

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

Midcon 2006 10th – 12th November 2006, Thistle Birmingham City Hotel

MidCon 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 adults, including a Diplomacy tournament
- the **MidCon** music quiz on Friday evening
- the **MidCon** quiz for teams of 4 on Saturday evening
- the chance to buy even more board games

MidCon is primarily about playing games and meeting people. You can play any of the number of games people have brought along with them, which may include spending the weekend playing 18xx or Diplomacy. People have even been known to stay up late, drink too much and lose the shirt off their backs– but we don't recommend it.

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's an adjacent car park.

Editorial – The pre-MidCon Fret (Jeremy Tullett)

So, October comes around again, and I again start to worry about whether we shall have enough registrations to make the convention viable.

In 2005, for the third year running, we had around 95 people attend, of which perhaps a quarter registered on the weekend, the highest proportion so to do whilst I have been on the committee. Financial break-even for the convention requires around 80 attendees, and the hotel could, under the terms of its contract, penalise us if we don't fill the rooms that we request in advance, so it is a bit nerve-wracking, really until MidCon Sunday.

This year, John Harrington and Paul Oakes have kindly been doing some extra publicity for me. I do not know what influence this has had, but this year's registrations certainly contain a number of people who are unfamiliar to me. A number of MidCon regulars, though, have yet to register. If they do, we could be heading for a record in recent years, and rooms at the hotel may run out! If you want to come, and wish to stay at the Birmingham City Thistle, take this as a prompt. There's not much time left!

As of today (18th October), the following have registered:

Jeremy Tullett	Tony Wheatley	Tebandeke Tadeo
Bill O'Neil	Simon Cutforth	Geoff Hardingham
Neil Palfreyman	Mike Oakes	Marek Siejka
Steve Kearon	John Davidson	Adam Siejka
Angela Crick	Steve Jones	Alan Gates
Jeff Edmunds	Dave Thorby	Malcolm Booker
Dane Maslen	Ian Wilson	Mark Eddie
Danny Victor	Barrington Beavis	Richard Minson
Jon Gilbert	Dave Allen	Alessandro Lala
Mark Green	Mark Stretch	Davide de Martino
David Hecht	Peter Card	Richard Beattie
Chris Boote	Geert Lagrou	Peter Eldridge
Peter Haslehurst	Hugh Webbely	John Colledge
Nick Kinzett	Paul Oakes	John Harrington
Keith Thomasson	Mike Head	Dave Cooper
Paul Evans	Geraldine Evans	John Boocock
Fiona Bowes	Adam Huby	

If your name is not on this list, then I have not received a registration fee and/or a room reservation request from you.

I have had some specific queries about this year's MidCon:

Will there be a Diplomacy tournament? I will run a Diplomacy tournament if there is enough demand. There will not be a *National Diplomacy Championship*, as a title that has fewer than 20 people fighting for it is meaningless. The format of the tournament will depend on how many people wish to play, but there will probably only be rounds on the Saturday and Sunday.

Will there be a second-hand games stall? John Harrington is looking at the economics of this. Someone called "Noggs" also reckoned to have 80+ games to sell, and I hope that he is now talking with John about how we might move this along. I recognize that second-hand games sales are a big attraction.

Will there be a new games stall? I have had two offers to run a stall, but not from our usual vendor (Dave Lunn). I don't yet know whose stall it will be yet, but there will be one.

What time does the convention start? The convention officially opens at **16:00** on Friday, so early arrivals should not expect the convention rooms to be open before then (although they might be). We are using the Wroxton and Ariel suites.

We will be expected to vacate the Wroxton Suite (the main convention room) at **18:00** on Sunday, and attendees are requested to comply with requests from the hotel to vacate this room should they ask you so to do.

Technically, we do not have access to the Wroxton and Ariel suites between **23:00** and **08:00**, although in practice, I do not believe that anyone has ever been asked to leave. You are, however, asked to co-operate with all reasonable requests from the hotel staff.

The two rounds of any Diplomacy tournament will commence at **09:00** promptly on both Saturday and Sunday. Other tournaments are organized on an *ad hoc* basis. The awards ceremony will be at about **16:30** on Sunday, and marks the official end of the convention. After **18:00**, you are free to continue playing games in the lounge and bar areas.

How do I get there? The Thistle Birmingham City (formerly the Royal Angus) hotel is at St. Chads, Queensway in Birmingham city centre. There is a National Car Park attached to the hotel. The car park entrance is off St. Chad's Queensway past the Hotel Main Reception. If you need more help call the hotel on 0870 333 9126.

