

The Queen's Lane Advertiser

(Incorporating Convention News)

Issue Number 24

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April 2008

Edited by Jeremy Tullett

A magazine containing news about various games conventions taking place in the UK

Inside this issue:

- ◆ ManorCon progress report - booking deadline is June 20th (or April 13th for Twin rooms)
- ◆ ManorCon announces The Diplomacy Challenge - a one round Individual Diplomacy tournament for those who don't want to play all weekend
- ◆ UK Spielchamps at ManorCon announce the games to be used for the competition
- ◆ OxCon 2008 President's report
- ◆ UK Games Expo update – it's getting close! Full booking details and directions included
- ◆ MidCon 2008 dates confirmed. Booking form enclosed

Forthcoming Conventions

TringCon XVI Marsworth Village Hall Marsworth Nr. Tring Buckinghamshire 5 April 2008 www.fwtwr.com/tringcon	Beer and Pretzels Burton Town Hall Burton-upon-Trent Staffordshire 17-18 May 2008 www.spiritgames.co.uk/bnpdetails.php	UK Games Expo The Clarendon Suites 2 Stirling Road Edgbaston Birmingham 30 May-1 June 2008 www.UKGamesExpo.co.uk
Summer StabCon Britannia Hotel, Stockport Bookings(at)stabcon.org.uk 4-6 July 2008	ManorCon XXVI Stamford Hall, University of Leicester 25-28 July 2008 www.manorcon.org.uk	TringCon XVII Marsworth Village Hall Marsworth Nr. Tring Buckinghamshire 4 October 2008 www.fwtwr.com/tringcon
	MidCon XXX Thistle Birmingham City Hotel 14-16 November 2008 www.midcon.org.uk	

MidCon XXX (Jeremy Tullett)

14th – 16th November 2008
Thistle Birmingham City Hotel

About the con

MidCon XXX takes place in a comfortable hotel in the centre of Birmingham from Friday afternoon (4pm) to Sunday evening (6pm). It features:

- the opportunity to play board games with like-minded adults¹
- the **MidCon** music and general knowledge quiz on Saturday evening
- the chance to buy even more board games
- the chance to sell your surplus games on the Bring & Buy stall on the Saturday afternoon

MidCon is primarily about playing games and meeting people. You can play any of the number of games people bring along with them, including the hot new games from the Spiel games fair in Essen, which takes place just a few weeks before **MidCon**. Popular games include 18XX, Puerto Rico and Power Grid, but you are welcome to bring along your own favourite games – you will almost certainly find some people willing to play at least one of them.

Costs

Attendance at **MidCon** costs £15-£18 for the whole weekend (day rates of £8/£10/£8 for Friday, Saturday and Sunday) and accommodation is available in the Thistle Hotel at reasonable rates. The hotel is reachable by public transport and there is an adjacent car park.

Registration

If you would like to join us at **MidCon**, please complete the form on the back page of this magazine and return it with the convention fee of £15² a head to:

Jeremy Tullett, **MidCon**, 7 Midland Place, Derby, DE1 2RR,

or register electronically at **www.midcon.org.uk**

Changes from Previous Years

The hotel, we are told, is changing its name again, and may revert to being known as 'The Angus', which will amuse those of us who remember it being called that many years ago.

However, we are dealing with the same staff as last year, so we hope that the change of ownership won't cause any problems.

A separate room is being hired for the second-hand games sale, so we won't disrupt the gaming in the Wroxton Suite.

A disabled toilet should be available, adjacent to the restaurant.

¹ Though children are welcome as well!

² Goes up to £18 on November 1st

MidCon '08 Booking Form

The registration fee for **MidCon** is £15 per person for the whole weekend. Day rates are £10 for the Saturday and £8 (each) for the Friday and the Sunday. Please note: convention fees are *not* refundable. After November 1st we will not be able to accept postal bookings and accommodation will have to be booked directly with the hotel, whilst the convention fee will have to be paid at the convention. **Please note that the registration fee goes up to £18 after November 1st.**

Name			
Address			
Post code		Tel:	
E-mail			
I enclose a cheque / PO (payable to "MidCon") for		£ (See above for registration rates)	
Other names covered by this registration			

Accommodation

Please reserve the following rooms at the rate of £49.00 per person per night for a single room and £40.00 per person per night sharing a twin/double room – a full English breakfast is included. Hotel charges will be settled directly with the hotel on your departure.

Please select one of the following options by ticking the appropriate box.

- ☐ I hereby give permission for **MidCon** to pass my credit card details to the Hotel to reserve my room. My credit card details are given below
- ☐ I enclose a cheque for 50% of the total cost of my room booking, payable to "Thistle Birmingham City Hotel", as a deposit.

