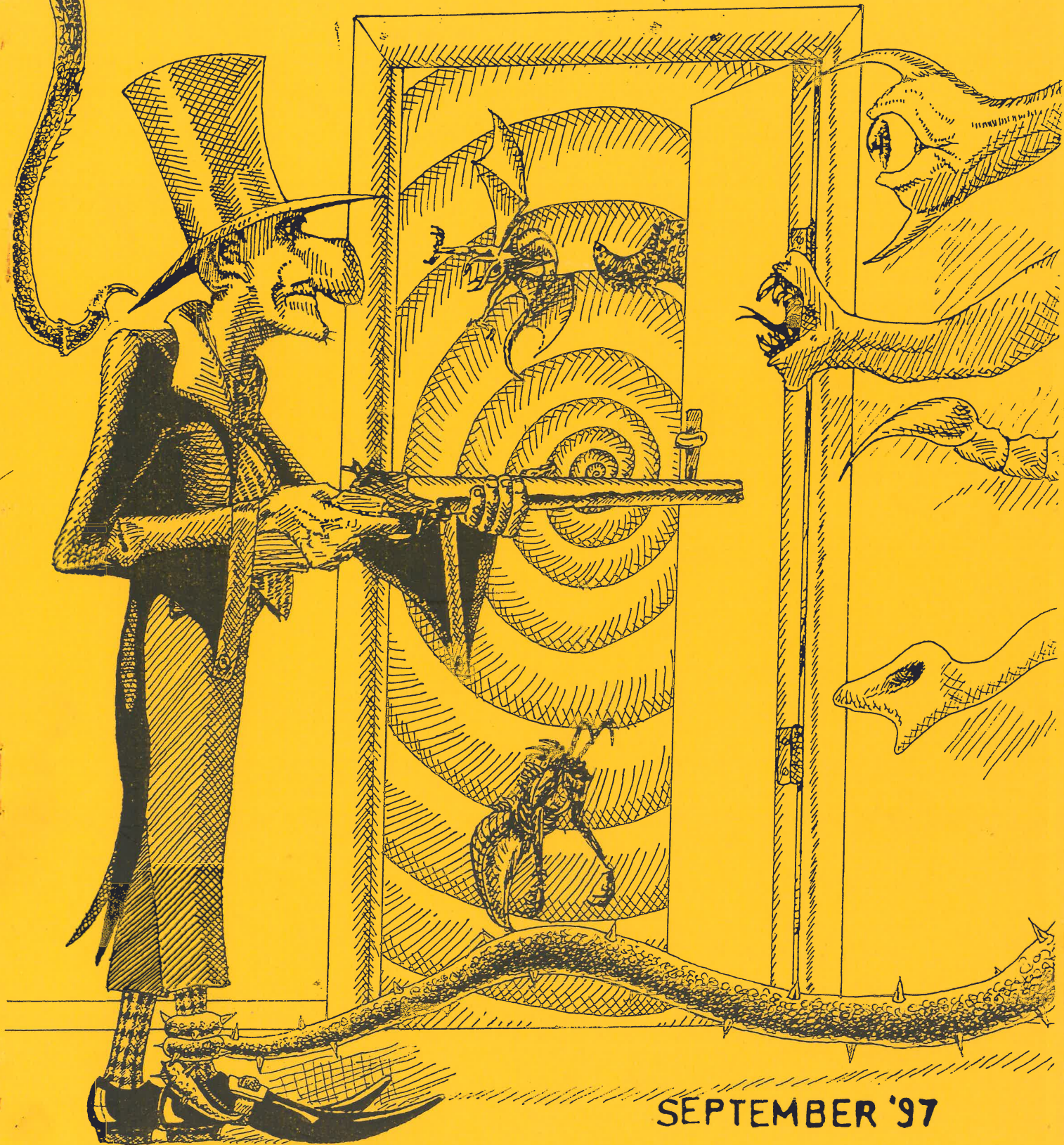


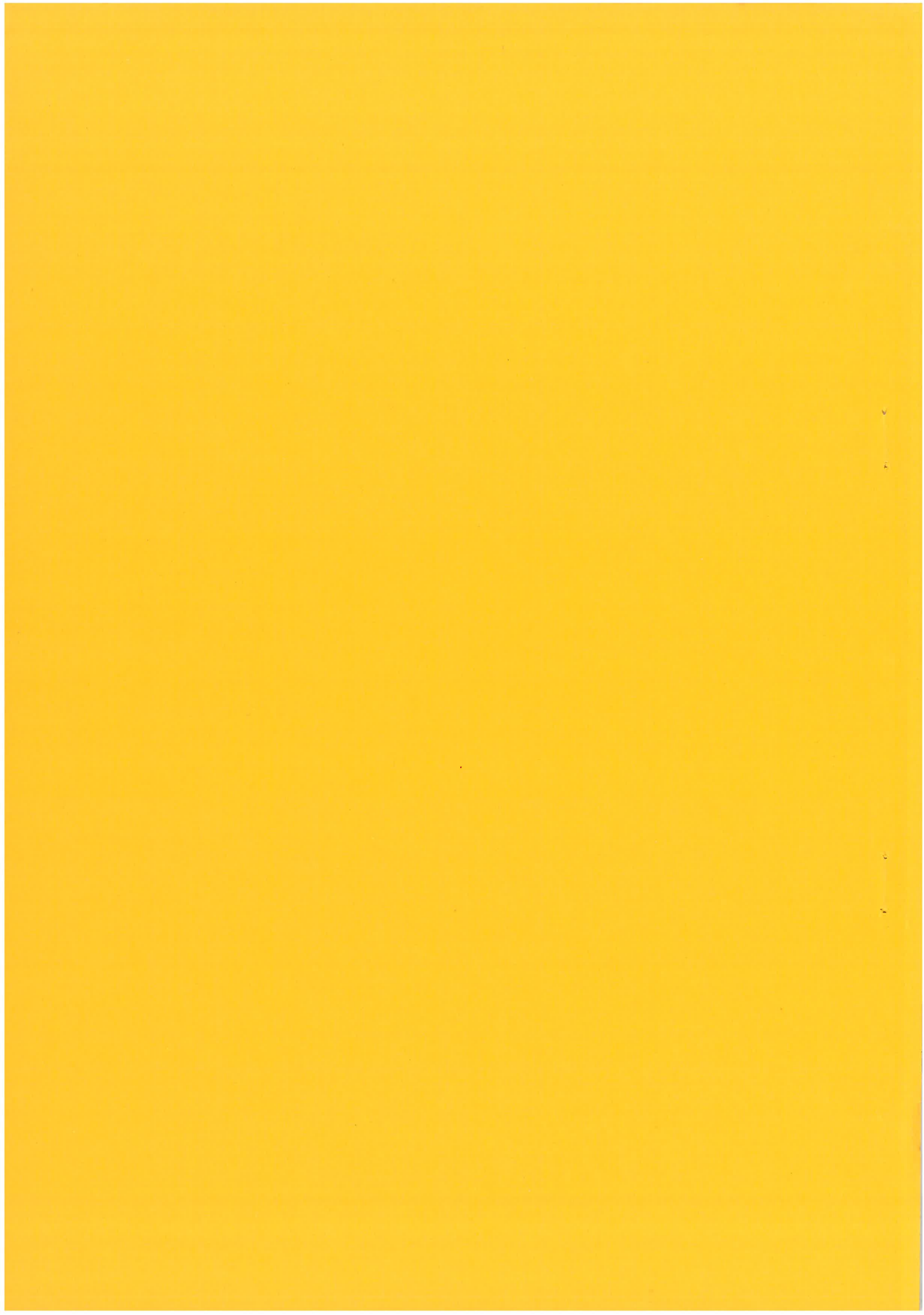
# Queensland Wargamer



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# Editorial

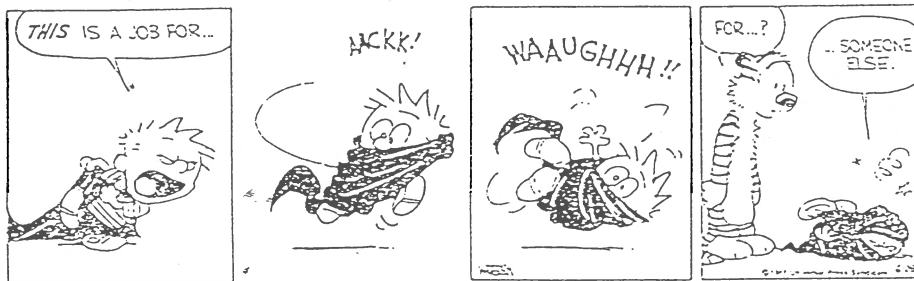
Gary Johnson

All things come to an end eventually, and this is my final issue of the *Queensland Wargamer*. After three years and twelve issues, I feel it's time to stop and let someone else have a go. As Editor, I've had a lot of fun (and a lot of aggravation too), I've learnt a great deal about publishing and editing, and I've had a captive audience for my ideas on various aspects of gaming. For these reasons (and more), being Editor has been a great experience. I'm sure whoever succeeds me as Editor will get just as much out of the position as I have.

The next *Wargamer* will be the fiftieth issue of our club magazine, and the deadline for this anniversary issue will be sometime in the middle of January next year. I imagine that the Editor will want to publish issue 50 next February, on Orientation Day 1998, because next year is the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Queensland University Games Society. I don't know about you, but it sounds to me like 1998 is going to be a year for Q.U.G.S. to celebrate! (To the next Executive: Hint! Hint!)

In any case, it's time for me to say goodbye. Thank you all for your support of the Society and the *Wargamer* over the last three years. In particular, many thanks to everyone who contributed towards our club publication. The *Wargamer* is only as good as the members of Q.U.G.S. make it; I'd like to think it's been pretty damn good during the last three years. Once again, thank you; and farewell.

## Calvin & Hobbes



# I Have a Story to Tell ...

## announcing the Everway Demo Program in Australia

Travis Hall

Hands up, who's heard of Everway? You know, the RPG with the really pretty cards? Uh-huh, that's what I figured: just the attentive ones who read my article in the last Wargamer. Who's actually played it? Yup, not many.

