Octopus's Garden

Issue Seventy

20th February 2011

Sub-editorial

HELLO, good evening and welcome to Octopus's Garden, the subzeen with its very own Railway Rivals game. It's a subzeen to Jim Burgess' The Abbysinian Prince. Produced by Peter Sullivan, peter@burdonvale.co.uk. It's also available on the web at http://www.burdonvale.co.uk/octopus/.

More Convention News

In an exciting development, I've decided this time to talk about a convention *before* it actually happens. I know, radical, huh?

This year is the 29th Manorcon, at the University of Leicester venue where they resettled a few years back after leaving long-time venue the University of Birmingham. Dates are 15th to 18th July 2011, and the event will feature all the usual tournaments (Diplomacy, 18XX, Dominion, Puerto Rico, St Petersburg, Acquire, Race for the Galaxy and Midnight Party, as well as the Croquet tournament). Further details are available on the website at http://www.diplom.org/manorcon/.

I note that the bar is hoping to have real glass glasses this year; apparently, last year's plastic glasses were a condition imposed by the licensing magistrates, "in case the gamers got too rowdy." Of course, I've learned to take stories about the Manorcon bar with a pinch of salt. When I was on t'committee, there was the year that we were denied the traditional bar extension to midnight. The story going around was that it had been denied because we were sharing the venue with a netball convention, and that the prim and proper young ladies had to be protected from hordes of ravening drunk gamers. The reality was actually much more prosaic. Apparently, we had for years been granted the bar extension on the basis that the University were providing us with a "conference dinner." This was technically true - in that the cafeteria was open for food from 5 until 6 (although most attendees on a Saturday night preferred Imrans). But it wasn't really a "conference dinner" in the sense that the licensing magistrates had understood it. That is, as you would have at an academic conference. Once they cottoned on, no more bar extension.

Of course, having applied for and been refused an extension, we were then subject to a police inspection, just to make sure that the University wasn't going to just ignore the refusal, and go on serving anyway. (The reality is there was no way either we or they were going to risk their license.) This turned completely surreal when a local gamer, who was a policeman in real life, turned up in uniform to do the inspection, having just been at the convention that afternoon. He manfully resisted the temptation to join in a quick session of whatever the cult game was that year, explaining "I'm on duty."

Round 2 — "Hannibal Hamlin"

Railway Rivals Map FR

SOUTHERN RESORTS NO LONGER SO UNIVERSALLY POPULAR — Northern and Western Railroads Bloom

NERTZ (William Whyte, USA.) [purple]
    2a) S25-R25 ;
    2b) (R25) - Lyon [+6] - P26 - O26 - N26 - M26 ;
    2c) (M26) - L26 - K26 - I27 - G26.
    =20+6+5[R]=31
LOSER (Geoff Challinger, UK.) [blue]
    2a) (Paris) - G58 - G57 ;
    2b) (G57) - Rouen [+6] - H55 - LeHavre [+6] ; G58 - H58 ;
    2c) (H58) - I59 - Amiens - M60 - Lille [-9 Fw].
    =23+12+8[R]+4[Fw]-9[Fw]=38
FRAK IT (W. Andrew York, USA.) [black]
    2a) (Z19) - Orleans [+6] - Z16 ;
    2b) (Z16) - Z11
    2c) (Z11) - Z9 - Rennes [+6] ; (Z9) - Nantes [+6].
    =23+18=41
FWOGGIE (Brendan Whyte, Aus.) [red, becoming green]
    2a) (Paris) - H57 ;
    2b) (H57) - Amiens [+6] - M60 ;
    2c) (M60) - Dunkerque [+6] & buys ferry [-6] ; (M60) - Lille [+6] ; (H57) - H54 [-4 L].
    =23+18-6[ferry]+5[R]-4[L]+9[L]=45
RENAISSANCE (Robin ap Cynan, UK.) [yellow]
    2a) (W26) - U27 - T26 ;
    2b) (T26) - S27 - Lyon - P26 - O26 [-5 N] ;
    2c) (Paris) - G58 [-5 Fw] - G57 [-8 L] - Dieppe & buys ferry [-6].
    =23-5[N]-5[Fw]-8[L]-6[Ferry]=-1

GENEVA:
Lots of juicy cross-payments there; let me know if you think I've got anything wrong. In particular, note that FWOGGIE and RENAISSANCE cross over at H58 simultaneously, so neither pays the other. Remember that parallels built in the *same* round are only 1 point per half hex, plus one for the junction as usual. Also, neither of these apply inside a city hex. Which I believe David Watts has always acknowledged isn't necessarily logical, but which enourages people to (realistically) connect at cities, rather than generate "Bristol Parkway"s all over the map.
With Brad no longer with us, Brendan asks "Please change someone to green!", volunteering "(me if necessary)". With electronic maps rather than paper, this is fairly easy to do, so see above.
Rolls for Round Three: 4 - 4 - 5.
The deadline for Round Three orders is SATURDAY, 12th MARCH, 2011 to Peter Sullivan,
peter@burdonvale.co.uk

No **PRESS**

That was Octopus's Garden #70, A Startling Press production.