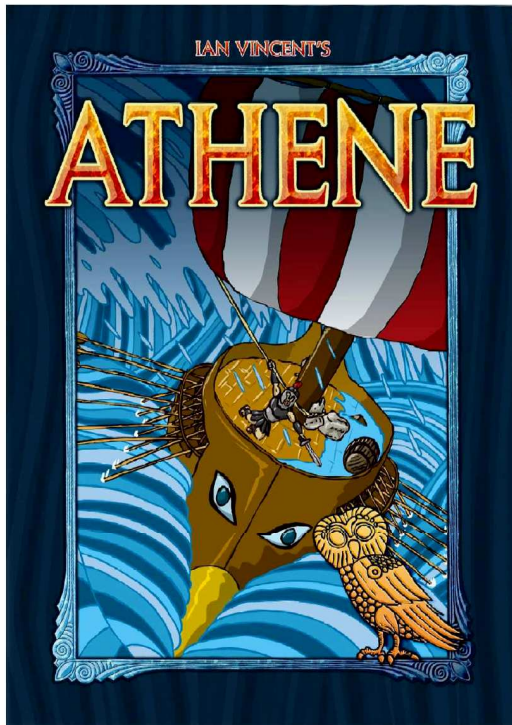
My credit card details (You do not need to provide these if you have enclosed a cheque to cover the deposit on your room)

The name on my credit card is:			
The credit card number is:		The expiry date is:	

The cancellation policy of the hotel is complicated, but full refunds should be available up to 10 weeks before **MidCon**, with an escalating cancellation fee as 16th November approaches.

	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
N^o. of single rooms			
N^o. of twin rooms			
N^o. of double rooms			
Sharing with ...			

When complete, return this form, together with your registration fee (payable to "**MidCon**") to: Jeremy Tullett, **MidCon**, 7 Midland Place, Derby, DE1 2RR. Alternatively, credit card bookings may be submitted online at www.midcon.org.uk by clicking on the Booking Form link in the left hand menu bar.



Athene by Ian Vincent

With the unspeakable events of Troy behind them, Odysseus gathers his men and sails his ships for home. But Poseidon will not let their act of blasphemy go unanswered and marshals the storm clouds as they have never been marshalled before, nor will they be again. As a salmon fights its way upstream to spawn, so you must battle the storm and placate the gods, for your wife and children must share your dishonour and are at as much risk at home as they would be by your side. Can you secure Athene's assistance to overcome the wrath of the god of storms?

Athene is a game for 3-6 players. The game is played on a grid of tiles. The tiles start off as calm seas, and players play cards to control the

movement of their ship. But as the game progresses, the tiles are turned over to reveal the currents, and the players have less and less control of where their ship goes. The longer a ship stays at sea, the more valour the captain will earn, but if a captain fails to make it to a safe harbour before the seas become unsurvivable, then all is lost.

You can watch a video overview of this game at www.jklmgames.com.

Huang Di by Bryan Johnson

In **Huang Di**, you play one of 2-6 master builders chosen by the Emperor (Qin Shi Huang) to help construct one of the greatest man-made structures in the world – The Great Wall of China. Your goal is to become the most distinguished master builder in China with the help of your taskmasters, workers and Qin Shi Huang himself!

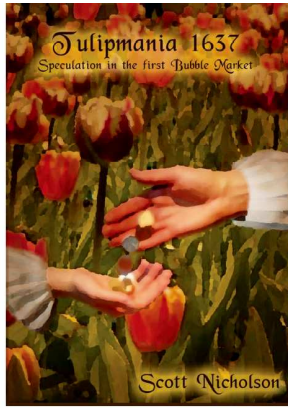
In the game, all players use identical sets of role cards to select their actions such as purchasing workers, building sections of the wall, collecting money from the treasury, etc. As players build sections of the wall, they score points for having built the majority of blocks on each section and each level of the wall. Players can also boost their income by completing favours for the Emperor, by building the wall to his requested design, and mounting plaques on the wall to honour the Emperor.

The game ends when the wall is completed. However, there is only a limited length of time to do this. If the wall is not built fast enough, then the Mongals will invade through the incomplete wall, leaving one of the world's greatest man-made structures uncompleted.

This game won the first ever ProtoSlam competition held by Cambridge Games Factory in August 2006 and is the first published game by designer Bryan Johnson.



Advertisement



Tulipmania 1637 by Scott Nicholson

The tulip, a flower native to east Africa, created quite a ruckus upon reaching the shores of Europe in the mid-1500s. When a virus attacks a tulip, the resulting colour patterns can be stunning, but the same virus weakens the tulip and makes reproduction a challenge. These rare tulips have always been quite expensive, even to this day. Many associate Tulipmania with these rare, high-priced tulips, but the first bubble market, where buyers pay far more than something is physically worth because of the resale value, actually stemmed from the common tulip market over

December 1636 and January 1637.