Well, Rubicon Games (who bought the game from the Wizards of the Coast a while back) is trying to remedy this situation. They have instituted a Demo Program to give more people the chance to try out the game. Unfortunately, it isn't terribly well known over here. In fact, until a few days ago, Rubicon Games didn't even know we had Everway here in Australia. Then I contacted them, and now they know we exist.

Now, Rubicon Games have made me Australia's first official Teller—that is, an Everway demonstrator. What that means is, Rubicon Games will send me appropriate support material, and I will run demonstration games for anyone who wants to try it out.

If you aren't sure what Everway is, check out my article on cards in role-playing in the last Queensland Wargamer. Briefly, though, Everway is a fantasy role-playing game in which cards showing fantasy art are used to help inspire and depict the Heroes (PCs) and actions are resolved by turning a card from a Tarot-like deck.

Everway really is a very different sort of game to your standard FRP. If you think it sounds interesting, let me know and I'll start getting groups together for demonstration games. I can be contacted by phone on (07) 3397 5118, by e-mail at [Wraith@mailbox.uq.edu.au](mailto:Wraith@mailbox.uq.edu.au), and I am at most QUGS meetings. It's a fun game system. Come and give it a try.

# QUGS 1997 Diplomacy Tournament

## The Presence of Don

Paul Appleyard

### My Experiences

Well, I tried to take notes so I could write this stuff out properly—four games in two days can tend to make the details hazy on the first game—but here I go.

I arrived bright 'n' early—no mean feat for me—at the QUGS meeting place, and knew I was where I should be because of all the attractive and well dressed guys lounging around looking cool. *koff* Whups, notes got mixed up. anyway, the usual assortment of geekish types cast suspicious eyes at me entrance (not THAT entrance but ... damn, been a Donist for too long ...) anyway, with me there were a total of NINE people ready to play, plus one guy (Travis) who could only play the first game and thus publicly declared that he was fistable.

