

The Queen's Lane Advertiser

(Incorporating Convention News)

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Edited by Jeremy Tullett

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

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Forthcoming Conventions

Spieltage Messe Gruga, Essen, Germany 26-29 October 2017 www.merz-verlag-en.com	MidCon The Hallmark Hotel Derby DE1 2SQ 17-19 November 2017 MidCon.org.uk	Pasteboard and Plastic Saltdean Scout Hut, Brighton Saturday 25 November 2017 Details: tinyurl.com/3ex38k Map: tinyurl.com/ybq7ng
Boardgames at the Manor Oxford Manor TN15 6XF 1-3 December 2017 www.oakhall.co.uk/manoroffice(at)oakhall.co.uk	Winter StabCon Britannia Hotel Stockport 5-7 January 2018 bookings (at) stabcon.org.uk	Raiders of the Game Cupboard XLI Waterside Community Centre Heath Road Burton-upon-Trent DE15 9LF 6 January 2018 www.raidsofthegamecupboard.co.uk
Handycon Holiday Inn High Wycombe M40 Jcn 4 19-21 January 2018 handycon.co.uk	SoRCon 11 Holiday Inn, Basildon 23-25 February 2018 Doors open 10am Friday sorcon.co.uk	Swan Con 2018 The Swan, Knutsford, Cheshire 15-18 March 2018 geggus(at)sky.com
Raiders of the Game Cupboard XLII Waterside Community Centre Heath Road Burton-upon-Trent DE15 9LF 24 March 2018 www.raidsofthegamecupboard.co.uk	Baycon 2018 Exeter Court Hotel Kennford Devon 4-8 April 2018	UK Games Expo NEC Hilton Metropole, Birmingham 1-3 June 2018 www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk
Raiders of the Game Cupboard XLIII Waterside Community Centre Heath Road Burton-upon-Trent DE15 9LF 23 June 2018 www.raidsofthegamecupboard.co.uk	ManorCon XXXVI Stamford Court, University of Leicester 20-23 July 2018 info(at)manorcon.org.uk www.manorcon.org.uk	Boardgames Holiday Le Pas Opton, France 10-17 September 2018 Springharvestholidays.com/boardgame-week
	Raiders of the Game Cupboard XLIV Waterside Community Centre Heath Road Burton-upon-Trent DE15 9LF 22 September 2018 www.raidsofthegamecupboard.co.uk	

Editorial (Jeremy Tullett)

World Diplomacy Championships 2017: I was there! And much fun was had by all.

Held at St. John's College, Oxford, organiser Dan Lester had set out to impress, and the American contingent was suitably wowed by the (moderately) formal dinner held on the opening night in the college dining room, although one individual managed to be a bit mardy about the standard of the food.

My bedroom – despite promises to the contrary – did not even have a basin, and I had to share washing and showering facilities with three other rooms. Being an Oxford alumnus myself, this did not especially surprise me – much on-site college accommodation is pre-20th century – but I was in a more modern room and could have expected better.

It is a source of amusement to me that my reputation as a Diplomacy player rather exceeds the statistical analysis of my results over the years. So the dinner – and the reception beforehand - provided much entertainment as various people indulged in a certain amount of bowing and scraping out of all proportion to the threat that I thought that I posed. I also managed to tease Dan's wife for some considerable time, by wearing a pin for my old college, which she failed to recognize, despite being a university alumna herself.

I mostly forget the details of my Diplomacy games almost as soon as they are done, so others who come to me reminiscing about a board we shared in 1989 will generally see my eyes glaze over. True to form, therefore, I can say little about my three rounds.

I do recall that I drew France in Round 2, was lied to by both Germany and England, but mounted such a strong defence that their alliance eventually broke, leaving me to finish in quite a decent position as a resurgent me and a fast moving England wiped Doc Binder from the board, which he seemed to take as a personal affront to his *clearly* superior skills as Diplomacy player.

In the final round, I found myself in a decent alliance with the estimable David Norman, only stabbing him in the last year, in an attempt to pick up a few extra points for the championship.