Bubonic plague was killing 1 of every 7 people per year, so the common man saw little reason not to invest foolishly with a good chance of a substantial profit. These conditions created a situation where the prices of tulips skyrocketed, until they could not be sustained. The investors who profited most were those who sold just as the market started to turn sour.

You are one of those wily investors. You have a network of buyers and colleagues, all of whom are also trying to become wealthy. Your goal is to make smart investments, artificially raise prices, fleece your network at the best time, and then make your escape from Tulipmania with the most money.

Ascendancy by Nigel Buckle

Starting as a loose federation of planets, the Empire has grown to control nearly the entire galaxy. In recent times the Empire has suffered revolts from the Veleks (a race of cyborgs, once used for labour throughout the Empire, now banished or hunted in every sector). Other conquered races have sought to throw off the dominion of the Empire. These rebellions were crushed mercilessly, but the Empire was shaken.



Out on the galactic rim, the Veleks are ready to strike back at their oppressors. Three other races have formed a loose coalition to confront the Empire. However the coalition is tenuous, the races have little in common apart from a mutual oppressor.

In this game each player is in control of an alien race and aims to achieve ascendancy. Ascendancy is a game for 2-4 players. The Short Game is playable in an hour, while the Long Game takes about twice as long. The long game race-specific targets for end of game bonus victory points, along with Improved Technology and special powers.

Pre-order your copy

Athene and Huang Di will be released at the UK Games Expo in Birmingham, on 31st May 2008. Tulipmania 1637 and Ascendancy will be released at Essen on 23rd October 2008. The RRP for Athene is £17.00, for Huang Di is £25.00, for Tulipmania 1637 is £17.00, and for Ascendancy is £30.00. Pre-order at www.jklmgames.com before they go into production and get 20% off, and if you are one of the first to pre-order then you'll also receive a voucher towards a future purchase from JKLM. Or pre-order once the game is in production and get 10% off.

ManorCon XXVI (Gary Duke)

25th to 28th July 2008

Stamford Hall, University of Leicester

The organization for ManorCon XXVI is proceeding well. We did have a few minor issues in getting our new online booking system ready by the time the last issue of QLA was produced, but the system is now fully operational – visit <http://www.manorcon.org.uk/book.htm> and follow the links. Of course, you can still post a form and cheque – the form can be found at the same place if you need one.

If you intend to come, but have not yet booked, please remember that **advance registration is only available until 20th June**. After this, you will have to register at the door and pay higher registration fees and accommodation charges (and you may not get any accommodation at all – our supply of rooms is fairly limited). **For anyone thinking of booking a twin room, please remember that there is an earlier booking deadline of 13th April**, and twin rooms will not be available on the door.

If you have booked, but need to cancel all or some of your booked accommodation, you should inform us as soon as possible. If you cancel by the booking deadline, then you will definitely avoid cancellation charges. Thereafter, the later you leave it to inform us, the more likely you are to suffer accommodation cancellation charges.

ManorCon is run by volunteers, and does not aim to make a profit. In order for us to keep this tradition, we ask for volunteers for a number of tasks. One of these is help with the registration desk, usually by manning the desk for an hour on the Friday afternoon. Now that we hand out keys in addition to handling on-the-door bookings, we need lots of volunteers! If anybody asks anything you don't know, just point them at the nearest committee member – it's not difficult. If you would like to help us out and failed to mention it when booking, please e-mail us at regdesk@manorcon.org.uk.

This year, as usual, we will have a mix of scheduled and ad-hoc tournaments, plus some other competitions and events.

Scheduled tournaments:

- **Croquet** – knock-out tournament limited to a maximum of 16 players.
- **Diplomacy** – individual rounds at 1800 on Friday, 0900 on Saturday, and 0930 on Sunday. In addition to the main tournament, there is also the **Diplomacy Challenge**, an individual one round tournament based solely on scores in the Saturday round. This replaces the team round from previous years.
- **Midnight Party** – three rounds, at midnight each evening.

Ad-hoc tournaments (play games as and when you wish):

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| • 18XX | • Outpost/Phoenicia/Sceptre of Zavandor |
| • Acquire | • Puerto Rico |
| • Athene | • Race for the Galaxy |
| • Huang Di | • Settlers of Catan |
| • Imperial | • St Petersburg |

SpielChamps:

ManorCon is the new home of the UK SpielChamps, which will take place on the Saturday between 0930 and 1800 (ish). Formerly known as Intergame, this is a tournament for teams of four players. The tournament consists of four rounds, each round playing a different game, and each player competes against three different opponents in each round. The highest scoring team across the four rounds wins the tournament, and the top three or four teams are invited to represent the UK at the European Spielchamps in Essen, Germany in October. The games have now been chosen, and will be:

- **Augsburg 1520** (published by Alea)
- **Caylus Magna Carta** (Ystari)
- **Leonardo da Vinci** (daVinci Games)
- **Brass** (Warfrog)

There is no entry fee (other than being registered at Manorcon for the Saturday), but each team must bring one copy of each of the games. Players who wish to take part should try and form teams of four in advance - the organisers will help people find team-mates, and if necessary, scratch teams may be formed on the day (the Bishop Games stall will have some stock of each of the games). Players or teams wishing to take part or who would like more information can contact the organisers at spielchamps@manorcon.org.uk or on the forum at <http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/SpielchampsUK/>. There is also a box on the Manorcon booking form to indicate interest in the UK Spielchamps, and anyone who ticks it will be contacted by the organisers.