We managed to struggle through with TWO GM players per game, Gary and Dave much in demand. Suprisingly, the GM players didn't do too badly; possibly because they got to write their orders down, whereas normally the GM player comes over to the board at order reading time and moves his pieces first.

### To the first rivetting game

I drew Italy; GMs were Germany and England if you can believe that, and Owen Gintis, a wide-eyed boy on exchange from Massachusetts, as France. The (eventual) 1st and 2nd place players, Daniel Edwards and Darryl Greensill, were Russia and Turkey respectively. Austria was Travis "Fist Me Now" Hall.

Daniel and Darryl had played together before and right off they became a team. Austria quaked in fear and turned to me as his only hope; I should have taken him to my bosom and protected him from what would have (in a full game) been a hefty steamroller, or stabbed him outright; instead, I fostered his trust and then stabbed, which led to him favouring R/T in the final tussle.

So while we feasted on Austria, Russia saying non-steamroller phrases (he was VERY good at it too) Germany (played by GM David Astley, no relation to the fab singer of 80's fame) wanted a bit of Austria and Russia teased him with offers of Vienna.

This was not to be the last game that Austria has one unit left causing me mucho pain; as Russia thindered accross, Germany and I worked to slow his progress, while I bottled Turkey up in the Aegean. If I played as well all the time as I did defending against the R/T roller I'd be a Grand-Master; at one stage I was in possession of both Trieste AND Vienna, but Austria's antagonism stopped me from hanging on to them.

ALL games generally ended up with a Fall '05 stab and grab. Daniel kept the long, tourney view and left Turkey alone. For that matter, none of my usual charismatic persuasion could shift R or T from the alliance.

Result was France on 10 (he mercilessly savaged England and stabbed Germany for a couple on '05) Russia on 9, Turkey on 7 and Germany and Italy (me) on 4; England and Austria were eliminated.

## Game 2: The Afternoon

A satisfying burger and a lecture to Owen Gintis on the inferiority of the American Burger were followed by a 'low board' game; the lowest scorers from the previous round were shovelled onto a board with me.

Russia, Turkey AND England were all GM'ed so it made for interesting stuff from the word go.

Despite a co-ordinated resolution To Get Russia, we monumentally stuffed up in Fall 01—to wit, I forgot to order. Fortunately, everyone let me move my pieces, but I chose to be honest and **didn't** bounce Russia out of Sweden. France went straight after England, who had set up for Scandinavia; thus he was doomed to die, but I tried to keep him as strong as possible to limit France's growth. Thus, Russia was saved from a Northern aggressor.

In the South, the I/A alliance had a setback when Christian Kelly (Austria) thrust the Latex straight up Simon Gallimore (Italy), taking Venice AND Rome in one move. France would not arrive to chew on Italy's last bits until late in the game, but arrive and chew he did. Italy ended up surviving on 2.

My persistent attempts to get in and finish off Russia were stalled by Austria leaking my moves and then stabbing me in Munich; which he claimed he was just borrowing, and returned to me ... and which I FORGOT to hold in the Fall ...

Had the game gone longer Austria and I would have hit France; as it was it was Christian (Austria) on 9, France (Dale Edwards, eventual Wooden Spooner) on 10, myself on 8 and everyone else pretty crappy.

Suddenly, night fell on this great big town. I went home and had a beer. Who knows what happened to the rest of this wild bunch of slap-happy lads. I don't think I WANT to know ...

Arrived on Sunday just in time (9:15 ... these guys were STRICT about starting times, lemme tell ya).

## Game Three

I was Russia and Daniel "Snake" Edwards was Germany; high up on the rankings, he claimed to just want to 'survive'. Daniel is one of those players who muses aloud, in a tone which suggested he is speaking to himself, all the disadvantages your ally has and all the ways you could potentially stab. He was good.

Italy (Daryl Greensill, 2nd place guy) and Austria (Dale Edwards, wooden spoon) both tried frantically to get me to stab Turkey; and with England and Germany hammering me in Scandinavia, I soon

caved in and grabbed a couple of centres, then was promptly stabbed by Austria ... well, violated is more the word; he moved to Galicia. I sighed and retracted my units, and Italy whopped Austria from behind to remove that threat. Foolishly, however, I dismissed Austria as 'nearly dead' and he got Warsaw off me, and got irretrievably behind my lines; the hounds leaped on the wounded Russia and I was eventually eliminated in the Fall of 06, with Christian taking my final unit in Ankara. This from being at 8 at one stage ...

LET THIS BE A LESSON to all Russian players; keep yourself INTACT against a possible Austria penetration; geography dictates that you practically have to recall all forces and suspend all other projects to get him out.

England (GM—David Astley) Germany (Daniel) and Italy (Daryl Greensill) all ended on 10, with Turkey on 4 as the only other survivor.

I thought a lunch of pie, chips, gravy and a glass or two of beer would restore my edge; they helped.

## The Final Game

I drew England, Owen Gintis Germany, and France was Glen Dawson, a quiet guy with a slightly fanatical look in his eye.

We immediately made a blood pact EFG, and things were looking good. David Astley (Russia, in a GM position) and Dale 'loser' Edwards (Turkey) had a loose, non-steamer alliance; while Austria, though initially harrassed by Italy, was soon left alone when France launched a blitz against Italy.

France headed south; I got Holland and Norway first up, and the rest of the game was a slow grind against Russia with Germany and I; then in Fall '04, Germany launched a massive stab against Austria—at EXACTLY the same time that I convoyed an army to his Belgium and took Sweden off him, while his support helped me get Moscow.

This gave me 10 centres; however, France, stunned by my lack of honesty and 'dishonourable' behaviour, built aggressively against me. Germany managed to take a VERY poorly defended Moscow and Sevastopol, with Turkey grabbing another centre and Italy dying completely.

In the end, It was France on 10, me on 9 and Germany on 7, with Turkey on 6 and Austria scraping through with 3.

Overall, I finished 6th on the ladder out of 9; due basically to my total honesty and reluctance to betray. What can I say, that's the kinda guy I am ... I'm hoping to make it to the next tournament; just remember, you can trust me implicitly.