The scoring system was not, in a mathematical sense, very difficult to understand, but the implications were not so obvious, and I worked out quite late on that even one extra supply centre could be significant in scoring the board – had I twigged this earlier, I think I might have taken more risks and finished further up the classification.

The Championship title changed hands, which is a good thing, and the only woman in the competition finished in third place, the only remarkable thing about *that* being that, in 2017, it *was* the only woman.

The top few positions (84 names classified) were as follows:

1. Doug Moore Champion	11. Pete Yeargin Top Board	21. Tim Jones	31. Andrew Goff
2. Marvin Fried Top Board, Best Russia	12. Ruben Sanchez Top Board	22. Emmanuel du Pontavice	32. Grant Steel
3. Tanya Gill Best Turkey	13. Conrad Woodring Top Board, Best Germany	23. Dave Simpson (MidCon Committee)	33. Mikalis Kamaritis
4. Nicolas Sahuguet Top Board	14. Steve Cooley Best Austria	24. Julian Joost	34. Jeremy Tullett (MidCon committee)
5. Chetan Radia	15. Chris Martin	25. Dave Maletsky	35. Matthew Smith
6. Philipp Weissert Best England	16. Chris Brand Top Board	26. Simon Bouton	36. Jason O'Donnell
7. Greg Mostyn	17. Nathan Barnes	27. Ivan Woodward	37. David Norman (MidCon Committee)
8. Mark Wightman Best France	18. Laurent Joly	28. Dave Wreathall	38. Doc Binder
9. Alex Lebedev	19. Tom Haver	29. Shane Cubis	39. Sven Vasseur
10. Pete MacNamara Best Italy	20. David Wigglesworth	30. Owen Richards	40. Ben Barber

ManorCon XXXV - Results

This was our second year in Stamford Court. The impression continues to be that this is an improvement to John Foster Hall as a venue, so we will be looking for ManorCon to remain there for the foreseeable future. A few changes were made to the room configuration following our experience from 2016, moving the bar and the quiet gaming room to more suitable locations, both of which seem to have worked out well, so we will be looking to retain the same layout for 2018.

2017 was the largest ManorCon since WorldDipCon in 2004, and up over 10% on last year. But despite this, we never ran out of table space, and still have a few spare tables, which could be put out if needed. So we hope to continue to see new faces in the coming years.

18XX

The 18XX tournament had 22 players playing 16 games, a small decrease from last year's high. The games included three 1858, two 1846, two 1817, and one each of 1867, 1837, 1862 EA, 18BF, 1761, 1861, 18Ireland, 1837 l'Hexagone, and 1822. Although last year's champion Lyndon Gurr had three wins from five games, he could not compete with Steve Thomas' four wins from five games. Congratulations to Steve on winning the tournament.

Rank	Name	Games	Wins	Score
1	Steve Thomas	5	4	115.22
2	Lyndon Gurr	5	3	110.79
3	Dave Berry	3	1	84.44
4	Danny Victor	4	1	75.23
5	Francis Tresham	1	1	69.33
6	Jon Draper	5	2	67.85
7	Dave Thorby	5	1	66.89
8	Ian D. Wilson	4	2	63.78
9	Chris Dawe	1	0	60.38
10	John Boocock	4	0	59.84
11	Richard Walker	1	0	58.65
12	Mikaela Munlander	1	0	52.40
13	Tudor Badae	5	0	52.11
14	Marcus Barber	1	0	49.23
15	Oliver Burnett-Hall	5	1	45.53
16	Geoff Hardingham	3	0	42.95
17	Richard Clyne	2	0	40.86
18	Hamish Hamilton	3	0	37.21
19	Richard Wyncoll	1	0	32.84
20	Antero Kuusi	2	0	26.56
21	Colin Smith	4	0	15.91
22	John Hopkins	3	0	15.00