Other events:

- **Games Stall** – This will be run by Bishop Games, will offer lots of the newest and latest games available on the market, and will be open for business from Friday until Sunday. They will be offering a 10% discount on their normal prices.
- **Pop Quiz** – on Saturday evening. This will be run by Dan Lester.
- **Second Hand Games Sale** – probably two sessions, at times to be determined.
- **Treasure Hunt** – on Sunday afternoon.

Please note that, for several reasons, including the need to ensure there is sufficient space, the selling of games other than via the Bishop Games stall or the Second Hand Games Sale should not be done without permission from the ManorCon Committee (contact details below).

There will be trophies for:

- 1st to 3rd in the Diplomacy and 18XX.
- The winners of the Acquire, Croquet, Diplomacy Challenge, Puerto Rico, Race for the Galaxy, and St Petersburg.

As part of our efforts to improve communications, we have now created a Guild on BoardGameGeek, where we will respond to any queries and publish up-to-date news as we get it. To access the Guild, go to <http://www.boardgamegeek.com/guild/441>.

You can also contact us:

By post: Steve Jones, 59 Sudeley Walk, Putnoe, Bedford, MK41 8JH, UK.

By phone: +44 (0)1234 405878.

By email: info@manorcon.org.uk.

As of 10th March the following 27 people have registered

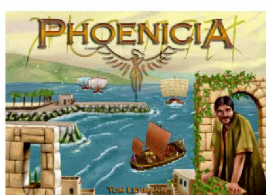
Richard Barton	Martin Holden	Nigel Pepper
Don Clarke	Steve Jones	Darrell Perrins
Jeff Crane	Steve Kearon	Josh Perrins
Gary Duke	Nick Kinzett	Dave Simpson
Luke Ellis	Kevin Lee	Mark Stretch
Jerry Elsmore	Pete Mason	Steve Thomas
Mark Fox	David Norman	Dave Thorby
Richard Frost	Teik Chooi	Daniel Victor
John Gates	Richard Oxlade	Stephen Webb

JKLM INTERACTIVE

Play games online before they are released.

JKLM Interactive allows you to try out new JKLM Boardgames before they are released. The system consists of a Windows application which you download, which connects to our dedicated games server. There you can play games against other players in Real Time.

JKLM Interactive currently supports three games.



Empires rise and fall. In the buffer areas and crossroads between civilizations, however, a clever ruler can sometimes adopt new ideas, establish trade, and found a city-state - such as the great Phoenician cities of Tyre and Sidon - that will outlast many neighbouring empires.

Phoenicia is a strategy game of bidding and development for 2-5 players, ages 12 and up. Each player rules a settlement located on the shores of the Fertile Crescent, in the Middle East, more than 3,000 years ago. During play, you spend wealth to expand your settlement, adding tiles and tokens to it. The first player to successfully found a city-state wins!

Phoenicia was designed by Tom Lehmann, and released at the UK Games Expo in Birmingham in June 2007. The game is often compared to Outpost and The Sceptre of Zavendor, both of which have similar mechanics to Phoenicia. However, Phoenicia is much more streamlined, allowing the game to be as challenging, while playing in half the time.



On the Underground starts with a board that shows a plan of the yet-to-be-built London Underground. Each player is in charge of building two lines onto this plan during the course of the game. As they build their lines, a nominal passenger moves around the map, trying to get to various destinations. Players score points for connecting their lines to important stations around the board, and also whenever the passenger uses their line to reach his desired destination.

On the Underground was designed by Sebastian Bleasdale, and released at Essen in 2006.



Tulipmania sees players competing to buy and sell in the world's first bubble market. During December 1636 and January 1637, the prices of Tulips in Amsterdam rocketed, as investors saw tulips as a commodity worth investing in, as the price was increasing rapidly, even though their value wasn't, which meant there was a very large profit to be made very quickly. But bubbles burst, and when they do, the price crashes, leaving some people with a healthy profit, while others are left holding the tulips.

Tulipmania was designed by Scott Nicholson, and is scheduled to be released at the Essen Game Fair in 2008.

To get started on JKLM Interactive, go to the website, www.jklminteractive.co.uk, and download the software. Install and run it and you're ready to play.