I'm working on my first sacrifice to Don to ensure my success.

Gary and David, who and both been to the highly successful SunCon a couple of years earlier, discussed with me the poor turnout; basically, it was a result of a low active player-base in Brisbane, and a zero turnout from Southern states. Next year, we have planned a more aggressive marketing project at the 'grass roots' Brisbane player level, actively encouraging everyone to seek out dormant players.

Thus ends the tale.



# Minor Powers Uber Alles: Some Changes to Diplomacy

Gary Johnson

There are few boardgames as well-known and venerable as Diplomacy. It's a good, clean game system, easy to play once you grasp a few key concepts, and pleasantly predictable when it comes to resolving combat. Much like chess, really, which I suppose is why some people complain that the openings are too predictable and that sensible game play is boring. I'm not one of them. I thrive on opening theory, I enjoy the strategic challenges, and I don't mind the lying, deceiving, and conniving aspects of playing the game.

Why, then, you might ask, do I want to change it? We all like to tinker with our favourite games, and I'm no exception when it comes to Diplomacy. Certainly I don't think there's anything wrong with the game mechanics, even if they lead to the occasional paradox or two. Neither do I want to play around too much with the freedom of players to do whatever they want. I've looked at a number of different ways to force players to keep their promises, and they're cumbersome, distracting, and sometimes unintuitive. In short, such changes just doesn't work well enough to justify introducing them. What I do like to do is to play around with the distribution of starting forces on the map and see how that changes the course of the game. Here come ten suggestions; pick and choose from them as you wish.

## 1. **Switzerland is passable.**

I've mentioned this and the next two suggestions in a previous Wargamer (issue 41, September 1995). I'm sure it's occurred to nearly every Diplomacy player at some point that France would be screwed if you could have a unit in Switzerland. 'Nuff said.

## 2. **Switzerland is a supply centre.**

Nearly every other minor power gets to be one, so why not the Swiss?

## 3. **Switzerland contains an army at the start of the game.**

As well as helping to shore up France's suddenly vulnerable eastern border, this presents the Great Powers with an excellent reason to leave this traditionally neutral state alone. Without only five adjacent regions, two of them French, the Swiss may well sit peacefully and watch their warlike neighbours butcher each other in the War To End All Wars.

## 4. **Every neutral with a supply centre contains an army at the start of the game.**

This will slow everybody down, and significantly alters what might happen at the start of the game. Players may, as usual, eat up the Minor Powers before turning on each other; or they may find themselves waging full-scale wars before the little fish have been gobbled up.

**5. Iceland and Ireland are named provinces that units can occupy.**

It may not a lot, but you never can tell for sure when the war between Russia and France is going to bog down around the North Atlantic Ocean and the Norwegian Sea. Possibly a suggested change that's off with making the Caspian Sea a valid sea area and giving both Sevastopol and Armenia two coasts ...

**6. Iceland and Ireland are both provinces with a Supply Centre.**

This does favour England, though not very much if suggestion 4 is also in play. They're both behind England's main fronts, both out of the way, and both are adjacent to a mere two areas each. Not as unbalancing as it may seem at first glance.

**7. Ireland is one of England's home Supply Centres.**

An evil thing to do to the French player, though it helps simulate the naval power of the British Empire. I'd recommend coupling this with suggestion 8, and really ruining France's long-term prospects.

**8. The Ruhr is one of Germany's home Supply Centres.**

Germany's on-board fragility in standard Diplomacy does worry me at times. I find it hard to remember a game of Diplomacy where Germany survives a two-front war with France and Russia, and I suspect that's because it just doesn't happen. Giving Germany a fourth starting unit simulates the industrial and military power of the Second Reich, just as giving England a fourth unit simulates the resources and naval supremacy of the Empire. Why the Ruhr? Because it was a centre of industry, and deserves to be a Supply Centre more than the other vacant areas of Germany.

**9. Players must secretly choose their starting units after a brief round of initial diplomacy.**

I'd suggest starting the game with the 1900 Turn, where all the Great Powers have no units in play but control their home Supply Centres. After Diplomacy, players write down their builds for 1900 as per the normal rules. If they forget, well, it'll be a short game for them, won't it?

**10. Use all these suggestions at once.**

Or, as a friend puts it, "Go crazy!". What you end up with is a game where there are 38 Supply Centres, so you have to control 20 to win the game. The "Northern Alliance" of England, Germany and Russia all start out with four units; the decadent Mediterranean countries of the south with a meagre three apiece. Players can choose what units they want to start the game with, but have to take time and devote units to conquer the Minor Powers of Europe (with the exceptions of Albania and North Africa). What you end up with is a somewhat more realistic depiction of the balance of power in Europe circa 1900, and new strategic and tactical problems to overcome. Surely this is a scenario worth trying at least once...

# Height and Weight Revisited

Travis Hall

Recently, looking through old issues of *Dragon*, I came across an article concerning height and weight for characters in role-playing games (specifically AD&D in this case, but it would apply generally to most RPGs). This article related weight to the cube of height, a valid assumption if people are all proportioned the same. An article published in the *Queensland Wargamer* a while back also mentioned this, again stating the cubic relationship. The *Dragon* article went a bit more in-depth, though, looking at modifiers for certain fantastic races (elves being slimmer and lighter for their height, dwarves being stocky and dense, and so on) and giving a table showing average weights for given heights.

However, reading this article got me to wondering how accurate these figures were, so I scratched around a bit looking for some real-life data. Not getting very far, I decided to go to the person I always ask when I need to know something about the human body. I asked my mother.

Now, you might think it a bit strange for an adult of 23 to go to his mother when asking anatomical questions, but my mother is a special case. She happens to be a medical doctor. As a result, she was quite helpful, in her own way. She dug out a reference book from her and my father's medical library (he's a doctor too) and told me which bits to read. The book, if you are interested, is the 1995 MIMS Annual, published by MIMS Australia, and is mostly a listing of relevant prescribing information for various drugs. The information which interested me is on page LXXX.