Midnight Party

As ever, there were three rounds, played at midnight on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Rank	Name	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Overall
1	Mike Townsend	12	10		7.33
2	Timothy Luffingham		12		6.00
3	Ian Wilson	8	8	6	5.50
3	Steve Guest	10	3	9	5.50
5	Dave Holmes	6	10	4	5.00
5	Tanya Lim	5	8	7	5.00
5	Stuart Malaure	9	6		5.00
8	John Mitchell	7	6	4	4.25
9	Alan Bellamy	3	4		2.33
10	Dave Cowie	5	1	1	1.75
11	Richard Beattie			3	1.50
11	Gemma Haigh	3			1.50
13	John Harrington			2	1.00
13	James Faulkner		2		1.00
15	Chris Burnham	1			0.50

Pop Quiz

Dan Lester set the questions once again. It was really, really hard!

Rank	Name	Score
1	Martin Burrowed Out	82½
2	Team Fat Bastard	70½
3	Olives Army	64
4	Don't Call Us, We'll Call You	60
5	Are you Jerry	54½
6	Team Mars	51½
7	Team 6 Near The Bar	51

Game Sales

The shop and the second hand games sale are now both entrenched as an integral part of ManorCon. This year was the last year for Milestone Games running the games sale as they enter retirement (and hopefully will be at ManorCon next year, just to play games). We are working on a new shop to take their place for 2018.

The second hand games sale saw 450 games put up for sale; almost 50% of those were sold. The highest price paid was £50, the lowest 50p. The average selling price was just over £10. Thanks go to Steve Bailey for taking on the organisation of the sale, along with his helpers, Colin Evans, Richard Wyncoll and the Escape Games mob.

Treasure Hunt

28 people in 5 teams tried to uncover the fake news. It was really, really hard!

Winners: The Firefoxes – Claire Bennett, Mark Fox, Chris Martin, James Richardson, Lucy Richardson, Mark Rigby-Jones

Despite not being on the winning team, Phil Hannay has agreed to lead the organisation of next year's treasure hunt.

Your Feedback

Thank you to everybody who filled in a feedback form.

Once again, the biggest issue was the food, but somehow the problems seem to change every year. It looks like each year we fix one issue and something else goes wrong... This year's core problem was the kitchen being unable to provide enough food fast enough. From what we understand, this was due to a lack of staff, which in turn is due to a recent restructure in the organisation of the catering team. We have made our feelings on this very clear to the University at the end of the convention – their internal issues should not be affecting their customers – and we will be raising the issues we had once again in advance of ManorCon next year to ensure they do not reoccur.

Following our experiences in 2016, the bar was moved to a more suitable room, which solved a lot of the space problems we'd had. This year, the bar stock included a barrel of lager and a barrel of cider, as well as an additional barrel of real ale. The real ale sold out by Sunday night, so we will be going for the same number of barrels again. The cider was also a big hit, selling out by Saturday morning, so we will be significantly increasing the stock of this for 2018. But the lager didn't sell, so we will be dropping this – although there will still be cans/bottles of lager available.

The bar did have issues with a lack of soft drinks, and a lack of sufficient staff. We have relayed this back to the University so that they can resolve it for next year.

We had feedback on a number of other issues, which we have passed on to the University – lack of rubbish bins, coffee machines moving around, room service being far too early in the morning. Hopefully these can all be resolved for 2018.

There were complaints about the students from the language schools singing in the early hours of the morning. We have raised this issue with the University who will hopefully stop a repeat happening, but if it does happen, a call can be made to the porters who will then deal with it at the time.

And we had feedback on a number of issues we can do nothing about – lack of phone signal in the gaming rooms, the bedrooms being too hot (despite the heating being turned off – the building is just too well insulated!), and the quality of the chairs. Unfortunately these are all out of our hands...

Finally, we had feedback on the questionnaire layout, which was less than ideal... Unfortunately it got messed up moving between different versions of MS Word, and we didn't spot it until they were all printed and it was too late. Fortunately in most cases, people spotted this themselves (it was hard not to!) and made their answers clear enough to understand.