UK GAMES EXPO 2008

“Everything about games”

30th May to 1st June 2007

The Clarendon Suites

2 Stirling Road, Edgbaston,

Birmingham B16 9SB

www.UKGamesExpo.co.uk

The Second UK Games Expo is getting close now.

Here are some highlights:

- Board games exhibition including new releases. See new games from Warfrog, JKLM, Surprised Stare, Ragnar Brothers, Ludorum and others.
- Grand board game tournament including the UK Carcassonne Championship.
- RPGS with the first chance to play Dungeons and Dragons 4th Ed, the new Dr Who RPG and others.
- Card games including World of Warcraft and Yu-gi-oh.
- Miniatures games including tournaments such as the Flames of War, Hordes and Warmachine UK Open and the new Field of Glory rules.
- Computer Games including LAN Gaming, Nintendo Wii and Guild Wars.
- Costumed groups from Star wars, Daleks and Lord of the Rings.

Traders and exhibitors

As this goes to print we have 50+ traders confirmed. These include Upper Deck Entertainment, Wizards of the Coast, Mongoose Publishing, Wargames Illustrated, NC Soft, Battlefront Europe, Warfrog, Andrew Sage, Ludorum Games, Stafford Games, Games for the World, Centralan UK, Ragnar Brothers, Kerr and King, Spirit Games, Bishop Games, Burley Games, Gamers, Collective Endeavour, Flagship, Games Gazette, JKLM, Heron Games, Veteran Armies, Minipainters, Northumbria Games, Pagan Angel, Reiver Games, Surprised Stare Games, Tabletop Games, Tumbling Dice, Cubicle 7, Tolkien Society, Coiled Spring, Wizkids, Leisure Games, Treasure Trail Games, Not tonight Josephine, Time for games, Firestorm cards, Ramshackle Games, Privateer Press, Pinnacle Entertainment, Tritex, Westwind, Great Escape Games, Honourable Lead Boiler Suit, Men in Black

Debut Board Games- new Releases

We expect a number of new board games to be released at UK games Expo including: Huang Di and Athene from JKLM Games, Monastery from Ragnar Brothers, Confucius from Surprised Stare, Ice Flow from Ludorum along with new games from Warfrog, Treasure Trail Games and Reiver Games. You the visitor will get a chance to vote on these new games and decide who will win the Expo Awards this year.

Friday Night two Player tournament.

David Norman is organizing a two-player games tournament on Friday night 30th May. This will consist of Gipf, Lost Cities, Quinamid, Fjords and Hive. It will be held in the Free Play Games Room in the Strathallan Hotel, and will take 2.5 hours for the entire tournament. This will run from

9pm-11.30pm. If you wish to take place and own any of these games and/or any Chess clocks please bring them. This will be a free event but if you wish to come register via the web site.

The Grand Board Game Tournament

David Norman is organising a mixed board game tournament. Expanding on the event we ran in 2007 this consists of am and pm sessions each day and full day tournaments. You choose which event to enter for each half day or instead you can enter a full day tournament. There will be individual winners for each different board game tournament and a Grand Tournament winner. The overall Championship will be based on your results in the individual tournaments you play in, with a significant advantage to those players who play more sessions. The Timetable is as follows:

Saturday 31st May:

Saturday, registration is 8:30am - 9:00am with games starting at 9:30am

All day tournament: Imperial

Sat am half day tournament: Container / Phoenicia

Registration for PM tournaments is from 1.30pm with games starting at 2.30pm.

Sat pm half day tournament: Settlers / On the Underground

Sunday 1st June:

Sunday, registration is 8:30am - 8:50am with games starting at 9:00am

All day tournament: Powergrid

Sun am: Carcassonne / St Petersburg

Registration for PM tournaments is from 12.00pm with games starting at 1.00pm.

Sun pm: Puerto Rico / Acquire

We will schedule a long lunch interval so even players entering every event still have the chance to look round the rest of the Expo.

UK Carcassonne Tournament. In agreement with Spielzentrum the UK Games Expo Carcassonne Championship will be a qualifying event for the World Carcassonne Championship to be held at Essen Spiel in October 2008. The UK Carcassonne Tournament is the half-day tournament held on Sunday 1st June.

Request from David: Please bring along copies of any games you own that are part of the tournament and make sure you bring them to the Tournament Room. Each tournament is followed by prize giving. The Grand Champion prize giving will be at 17.30 Sunday or as soon to that as possible.

Prizes for the Grand Board Game Tournament:

Overall Winner gains a VOUCHER for £100, which is valid on the JKLM trade stand and acceptable on his website, and a game signed personally by Reiner Knizia.

There are prizes for winners of each of the 10 tournaments as well.

Heroscape Tournament

Richard Dewsbery is organizing a Heroscape tournament on Sunday 1st June. More details on the website.

Entrance charges and how to book

Our booking system is now online so go to our website: www.UKGamesExpo.co.uk register and book. Book an entrance ticket for 1 or 2 days and then book tournament tickets.