According to my source, the cubic law that both aforementioned articles cite does not work for human heights and weights. This is because shorter people are stockier in proportion, generally, than those of average height, while taller people are usually thinner. Our cubic law only works if the proportions of people do not change according to their height. Apparently, for normal people, weight varies with the square of the person's height, not the cube.

A good indicator is the Body Mass Index, or BMI. This is calculated with the formula  $BMI = \text{weight}/(\text{height})^2$  where weight is in kilograms and height is in metres. (You could calculate BMI in other units, but you'd have to do some conversions to make comparisons to the recommended norms.)

The majority of men have a BMI between about 19.5 and 24.5, while most women have a BMI between about 18.8 and 23.5. The difference between men and women is largely due to differing body shapes and proportions of tissue types. A person whose BMI is above this range may often be considered overweight (medically speaking, not in the fashion sense), while a person whose BMI is below this range would be underweight. I have tested this formula by asking a few of my male friends for their heights and weights and calculating their

BMI, and despite widely varying sizes, most seemed to fall into the recommended range. (I haven't tried it with women—I'm not stupid enough to ask most of my female friends the same questions.) I happen to have a BMI of almost spot on 18, telling me that I really need to gain some weight (which I already knew).

Questioning my mother further, I have discovered that most medical practitioners consider the BMI to be a very good indicator of appropriate weights for people of a given height. It seems to work for all normal people, no matter how short or tall they might happen to be. However, there are cases in which the BMI doesn't work. Sufferers of true gigantism or dwarfism are generally not proportioned normally, so their BMIs are significantly skewed. Equally, any other person with an unusual body shape, say a sufferer of spinal deformities or an elderly person who has become hunched with age, might not conform to the expected results. Also, those with well-developed musculature, such as athletes, tend to have unusually high BMIs. This is because these people often have more muscle tissue in proportion to their size than most people, and muscle tissue is comparatively dense (which is why athletes often sink in water.) This last factor is especially important when considering players characters in role-playing games, because these individuals are often extremely fit and strong, with muscles on muscles on muscles. Thus, if you are playing a warrior-type, you should consider giving him a very high BMI, perhaps around 26 or so.

Of course, most of the time we already know the character's intended height. That is much easier to estimate than weight. The problem is finding the proper weight for the character. In this case, just choose an appropriate BMI (say 19 to 24, remembering that women tend to be lighter, and higher numbers give more heavy-set and/or fit men, and very fit characters will often exceed this range) and multiply by the character's height (to the nearest 0.01 of a metre) squared. This will give you an approximate weight, and you can modify up or down as you see fit.

There is another problem when applying this to role-playing games. When non-human characters are allowed, often they will not have the same body shape as an average human of the same height. Characters who are short but not stocky (some elves) will have lower BMIs, those who are noted for being particularly stocky (dwarves, for instance) will have higher BMIs, and those who are particularly tall but still as heavily-built as humans (some giants) will have lower BMIs. You might like to use the old cubic rule to convert an average human into a person of human build of the desired height, and use that example to find an estimate of average BMI for the race in question, considering their build relative to humans. Also, some characters might be unusually dense (some dwarves) or light, and there are a number of other special cases. Cyberpunk characters spring to mind: some of those characters have so much hardware built into them, you might be better off comparing them to motorcycles.

It is not uncommon for role-playing games to suggest that height and weight are linearly related, or even independently variable (as the AD&D tables might indicate). A cubic relationship might seem more accurate at first glance, but if you are concerned about finding a realistic estimate for your character's weight, you might find it more useful to consider the Body Mass Index. If it works in real life, it'll probably suit your game too.

# If Dr Seuss wrote for *Star Trek* *The Next Generation*

Anonymous net humour

Picard: Sigma Indri, that's the star,  
So, Data, please, how far? How far?

Data: Our ship can get there very fast  
But still the trip will last and last  
We'll have two days til we arrive  
But can the Indrans there survive?

Picard: LaForge, please give us factor nine.

LaForge: But, sir, the engines are offline!

Picard: Offline! But why? I want to go!  
Please make it so, please make it so!

Riker: But sir, if Geordi says we can't,  
We can't, we mustn't, and we shan't,  
The danger here is far too great!

Picard: But surely we must not be late!

Troi: I'm sensing anger and great ire.

Computer: Alert! Alert! The ship's on fire!

Picard: The ship's on fire? How could this be?  
Who lit the fire?

Riker: Not me.

Worf: Not me.

Picard: Computer, how long til we die?

Computer: Eight minutes left to say goodbye.

Data: May I suggest a course to take?  
We could, I think, quite safely make  
Extinguishers from tractor beams  
And stop the fire, or so it seems ...

Geordi: Hurray! Hurray! You've saved the day!  
Again I say, Hurray! Hurray!

Picard: Mr. Data, thank you much.  
You've saved our lives, our ship, and such.

Troi: We still must save the Indran planet—

Data: Which (by the way) is made of granite ...

Picard: Enough, you android. Please desist.  
We understand—we get your gist.  
But can we get our ship to go?  
Please, make it so, PLEASE make it so.

Geordi: There's sabotage among the wires  
And that's what started all the fires.

Riker: We have a saboteur? Oh, no!  
We need to go! We need to go!

Troi: We must seek out the traitor spy  
And lock him up and ask him why?

Worf: Ask him why? How sentimental.  
I say give him problems dental.

Troi: Are any Romulan ships around?  
Have scanners said that they've been found?  
Or is it Borg or some new threat  
We haven't even heard of yet?  
I sense no malice in this crew.  
Now what are we supposed to do?

Crusher: Captain, please, the Indrans need us.  
They cry out, "Help us, clothe us, feed us!"  
I can't just sit and let them die!  
A doctor **MUST** attempt—**MUST** try!

Picard: Doctor, please, we'll get there soon.

Crusher: They may be dead by Tuesday noon.

**Commercial break, commercial break  
how long will these dumb ads take?**

Worf: The saboteur is in the brig.  
He's very strong and very big.  
I had my phaser set on stun—  
A zzip! A zzap! Another one!  
He would not budge, he would not fall,  
He would not stun, no, not at all!  
He changed into a stranger form  
All soft and purple, round and warm.

Picard: Did you see this, Mr. Worf?  
Did you see this creature morph?

