he is returning to a three-weekly frequency, reviving his ink duplicator for publishing, and returning the post of Orphan Games Rehouser to John Marsden, who held the post ten years or so ago and performed the remarkable feat of sorting out the fold of Dolchstoss at a time when it had twenty-five Dip games or so and almost 400 circulation. Should a zine go missing and enquiries prove fruitless, John is now your man; contact him at 33 Weston Road, Strood, Kent ME2 3HA. I might add that his zine Ode has been running for nearly fifteen years, in all which time no OGRE has ever had to even think about it (save perhaps as a reliable site to rehouse orphans). Sample copies of CMag are no doubt available from Pete S at 55 Brunton Street, Darlington, County Durham DL1 4EN.

A new zine to me is Odarodde, from Bill Turner of Fellside, Nicholson Lane, Penrith, Cumbria. With my usual efficiency I have mislaid the zine, so details of price, postcode, etc. are hazy; however, I do recall it as being an interesting read with a couple of games going, including American Football, and lists for more. It suffers from Moss's Disease (lack of staple) so its folded A5 pages may be scattered throughout the house for all I know; but all in all, an enjoyable if offbeat read, and I shall look forward to seeing it develop. Christ, this review sounds patronising.

This month's other new trade is Martin Draper's Breakdown, now up to number 15 and available from this Viennamob stalwart at 124 Lord Street, Hoddesdon, Herts EN11 8NP at 60p/issue. (Sopwith statisticians please note that he appears to have about a dozen unrated games). Lists are currently open for regular Dip, Breaking Away, Sopwith, Paralytic Pedallos, Adel Verpffffft, Grand National (Mick

Haytack's brainwave which attracted 40 players to a waiting list in one issue of Bloodstock). Designer Dice (David Tittle's game first published in his subzine in Smodnoc) and Metric Mile; in other words, it fits very neatly alongside Hopscotch by being in the multi-games field whilst not ignoring dear old Diplomacy altogether. Chat fans are warned that there isn't any to speak of, but games fans will be in their element, as the zine is 3-weekly. And I haven't even mentioned the postal Diddly-Dum.

Perelandra is my only US trade so far (though I'm open to more if they're all as enjoyable), and it comes from Pete Gaughan of 1521 South Novato Blvd #46, Novato, CA 949474147. Since its politics are leftish by British standards I shudder to think what sort of communist the Damn Yankees think he is; but no matter, the zine is fun, it is well laid out and looks nice, it has an interesting letter column, it displays an excellent knowledge of American politix, and it's even copied greenly on recycled paper. It appears monthly and costs US\$ 1.50 for overseas air mail; intending subbers will find it cheaper to send sterling to Iain Bowen (5 Wigginton Terrace, York YO3 7JD) who is our end of the International Subscription Exchange. It may be a little too fast for a Briton to play games with ease, but offers Snowball Fighting, Diplomacy, and Railway Rivals -- just like one of our zines -- if you want to try. It is currently on issue 104. crumbs.

Mark Nelson's The Mark Nelson Experience, described on the masthead as a zine which "contains Hobby discussion", has in recent issues been more likely to contain sportsgamer Mark Boyle, a strange bedfellow indeed for Crazy Markie whose hatred of "postal mathematics" is well known. It is obvious that their mutual love of feuding transcends such barriers. Marcus Pustulus is an interesting case; he can and does write in a thoroughly entertaining manner about his everyday life, or indeed anything outside the actual hobby, but once the latter subject is raised he starts foaming at the mouth and biting people, and spouting the kind of tosh that led Walkerdine to throw him out of Mad Policy and even Nick Kinzett to become mildly acid. Mark N should know better than to print such rubbish, but then again, since the zine is invitational-only and is most likely to go only to those who will automatically ignore anything Pustulus says about the hobby, not too much harm should have been done. The current eleventh issue, meantime, is entirely filled with a Hobby purity test; or, dear Markie being dear Markie, a fannish purity test, which is not necessarily the same thing.

Paul Dunning's Bandersnatch has got to nine issues and has yet to feature any gamestarts, unless you count Pass the Pigs and Postal Consequences. Any philanthropist wishing to remedy this and prepared to play regular or Intimate Ia dip may write to Paul at 43 St John's Road, Watford

WDI IQB

(in-joke), enclose fifty pennies of the realm, and give the

idle bugger something to do other than rip jokes off from **Viz** and print silly letters from the likes of me and Roberto Della Sala (not that we are in any way alike, I hasten to add). In return, you will get what I feel sure is the only postal Diplomacy zine ever to carry a regular feature on stick theatre.

Guy Thomas's **Realpolitik** 81 is primarily notable for carrying reports of three of the editor's holidays squashed into one page. Oh, and the cover, of course, but then it always is. Either Guy does those covers himself, in which case he is far too damn modest and should give himself credit, or someone else does, in which case Guy deserves shooting for running them uncredited.

Take That You Fiend editor John Harrington has had a second child (or rather his wife Lin has, John not being built for that sort of thing; apparently he is not only male, but as broad as he is long). I tender my congratulations to them both, though I feel constrained to point out that, popular, dashing and debonair though I am, there was no need to name the lad after me -- I wouldn't have minded, honest. (Besides...Harry Harrington? Hmm). I tender further congratulations to the slightly different pair of John H and co-ed Kevin Warne, the thoughtless man's Bain and Creese, who have notched up the 10th anniversary of TTYF. (When you've stopped drooling, Kev, do remember to give this issue to Harrington, I'm sure he deserves it). One maxim which Warne prints for intending editors deserves to be set down in stone alongside Piggott's laws, viz., "Always remember you can say almost anything to a subscriber -- and then some -- as long as you mention their name." TTYF costs 50p and is sound as a quid, offering Breaking Away, Dreadnought, Choice, and Mogul (an intricate campaign of postal film making which is great fun to read but, I suspect, fiddly to play and purgatory to GM). (Kevin Warne, 8 Charles Street, Grays, Essex RM17 6DX).

And never let it be said that someone who gives me a good review goes unreciprocated. Lord knows I get few enough of the damned things.

In **Arfle Barfle Gloop** 47 John Colledge's subzine wishes us a MERRY CHRISTMAS in extremely large festive letters. And a Happy New Year to you too, John.

Slightly outside the normal run of the hobby, a little bird (oh all right, Ray Pullar, who I ran into at NovaCon) tells me that Pete Stover (whose cover design **U Bend** has used on and off since issue 2) has started a new semi-pro RPG magazine, which would doubtless account for his recent absence from his usual stamping ground in **Nertz**. I have heard nothing of this from any other source, but Pete's address is 1F3, 4 Brunswick Road, Edinburgh, EH7 5NG. I'd like to know more of this myself.

No more space! Remainder of letters held over due to lack of time, photopage likewise (despite what it says elsewhere).

For stop press and deadline see inside cover. It only remains for me to say: Have a happy 1993 and if you can't be good, be careful (and buy a gross of condoms).