Thanks

ManorCon is run completely by volunteers. Some of those volunteers are daft enough to call themselves the committee, and spend 12 months a year organising ManorCon. But they could not do it by themselves. Therefore we'd like to thank everybody else who helped with the running of ManorCon XXXV:

For their help on the Registration Desk: Clare Bennett, David Buckley, Peter Campbell, Kath Collman, Jerry Elsmore, Karianne Fog Heen, James Goodman, Bill Mayling, Graham Miller, Helen Payne, Eva Raikidou, Paul Regulski.

For organising tournaments: Paul Grogan, Steve Guest, Dan Lester, Robin Walters.

For hosting the convention, and being as helpful and friendly as always, the University of Leicester.

Rounding Things Up

Numbers were significantly higher than last year at 262, the highest since ManorCon last hosted WorldDipCon in 2004. There were 231 people on Friday, 255 on Saturday, 245 on Sunday, and 161 on Monday. The number of rooms used was 208, which is also highest since 2004. Internet bookings increased to 82% with 18% of advanced bookings being made postally.

We look forwards to seeing you at ManorCon XXXVI, the same week as 2017 – 20th to 23rd July 2018.

To contact the committee, e-mail info@manorcon.org.uk. More information can be found on the ManorCon website, www.manorcon.org.uk.

Boardgame Week at Le Pas Opton, Western France (David Norman)

This year I decided to attend the fifth Boardgame Week at Le Pas Opton, a Christian campsite close to the Atlantic coast of France.

The idea is simple. Once the high season has ended, 60 boardgamers take over the campsite for a week. The gaming is in the events area of the main building, with the accommodation in the mobile homes on the site.

As well as the boardgaming, there is also the opportunity to do various other activities, including using the open air swimming pool on site, driving the few miles to the local beach, and visiting various other sights in the local area.

The week started with a meet at a pub in Portsmouth, close to the ferry terminal. About 16 of us, and five cars, went from there on the overnight ferry to San Malo. The organisers had already matched up people with spare space in their car with people who had got to Portsmouth on public transport, so that all the ferry and driving costs could be shared. The ferry trip saw a couple of games played, but a force 8 gale meant most people didn't want to play for too long before going to their cabins to sleep! Once in France, it was a three-hour drive to the campsite. People found their accommodation, unpacked the games, and then the gaming started. More people arrived throughout the day, having either taken different ferry routes over, or having flown in to the local airport.

The games played varied from the typical games seen at other conventions - there was quite a bit of games such as Tzolk'in, Splendor, Istanbul and Agricola, played - to a variety of lighter games. And there was a wide variety of gamers, from those who'd been to Boardgame Week before, those who'd been to other conventions before, and those for whom it was their first convention. There was also a mixture of people - those who were there for the games and the religious activities, those who were only interested in the boardgames, and some who had been to La Pas Opton before for a Christian week, but for this week were just there to play games. The message from the start was that the religious activities were open to all who want them, and if you don't, that's absolutely fine.

In some ways, it was very similar to any other convention, but in some ways it was significantly different. Because it was 7 days long, there was no rush to play as many games as possible, there was time to relax, do other things, and still leave a lot of time to play games during the week. Conventions can sometimes be a difficult place to find people to play with if you don't already know people, but because so many people were there for the first time, there were a lot of people in this position, so it wasn't a problem. And if you didn't know anybody at the start, you certainly did by the end of the week.

Probably the only disappointment of the week was the weather. Actually, that's not true. The disappointment was the weather forecast! Pretty much every day, the forecast said the weather would be OK at first, but raining by mid-afternoon - so not the weather to go to the beach or go and see the local sights, etc. But then every day, the rain didn't arrive until late evening, if at all. On the plus side, not going off-site meant even more time for games! And in the end, we just ignored the weather forecast and went to the beach anyway - and while rather too cool for sitting on the beach, it still made for a good walk, and once again, the rain didn't arrive as forecast.

The homeward day was rather a long day - off the site at 9am to drive 5 hours up to Caen to catch the ferry home. A couple of hours waiting for the ferry, then 6 hours to cross the channel. 80 minutes waiting to get through passport control (probably because it was 3 days after the latest terrorist attack in London), and then another 2 hours to drive home, getting in just after midnight.