Worf: I did and then I beat him fairly.  
Hit him on the jaw—quite squarely.

Riker: My commendations, Klingon friend!  
Our troubles now are at an end!

Crusher: Now let's get our ship to fly  
And orbit yonder Indran sky!

Picard: LaForge, please tell me we can go ...?

Geordi: Yes, sir, we can.

Picard: Then make it so!

The End

# The Real "Man From QUGS"

Travis Hall

In case anyone is wondering about the title of this article, "the Man From QUGS" was the main character in a series of stories which appeared in the Queensland Wargamer a number of years back. This infamous gamer risked life and limb to complete various missions which all appear to have taken place at large gatherings of other gamers—that is, at a convention.

Recently, Briscon 1997, once "Queensland's Premier Gaming Event", was held on our very own campus, just above (and at times in) the rooms we use for our monthly club meetings. Having been one of the people responsible for running the convention this year, I am in a good position to make the observation that this year's Briscon was a dismal failure.

Why a failure? I believe a number of gamers would tell you that they had a lot of fun at Briscon. However, convention attendance was way down—a little more than half that of 1996. There were few traders, role-playing games were often badly organised and lacked prepared GMs, and several events were cancelled due to a lack of players. The convention was not well catered (the closest you could get to a meal was a nuked pie) and signage and transport information was inadequate. I'm sure many other problems will be brought to my attention.

Being a member of the Management Committee for Briscon 1997, I must admit my large portion of the responsibility for these problems. You see, most problems were caused by the convention being organised so late, and those that weren't caused by lateness, by a lack of work done by those running the convention. Really, the Management Committee should have had events and a venue organised and entry forms out by January. As well as getting the entries in, this would have given us much more time to organise catering, GMs, traders, and the myriad of other things that have to be done for a convention.

However, this is difficult to do when the five-person Management Committee consists of only three volunteers, especially when one of them is completely new to the job and one (myself) has previously performed the function of a mere go-fer, largely uninvolved in decision-making because of a lack of experience and knowledge. Add to this the legal requirement of five members on this Committee, and needing a quorum of four club reps to even hold a meeting (when only those three are likely to turn up), and operation becomes problematic. Also, each of those three has a life outside of running the convention, of course, and cannot afford to devote too much time to Briscon.

Why were there only three organisers? Well, because the year before, there were only five, and they were in precisely the same situation. Those five got nothing out of running the convention. Organisers don't get to play or otherwise participate in convention events, because they are too busy working. It is also very difficult for them to organise events or run games. They work up to fourteen hours each day of the long weekend, and for what? Maybe, if they do a good enough job, they'll be asked to do it again the next year. Which is what happened. And several members of the previous Management Committee said, stuff it, let someone else do the work. However, there wasn't anyone else, because no-one else wanted to do the work. Thus, we had three organisers, with little idea what they are doing and too few in numbers to operate properly.

Eventually, John White stepped in and was accepted as the new President of the Briscon Association, and a fifth person, John Collins, plucked up the courage to fill the fifth position. John brought a brand of enthusiasm and dynamic energy to the Committee that really pissed us off at times, but it got the job done as best it could be done in the limited amount of time then available. That's how we managed to have a convention, such as it was, but in the wake of that convention we are in an even harder position as regards the future of Briscon. Low convention numbers means a lack of money, so there is little capital to provide for Briscon 1998, and the overworked organised have had enough of doing so much for so little thanks and no recompense.

It's a pretty bleak way of looking at the Brisbane convention scene, isn't it? Well, yes, and I know I have a tendency to dwell on the negative. So let's look at some of the good things which have been happening.

Firstly, several new gaming clubs fronted up at the recent Briscon AGM. We now have six clubs willing to put a bit of effort into running the convention, which will make it much easier. Also, we have managed to fill all five Management Committee positions, with three of those positions being held by people from the previous Committee (albeit shuffled around). As a result, we now know (we hope!) what we are doing. Furthermore, we've managed to patch up some of the breaches in gamer relations encountered during the year, and plans to raise the necessary funds to run Briscon 1998 have been put in place. We've even begun looking into getting a venue (with luck, U.Q. again) and taking game submissions. Dreamlink members have indicated that they wish to run eight role-playing events!

Is that enough? Will this good news get us through Briscon 1998? I doubt it. I don't think it will be enough on its own. There's a lot of work to be done to organise a convention, and even with a complete committee, there are too few people to do it. Let's face it, the Management Committee is designed to do merely that—manage. We must do a lot more work than five people can carry out.

So who is supposed to run the convention and do all this work? Maybe if the Man From QUGS was still around, he would volunteer. He was a stalwart fellow, always ready to take on a difficult and dangerous assignment for the good of gamers everywhere. I'm sure that he would tell you that it isn't hard to lend a hand when the convention comes around, or better yet, well before convention time. Unfortunately, the Man From QUGS appears to have gone MIA, sometime in the early 1990s, along with the other courageous agents from his organisation. Other than myself, no QUGS member have submitted an event since Briscon 1995. QUGS members have been noticeably absent from Briscon meetings, and even at the convention itself, very few QUGS members were in evidence. This when the convention is on our home turf!

I don't know how interested the average QUGS member is in our hobby these days. I know that in times past, QUGS was one of Brisbane's most active and respected gaming clubs. Why can't we do that again today? I know there are at least a dozen role-playing GMs in the club, a number of whom have experience at running tournament scenarios. Even if you haven't done it before, every event organiser has started without experience. If you feel at all confident about your abilities, why not submit a module? Trust me, worse modules have been run than anything a QUGS member is likely to put forward! If you don't feel you can write a module, why not track down someone who is? Nothing makes things easier on event



and convention organisers than having an adequate number of GMs prepared well in advance. Wargaming, boardgaming or cardgaming referees are just as welcome, and often require less preparation (but more endurance).

Perhaps the off-table work is more your style. Be everyone's friend: run the barbeque! Or help run the second-hand stall (and snaffle the real bargains before they even hit the table). The registration table is the place for those who always know what is going on, and those who want to save their brains for the games can always be go-fers: you only need to be capable of following orders for that job. We are even considering a small fee reduction for those who become official volunteers, and let's face it, it's a rare convention-goer who manages to game for every session.