Ticket	Adult	Child	Family Ticket
One Day Ticket	£5	£3	£10
Weekend Ticket	£7.50	£5	£15

For the Grand board game tournament players the cost is £2 a half day tournament, £4 for a day. We need to know numbers interested in each game so we can get the games organised so get on and book. Our online booking system is now live and it's quick and easy to book using a credit card via PayPal.

Free Play Rooms

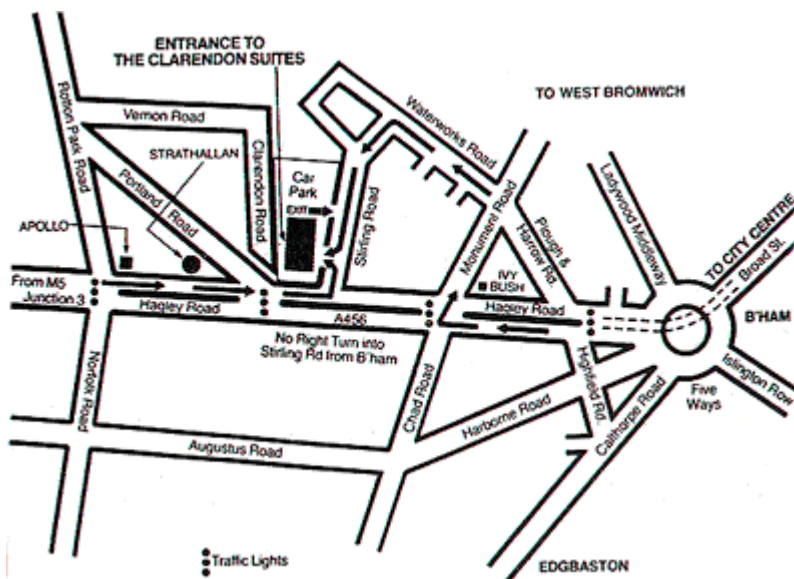
For folk staying over Friday night as well as after the Expo closes on Saturday night we offer a free play room. Expanded from last year we now have one large room at the Strathallan Hotel next door to the Convention centre and invite you to come and play games for free. This will be available both nights from 7pm till late. There is a bar in the Strathallan and a restaurant+ bar food. I will be staying both nights at the hotel and several Expo organisers will be there Saturday night. Last year over 100 gamers played games till late at the Strathallan so we hope to have a good crowd this year.

Practical Information you need to know:

The Venue

The Clarendon Suites
Stirling Road (off Hagley Road)
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B16 9SB
Phone: 0121 454 2918
Fax: 0121 455 0859
Email: sales@clarendon-suites.co.uk Web: www.clarendon-suites.co.uk

Map of the Venue area



Directions- how to get there

BY Car:

From M6 South or Northwest

Leave the M6 at Junction 6 and follow signs to "City Centre, Bromsgrove, (A38). Do not take any exits to the left. Go over the flyover and through the first tunnel. Branch left (signposted Convention Parking), then merge onto Great Charles Street Queensway - A38 At Paradise Circus roundabout take the 2nd exit onto Broad Street - A456 (signposted Motorway M5, Kidderminster). At the Ivy Bush pub on right get in to Right hand lane at Lights and turn right into Monument Rd, then second left into Waterworks Rd past TOLKIEN'S TWO TOWERS. Turn left onto Stirling Road. At the end

of the road the entrance to the car park is on the right. The Main car park is round the other side of the building.

From the M5 North and South

Leave the M5 at junction 3 (signposted Birmingham-West and Central), then at roundabout take the exit onto Quinton Expressway - A456 (signposted Birmingham). At roundabout take the 2nd exit onto Quinton Expressway - A456. Bear right onto Hagley Road. Continue on Hagley Road - A456 for 4 miles. You will go past the Strathallan Hotel and the Clarendon Suites on your left. Turn left onto Stirling Road. The entrance to the car park is on the left. Main car park is round other side of the building.

By rail

There are two main stations in Birmingham. Birmingham New Street is the main line from London, Euston, from Leeds/ Sheffield and from Manchester. Birmingham Snow Hill is located on the Marylebone line and serves stations through Warwick to London Marylebone.

Once you have reached the Rail stations you can take a 40 minute walk:

From New Street go up the escalators to the Shopping Centre and at the top turn left. Exit down the ramp to New Street. Turn left and go past Waterstones book shop up New Street. At Victoria Square go up the steps past the fountains and to the left of the town hall. *Cross the square in front of the library and go through the forum under the library, which houses many food outlets. Have a pint now you still have 30 minutes to walk. Exit across the bridge to the large square outside the NIA, Symphony Hall, the Rep Theatre and past a large memorial hall. You are now on Broad Street. Stop again for a pint if you like. Broad Street is the main nightlife of Birmingham and has many restaurants. At the end of Broad Street is Five Ways Roundabout. Go straight across (there are underpass walkways), past Tesco onto Hagley Road. Keep walking past the Plough and Harrow Pub (Tolkien stayed there) and the Ivy Bush pub and to the Clarendon Suites. The Strathallan Hotel is just beyond. Both are on the right side of the road.