All in all, an enjoyable and relaxing week, and certainly one I plan to do again next year.

MidCon 2017 Report (Jeremy Tullett)

The Convention

MidCon XXXVIII takes place in the comfortable Hallmark Hotel in Derby from Friday morning (9am) to Sunday evening (6pm).

Car parking

There will definitely be an £4/day car park charge to be paid at the meter or at reception.

A day's parking at £4 is for up to 24 consecutive hours.

Reception is open 24 hours a day so there would be no problem with registering vehicles. There is no need to worry about clamping this is "not something we do".

I have had a look at the text on the parking meters, and I recommend that all visitors using the car parks at either the Hotel or the Inn register their cars at the appropriate reception, as this seems to be the best way of being charged correctly.

Seven Needed for a Game of Diplomacy

I have had a request from a group of people who were at WorldDipCon to run a game of Diplomacy. As there are three or more of them, this looks feasible. Please let me know if you would like to play, as it does seem likely that we could organise something.

Convention Registration

As of 1st October, we have around 120 registrations, which is a little above the best previous year at the same distance out. Hotel singles are all sold, and hotel twins have almost gone, so register quickly if you want to be certain of getting your favoured room type.

If you would like to join us at **MidCon**, please complete the form on the back page and return it with the appropriate convention fee to:

Jeremy Tullett, **MidCon**, 7 Midland Place, Derby, DE1 2RR,
or register electronically at www.MidCon.org.uk.

The Final Word

This issue of The Queen's Lane Advertiser was brought to you by:

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who put it all together, and David Norman, who arranged for the printing and distribution.

MidCon 2017 Booking Form

Tell us who you are:

Name(s)			
Address			
		Tel:	
Post code			
E-mail			

Registration Fee: tick the appropriate box(es). Registration fees are not refundable.

Fri/Sat/Sun (Book before 1 st Nov) £25	Fri/Sat/Sun (Book after 1 st Nov) £30	Friday only £15	Saturday only £15	Sunday only £10

Payment for the Registration Fee (tick box)

PayPal (visit www.MidCon.org.uk for details)	
Sterling cheque (made out to "MidCon Convention") / Cash (delete as appropriate)	
Transfer to "MidCon Convention", Lloyds TSB Colmore Row 30-00-03 03033129	

Please provide your name and postcode as a reference with direct transfers. We *cannot* collect convention fees from credit cards.

Bed and breakfast prices per room per night

	Thu / Sun	Fri / Sat	Twins / doubles are available for single occupancy, at the full room rate. The convention closes 6pm Sunday, but anyone wishing to stay on Sunday night will get the Friday / Saturday room rate. <i>Charges to your room are your responsibility, and are to be paid on departure.</i>
Hallmark Hotel Single	SOLD	OUT	
Hallmark Hotel Double (Twin rooms sold out)	£80.00	£80.00	
Hallmark Inn Single	£54.00	£54.00	
Hallmark Inn Twin / Double	£67.00	£67.00	

Please note that there will be an £4 / day parking fee, payable in the hotel car park, or at reception.

Our bedroom allocation is held until mid-October: YOU ARE ADVISED TO BOOK AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE.

After 1st. November 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.

Inn or Hotel?	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	The cancellation policy of the hotel is complicated; please seek advice from a member of the <i>MidCon</i> committee if you have to cancel to minimise your financial exposure.
N ^o . of single rooms					
N ^o . of twin rooms					
N ^o . of double rooms					
Sharing with ...					

Accommodation deposit (tick box)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Credit card	16 digit number:	Expiry:	You give permission for <i>MidCon</i> to pass the credit card details to the hotel to reserve your room.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cheque	50% of room costs	Payable to "Hallmark Hotel"	

When complete, return this form, together with your registration fee (payable to "MidCon Convention") to: Jeremy Tullett, MidCon, 7 Midland Place, Derby, DE1 2RR