Possibly even more important is the work that has to be done before the convention begins. It doesn't take much time to run one or two errands for the committee. Suppose each of the clubs finds five volunteers, and each volunteer works for one hour in the lead up to Briscon. With six affiliated clubs, that makes six hours less work to be done by each and every person on the Management Committee. If each club finds ten volunteers, who each give us two hours of work, that's twenty-four hours—a full day—that each Committee member doesn't have to put in. That work is over the course of a year, and we aren't going to ask anybody to do anything that will greatly inconvenience them. Surely one hour isn't too much to ask to get the best convention Queensland has ever seen?

How about other events? This year, the Association is hoping to run a number of minor events in addition to Briscon itself. We hope to raise the capital we need to pay for the convention itself through these events, and everyone will get a chance for some extra fun throughout the year. Maybe you have an idea for a tournament, and just need someone to give you that extra bit of help to run it. Talk to us, and we can help with referees and GMs, venue hire, publicity, and the sheer number of warm bodies needed to make any tournament run, which you do your bit to help raise funds for Briscon 1998.

If you aren't prepared to do a little work, at least attend the convention. This year, the rate to attend all three days of the convention was only \$30, making it one of Australia's cheapest conventions. If that's too much, pay \$15 for one day, or \$5 and fill an empty seat in a role-playing module. Conventions are a great opportunity to play your favourite games, meet other gamers, buy cheap games, or just socialise.

Each affiliated club is supposed to put forward two people as representatives for the club. I have been a QUGS representative for three of the last four years. Unfortunately, the work I have put into the convention is hardly representative of QUGS members as a whole. I hope everyone who reads this can help to change that. No, that's wrong. I know you can change that. I just hope you will.

At the recent Briscon AGM, I was elected President of the Briscon Association. I'm new to this sort of work, and I know I have a lot to learn, but I have the support of some very good people from the Brisbane gaming community. I hope I will have your support too. If everyone does just a little bit, we can make Briscon 1998 the best convention Queensland has ever had, and make it strong enough to continue for many years to come. Getting involved is easy—just give me a call (3397 5118).

So, will the real Man From QUGS please step forward? We have another assignment for him ...

# Star Wars the SWRPG

David Astley and Bronwyn Walker

[We laugh at any accusations of copyright infringement.]

## Players

George Lucas (GL): GM.

Mark Hamill: Luke Skywalker.

Carrie Fisher: Leia Organa.

Harrison Ford: Han Solo.

Peter Mayhew: Chewbacca.

Alec Guinness: Obi Wan Kenobi.

GL: Alright, Luke and Leia run down a Death Star corridor, chased by storm-troopers. There's a door on your left. What do you do?

Mark: We go through the door.

GL: Okay, make a Dex. check.

Mark: Umm ... I get a 15.

GL: Great! You don't plummet to your death. The door opens onto a small ledge, overlooking a huge metallic chasm. There's a door on the opposite side of the chasm, maybe twenty metres away.

Mark: "I think we took a wrong turn." Umm ... I look around the chasm. Is there any way to get across?

GL: It looks like you're on a bridge that will extend across to the other side. By the way, while you're looking around, the storm-troopers have caught up. They open fire on you.

Carrie: I lock the door.

GL: Okay, there's a panel on the wall to your right. One of the switches closes the door. There's no lock.

Carrie: "There's no lock!"

Mark: Luke shoots the door panel. "That oughta hold them for a while!"

Carrie: "Quick, we've got to get across! Find the controls that extend the bridge!"

GL: Hey Mark, you know that panel you just shot?

Mark: Shit, shit, shit! "I think I just blasted them."

Carrie: Great.

GL: You hear pounding on the door.

Carrie: "They're coming through!"

Mark: Luke looks around. Is there any other way to get across?

GL: There's some kind of exhaust pipes hanging down from the ceiling in the middle of the chasm.

Mark: Great. Hmm ... what have I got on my character sheet? Hey, what's in the storm-trooper utility belt I swiped?

GL: You're standing there looking through it?

Mark: Yup. I got nothing better to do.

GL: Okay, there's a blaster power pack, another blaster power pack, a med-pack, a grenade—Mark: A grenade!

GL: Uh uh. Not on this ledge.

Mark: Anything else?

GL: ... a grappling hook and rope.

Mark: Cool! I get it out.

GL: Good idea. Make a Dodge roll.

Mark: Why?

GL: To avoid the storm-troopers firing at you.

Mark: What! Where did they come from?

GL: They're standing in a doorway on the other side of the chasm, about a level above the one opposite you. They turned up while you were looking through the belt.

Mark: Dodge of 12.

GL: They all miss. Doing anything?

Mark: I shoot at them! I get a 5 ... a 7 ... and a 13.

GL: One of them is hit, and falls over the edge of the chasm to a horrible death. The other two back away into the corridor. They're not shooting at you for the moment. Carrie?

Carrie: I take cover.

GL: Well, there's a slight recess where the control panel used to be. It's better than nothing.

Carrie: I stand behind Luke. This is all his fault, after all.

Mark: I use the grappling hook. "Here, hold this." Luke gives the weapon to Leia.

Carrie: Good! I shoot the storm-troopers. With a ... 7 ... a 15 ... and a 9.

GL: Another storm-trooper goes down. The storm-troopers behind you have managed to raise the door a fraction.

Carrie: "Here they come!"

Mark: Luke throws the grappling hook around the exhaust pipe and swings across the chasm with the princess.

GL: Spending a Force point?

Mark: Shit yeah!

GL: Roll twice your Throw skill ... don't forget to subtract a dice for two actions.

Mark: I get a ... 26?

GL: The grappling hook wraps neatly around the exhaust pipe. What's Leia doing?

Carrie: Hanging on while Luke swings across? Is there anything I can do to help and give a bonus?

GL: Not really.

Carrie: Leia will give Luke a kiss. "For luck."

GL: What the hell. Mark, you can have +2. Make a Strength check.