An alternative is to change trains and get a train to Fiveways station. At Fiveways come out onto Islington Middleway. Turn left to reach Fiveways and then second left into Hagley Road. Keep walking past the Plough and Harrow Pub (Tolkien stayed there) and the Ivy Bush pub and to the Clarendon Suites. The Strathallan Hotel is just beyond. Both are on the right side of the road.

From Snow Hill Station come out the main exit. Turn right down Colmore Row, past the cathedral and onto the square in front of the library and follow the route that starts with a * above. Or on Colmore Row there are bus stops (see below)

Taxis are available at both Stations for just a few pounds and are the much easier option.

By Coach

Digbeth is a National Express Coach Station. Come out onto Derritend, Digbeth (apologies it ain't a pretty bit of town!). Turn left up the Hill toward the New Bull Ring Shopping Centre - looks like a Dalek.

Walk between the Shopping centre and St Martins in the Bull Ring Church. Have a look around - it's the best shopping centre in Europe. Carry on to New Street Station, or go out onto New Street and Walk- see route above.

Buses

The best bet is to get to Colmore Road. Then get buses to Hagley Road. Numbers include: 127, 138, 139 and 140. Get off after passing Ivy Bush and cross the road to Clarendon Suites.

From New Street Station go up the escalators and at the top turn left and out the shopping centre to the ramp. On your left is Waterstones. Coming down the ramp if you proceed directly straight on you are on Corporation Street. Bus number 126 goes from there to Hagley Road. But on Corporation Street if you turn left before Rackhams and pass the Cathedral you reach Colmore Row (see above).

By Air

Fly into Birmingham International Airport. There is a railway station at the end of a light rail link from the airport called Birmingham International. Take a train to Birmingham New Street Station (see above).

Car Parking

There is a FREE car park at the Clarendon Suites (which is locked at night). On street parking is limited as the area is residential. Most hotels have their own car parks.

Internet Access at Clarendon

The Clarendon Suites has a T-Mobile Hotspot Wifi Setup. Buy airtime in advance from the T-Mobile website. For more information refer to <http://hotspot.t-mobile.com/>

Disabled access

The main entrances to the Clarendon Suites are on the ground floor. All floors and levels have lifts or ramps to them. One or two areas are a bit complicated to work out access but our helpers can advise you on the weekend.

Refreshments and Food

The Clarendon Suite has 2 bars and cafeterias. Hot food and both alcoholic and soft drinks will be available.

Cashpoint

There is a cash point in the Clarendon Suite however the venue did have plans to remove this in which case there are cash points around the Five Ways roundabout.

Accommodation

The Clarendon Suites are a conference venue and not a hotel so you will not stay in the hall itself. However do not let that put you off because within 50 to 200 yards are several hotels.

For the following three hotels the same UK Games Expo rate has been agreed for you:

Single room B&B £ 45

Twin/ Double B&B for sole use: £ 55

For double occupancy B&B £ 65

Executive rooms on sole use will be at £85 and double occupancy will be £95 B&B

The Menzies Strathallan is recommended as it is closest and is also where there is a Friday and a Saturday Evening gaming room available for you to play in after the convention hall is closed for the day.

Menzies Strathallan Edgbaston

225 Hagley Road, Edgbaston,

Birmingham, West Midlands B16 9RY

Phone: 0121 455 9777

Email: strathallan@menzieshotels.co.uk

For booking: Mention you are a UK Game Expo delegate when booking.

Apollo Hotel Birmingham

Hagley Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham

Tel: 0121 455 0271 • Fax : 0121 456 2394 <http://www.apollobirmingham.com/>

Good map of the area on that site by the way.

For booking: Ask for reservation line.

Quality Hotel Birmingham

166 Hagley Road, Birmingham

West Midlands, England B16 9NZ

Phone: (44) 0121 4546621

Fax: (44) 0121 4562935

enquiries@quality-hotel-birmingham.com

For booking: UK Games Expo Guests quote code quote Group No. 1111

All three of the above are within a very short walk of the venue.

Other hotels:

There are many B+B's on the Hagley road and nearby and are in many cases cheaper. See accommodation on the website.

Additional information can be obtained from Richard@UKgamesExpo.co.uk

Richard Denning

OxCon 2008 President's Report (Rohan Loveland)

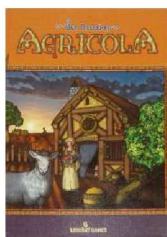
OxCon '08, held at the traditional locale of the Mitre on High Street, was well attended and enjoyed by all. A gathering for pizza at the Golden Cross on Friday night was followed by a good night of gaming lasting into the early morning hours, played back at the Boardgames Society usual haunt, the Physics Building. A fiercely contested game of Power Grid lasted particularly late, with both past and present Society members battling it out.