By train: The two major railway stations are Birmingham New Street (served by Cross-Country services, regional services and trains from London Euston) or Birmingham Snow Hill (slower, cheaper trains from London Marylebone). Birmingham's New Street station is about 10 minutes walk to the hotel. The other city centre station is Snow Hill, which exits onto Colmore Row.

By car from the M5: Take the Junction 3 Exit and follow the A456 City Centre signs. Continue down A456 through Underpass until you come to Paradise Circus. Take the 3rd exit down the hill (Great Charles Street) to St. Chad's Circus. Then take the 4th exit. Take the next left, then left again which will bring you to the rear of the Thistle Birmingham City hotel. Follow the road around to the left to bring you to the front of the hotel. The car park entrance is immediately after the front of the hotel.

By car from the M6: Take Junction 6 and follow the A38M City Centre signs. This brings you onto a dual carriageway. The Thistle Birmingham City hotel is the 4th Exit situated after the flyover. The hotel is immediately on your left hand side. **Do not go through the underpass.** The car park entrance is immediately after the front of the hotel.

By car from the M40: From the M40 join the M42 North and get onto the A34 into Birmingham. Get onto the Stratford Road. Follow City Centre signs into Digbeth. Then follow signs for The Bullring. Then follow the road around to the right. Take 2nd left exit at the island. Carry on straight onto the next island. Take the first left and go past the General Hospital and carry on for approximately 500 yards. This will bring you to the front of the Thistle Birmingham City hotel. The car park entrance is immediately after the front of the hotel.

Parking: - Parking is available at the NCP next to the Hotel. Guests of the Thistle Birmingham City hotel are advised to park on Levels 11 and 12, where surveillance cameras and floodlighting in darkness hours are provided. Access to the hotel is gained from Level 3a of the Car Park where there is a bridge. Guests will have to pay (there is now barrier where there used to be none), but the hotel reception offers a reduced rate parking charge on departure.

Alternatively, visit www.multimap.com (or similar), and search for the postcode B4 6HY.

MidCon '06 Booking Form

We will not accept bookings after 1st November. After that date, please book directly with the hotel. We will take your registration fee of £18 at the convention.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Tel: _____

Email: _____

Others covered by this registration:

Please register me/us at **MidCon '06** at £15 per person for the convention (**goes up to £18 on the door!**), or at the appropriate daily rate. Convention fees are NOT refundable.

I enclose a cheque / PO (payable to " MidCon ") for £ _____ <i>or</i> please charge my Visa / MasterCard via PayPal for my registration fee only . The name on my credit card is: _____ The card type is: _____ The credit card number is: _____ The expiry date is: _____ The 3 digit security code on the reverse is: _____

Electronic bookings can now be taken through www.boardgamers.org.uk

Accommodation

Please reserve the following rooms at the rate of £47.00 per person per night for a single room and £37.50 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.

* I hereby give permission for **MidCon** to pass my credit card details to the Hotel to reserve my room

* I enclose a cheque for 50% of the total cost of my room booking, payable to "Thistle Birmingham City Hotel", as a deposit.

* delete as applicable (you must select one of these options or we cannot reserve you a room)

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

	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
No. of single rooms			
No. of twin rooms			
No 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 soon (July 2006) at www.midcon.org.uk.

The Thistle hotel chain often offers cheap rooms in Birmingham during November at a rate below that of MidCon. Anyone taking advantage of this offer needs to be aware of the 'small print', noting that breakfast *may* not be included in the price, and that there *may* be no guarantee of which of the Birmingham Thistle hotels (there are three) the room will be in.

Details of your booking are stored on computers. We do not sell our mailings lists to any other individuals or organisations, but we may share them with other games conventions.

OxCon 2007 Progress Report (James Rogers)

Things are coming together very nicely for OxCon 2007, which is scheduled for the 20th-21st of January. We have confirmed almost all the arrangements for the convention - the main things obviously being the tournaments, which form the centrepieces of the convention.

Things will be a little different this year, with the all-new OxCon Puerto Rico tournament replacing the Diplomacy tournament, which has previously taken place on the Saturday. I will run this and I am currently in the process of liaising with the organizers of other Puerto Rico tournaments to work out the best format for it.

Saturday's other big attraction is its fifteen-to-one style quiz, which takes place after the end of the Puerto Rico. Dave Percik has run this in previous years and we are delighted to say that he has agreed to be question master for us once again.

Regrettably, James Pinnion, another stalwart of the convention's success, is unable to run the Settlers of Catan tournament for us at this year's convention. However, this year's tournament will still run along the same lines as last year's, albeit with a new tournament director. As with the Puerto Rico on Saturday this will be starting at 11am sharp with registration by no later than 10.50.