Mark: 19, umm, 21?

GL: With the plus two you make it across! You don't drop her. The door where you were is almost open now. The storm-troopers are starting to come through and shoot at you again. What do you do?

Carrie: We run off down the corridor towards the hangar where the Falcon is.

GL: Good idea. With any luck you'll run into Han and Chewie there.

**The End**

# Results of the QUGS Magic Tournament (10 August 1997)

Simon Gallimore

The tournament was a success with the first prize going to Geoff Kwan. In second place was Joshua Gan, and Scott Whitla came third. The pre-registration prize went to Tim Bereton.

The slowest deck of the day was used by Michael Puccini, who failed to complete a total of seven duels. Close behind were Michael Mason and Stephen Grundon, both of whom failed to complete six duels.

The tournament consisted of seven matches, each match consisting of three duels. The winner of the tournament was determined by the number of matches they had won, and the number of duels the person had won was used as a tie-breaker. In the event of a further tie-breaker being needed then the player match ratio was used. This is the sum total of the number of matches all other opponents have won and represents how difficult a player's opponents have been. The total ranking can be found below, followed by the decks of the three winners.

*Tournament Organiser: Simon Gallimore*

*Head Judge: Travis Hall*

Rank	Name	Matches	Duels	Player Match Ratio
1.	Geoff Kwan	6	16	29
2.	Joshua Gan	6	14	30.5
3.	Scott Whitla	5.5	15	29
4.	David Redfern	5	13	28
5.	Dion Fung	5	13	27
6.	Chris Kwan	5	11	34.5
7.	Daniel Edwards	5	11	20.5 (1 forfeit)
8.	Eddy Wong	4.5	11	27
9.	Michael Wong	4.5	10	20.5
10.	Michael Martin	4	12	30
11.	Russel Johnson	4	12	24
12.	Tarek Hani	4	11	20
13.	Greg Romans	4	10.5	28
14.	Jason Smith	4	10.5	25
15.	Peter Wu	4	10.5	19
16.	David Astley	4	10	25.5
17.	Michael Puccini	4	7	24.5
18.	Rob Milne	3.5	9.5	24
19.	Michael Mason	3.5	7	27.5
20.	Darryl Greensill	3	10	18.5

### Winner's Deck—Geoff Kwan

4 Counterspell; 3 Incinerate; 4 Force of Will; 3 Earthquake; 2 Dissipate; 3 Wildfire Emissary; 3 Waterspout Djinn; 3 Disintegrate; 2 Rainbow Efreet; 1 Fireball; 2 Binding Grasp; 3 Man-O-War; 2 Nevinyrral's Disk; 1 Brainstorm; 1 Air Elemental; 11 Islands; 8 Mountains; 4 Thawing Glacier.  
Sideboard: 3 Pyroblast; 3 Hydroblast; 2 Pillage; 1 Nevinyrral's Disk; 2 Energy Flux; 2 Dissipate; 1 Pyroclasm; 1 Pyrokinesis.

### Second's Deck—Joshua Gan

3 Whirling Dervish; 2 Harvest Wurm; 2 Yavimaya Ants; 1 Uktabi Orangutan; 2 Bounty of the Hunt; 4 Spectral Bears; 2 River Boas; 4 Quirion Rangers; 4 Winter Orb; 2 Jorael's Centaur; 4 Giant Growth; 4 Rogue Elephants; 3 Ghazban Ogre; 4 Llanowar Elves; 1 Fyndhorn Elves; 1 Heart of Yavimaya; 18 Forest.  
Sideboard: 1 Whirling Dervish; 2 Serrated Arrows; 3 Emerald Charm; 1 City of Solitude; 2 Gaea's Blessing; 3 Sandstorm; 3 Hurricane.

### Third's Deck—Scott Whitla

2 Lhurgoyf; 4 Yavimaya Ants; 4 Ghazban Ogre; 3 Killer Bees; 4 Giant Growth; 2 River Boa; 4 Jorael's Centaur; 1 Whirling Dervish; 4 Rogue Elephants; 2 Hurricane; 2 Quirion Rangers; 2 Nature's Resurgence; 3 Spectral Bears; 3 Llanowar Elves; 1 Fyndhorn Elves; 1 Creeping Mould; 18 Forests.  
Sideboard: 2 Whirling Dervish; 2 Phyrexian Furnace; 2 Karoo Meerkat; 2 Thermokars; 3 Uktabi Orangutan; 1 River Boa; 1 Seeds of Innocence; 1 Tranquillity; 1 Emerald Charm.

Rank	Name	Matches	Duels	Player Match Ratio
21.	Chris Flor	3	10	18
22.	Langdon Green	3	9.5	21.5
23.	Brett Callinan	3	9	32.5
24.	Jason McDonald	3	9	26
25.	Scott Barlow	3	9	25
26.	Matthew Tuxworth	3	6.5	27
27.	Stephen Grundon	2.5	7	29
28.	Millin Bear	2	11	22
29.	Nathan Zoontjens	2	10	16
30.	Jihad Hani	2	8	23.5
31.	Graham Howell	2	8	22
32.	Neville White	2	6	20.5
33.	Tim Brereton	2	6	19
34.	Kent Biscoe	1	5	17.5
35.	David Morrison	0	3	8.5 (4 forfeits)

# QUGS. 1997 Diplomacy Tournament Results

No.	Name	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Total	Place
1.	Peter Fordyce	10	0	9	1	20	8 <sup>th</sup>
2.	Simon Gallimore	1	2	9	10	22	6 <sup>th</sup>
3.	Dale Edwards	0	10	0	6	16	9 <sup>th</sup>
4.	Glen Dawson	7	8	0	9	24	4 <sup>th</sup>
5.	Christian Kelly	6	9	4	14	33	2 <sup>nd</sup>
6.	Darryl Greensill	7	8	10	0	25	3 <sup>rd</sup>
7.	Owen Gintis	10	5	2	7	24	5 <sup>th</sup>
8.	Daniel Edwards	9	10	10	7	36	1 <sup>st</sup>
9.	Paul Appleyard	4	8	0	9	21	7 <sup>th</sup>



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