The next morning saw a large crowd gathering for both open games and the Puerto Rico tournament, with the eventual conquest by perennial dominator Markus Wellbourne, adding another silver cup trophy to his collection. Quillon Harpham and Steve Guest followed with second and third place wins, respectively. A tournament of Fifteen-to-One then took place, with Mark Rigby-Jones ultimately answering the final queries. A large crowd made the long walk down Cowley Road for a curry feast, and more games continued on into the night.

Sunday saw a hard-fought Settlers of Catan tournament scattered over 8 tables, with participants ranging in age from the precocious 10 year olds up to the formidably knowledgeable sexagenarians. Champion Markus Wellbourne once again achieved victory, taking home another trophy and keeping his game prize vouchers - runners up for second and third were David Vancauter and James McDermott.

Our sincere gratitude to the committee and other volunteers for their help, particularly to Ian Lynagh, for his huge efforts organizationally, Ross Moulden, for registration and door help, Paul Gardner, for running the Settlers tournament, Dave Percik, for Fifteen-to-One, and last but certainly not least James Rogers, past President, for running the Puerto Rico tournament. Thanks also to all the attendees for their participation in making the con a great success. We look forward to seeing you all again next year.

New Game Releases.

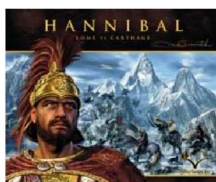


The new Z-Man edition of Agricola is currently in production, and is expected to be available in mid-April.

Each player plays a farmer in a wooden shack with their spouse and little else. On a turn, you get to take only two actions, one for you and one for the spouse, from all the possibilities you'll find on a farm: collecting clay, wood or stone; building fences; and so on. You might think about having kids in order to get more work accomplished, but first you need to expand your house. And what are you going to feed all the little rugrats? Every harvest, you have to produce enough food to feed your family – otherwise the only choice is begging – and begging is bad... After 14 turns, the player with the most produce over-and-above what they've needed to eat is the winner.



Container is one of Valley Games two big releases from Essen 2007. Each player controls a port, a shipping company and a buyer on the central island. Goods are produced and sent to the port, where they are loaded onto ships to send to the central island. But players are not allowed to ship from their own harbour – so they have to look around for the best deals from the other players, and try and offer their goods at the best prices so that other players will ship them. And at the same time, they have to try and buy the goods they want at the central island for the best price.



Hannibal is Valley Games other big release from Essen 2007. This game uses the very popular card system which first appeared in Avalon Hill's We the People game to detail the struggle between Carthage's Hannibal and the Roman Republic in approximately 200 BC. Players use strategic-level cards for multiple purposes: moving generals, levying new troops/reinforcing existing armies, gaining political control of the provinces involved in the war, and generating historical events. If perchance two armies meet on the battlefield, a second set of cards is used to determine the winner. Ultimately both players seek victory by dominating both fronts: military and political.



Rails of Europe is the expansion of Railroad Tycoon. Designed by one of the designers of Railroad Tycoon, it uses the original game's pieces, tiles, money, trains, shares and rules, along with a new board and card deck. There are some rule changes for the expansion to reflect the new setting of the expansion, and thankfully, the board is smaller than in the original game! Playing Rails of Europe requires the pieces from Railroad Tycoon.



Café Race is a race game set in a business office. The players take the role of office workers going upstairs to the first floor to get a cup of coffee who then improvise a race while they are going back downstairs... with a cup full of coffee. The player that makes it to the bottom of the stairs and spills the least amount of coffee wins.

Each round, throw as many dice as there are players. The results are the speeds at which the players may move their pawns. The players bid for these speed dice in a blind auction. Once all the speed dice have been distributed, the pawns are moved. After any movement, a check is made to see if your worker has kept his balance; if this check fails the coffee is spilled and one marker is lost. Play continues until a player crosses the end line. The player with the most points is the winner.

Games take about 20 minutes – just the right length to play it in your coffee break... For health and safety reasons, please do not try racing up and down stairs with real cups of hot coffee!



These games and over 400 others are all available from JKLM Direct Ltd. – www.jklmdirect.co.uk. Shops and other retailers can purchase at trade prices from JKLMnP Distribution Ltd – www.jklmnp.co.uk.



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Please contact the coordinator if:

- You run a convention and would like to be a part of the 'zine.
- You run a convention and would like to be included in the upcoming conventions list.
- You would like to offer to help out in some way.
- You are not on the mailing list for this 'zine, but would like to be.
- You would like to advertise in QLA.

The coordinator can be contacted at david@ellought.demon.co.uk

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