Further information about Oxcon is available on our website <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~diplo/oxcon/>. This link will provide you with information about this year's event but there are also links to reports about previous OxCons on the page. Briefly, the event will be taking place at the Mitre public house in Oxford city centre and prices are as follows:

Admission (and free entry into 15-to-1 and Lost Cities tournaments) = £4

Entry into Puerto Rico tournament = £7

Entry into Settlers tournament = £7

Comprehensive Weekend Entrance Fee = £10

All prices are half price for full-time students and unwaged people.

We look forward very much to seeing you.

James Rogers and the Oxcon team

UK Board Games Conventions Homepage (David Norman)

A new website has recently been launched, in order to promote UK Board Games Conventions on the Internet. <http://www.boardgamers.org.uk> is intended to bring together information about all the games conventions in the UK in one central place. The site complements the work of The Queen's Lane Advertiser - indeed one of the things you can find on the site is an archive of all the recent issues of The Queen's Lane Advertiser.

In the long term, the site will contain details of all upcoming conventions, gaming groups, and shops which sell hobby games in the UK. However, that part of the site is still under construction. In the meantime, it links through to the information provided on The Labyrinth website, <http://homepage.ntlworld.com/the-labyrinth/games/>. Thanks to Chris Dawe for providing and maintaining this information.

One thing that the site already contains is a Games Convention Booking System. Participating conventions can use this system to accept Internet bookings for their conventions. MidCon is already using it, so if you want to book your place at MidCon over the Internet, then you can do so. Just go to <http://www.boardgamers.org.uk> and click on Online Booking System. Registration fees are paid using PayPal, so if you have a PayPal account, you can use that to pay, or alternatively you can pay by credit card into the PayPal system.

If there is anything else you think should be on the site, then please feel free to make suggestions.

UK Games Expo 2007 (Richard Denning)

UK GAMES EXPO 2007

“Everything about games”

2nd to 3rd June 2007

The Clarendon Suites

2 Stirling Road, Edgbaston,

Birmingham B16 9SB

www.UKGamesExpo.co.uk

2007 sees the launch of UK Games Expo. We aim to be a showcase for all that is best, fun and fascinating in the world of games. Whether it is board games, card games, miniatures, computer gaming or role playing games we aim to present it all in an event which will be entertaining and appeal to men, women, children and in particular families.

Although there are many people who will play these games in the UK we have long been in the shadow of the huge and great European and US gaming conventions attended by tens of thousands. More people for example attended the great Spiel festival in Essen, Germany last October than went to the BBC Good Food Show at the NEC. UK Games Expo intends to try and create an all-inclusive show that appeals to serious gamers but also the public.

At UK Games Expo traders, manufacturers and producers of games will have trade stands with the latest board games, war games figures, collectible card games and role-playing books available to browse and buy. There will be many participation and demonstration games to join in including a western gunfight, radio controlled tank battles, car racing games, pirates and much more. There will be LAN gaming and massively multiplayer online games for you to try out and play.

We are encouraging board games producers to attend. In the first year we hope to attract several to demo their games. As I write this we have commitment from Ragnor Brothers who promise a brand new game for release at the show, JKLM games and Burley games. Spirit Games and Bishop games will attend and bring a large trade presence. We plan to hold a Best British Board Game Award at the event to attract the British Board Games companies.

For the competitive games player we have tournaments in Magic, Dungeons and Dragons Miniatures, Wizkids games, board games and war games.

Just expanding on this area in terms of board games we plan a Memoir 44 tournament. On the Saturday will be a single event and on the Sunday a team event. There is also a Settlers tournament, Carcassonne, Puerto Rico and Acquire event planned.

The event venue will be open from 8am till 6pm (possibly longer) both days. But in addition we are taking a room in the adjacent hotel to enable gamers who wish to play games into the night.

The venue is located in Birmingham, which has long had a tradition of being a premier location for conventions and exhibitions and is easily accessed from around the country. A local curiosity is that the venue is adjacent to the TWO TOWERS that inspired Tolkien in his writings and close to a school he attended and a Hotel he stayed in occasionally. The venue is close to Birmingham's broad street and its pubs and restaurants.

We recommend accommodation at the **Thistle Hotel, Edgbaston**. That is also where the Saturday evening room will be booked and is 50 yards from the convention hall.

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 £85 B&B

Contact the Thistle Hotel yourselves. Mention the booking is for UK Games Expo at the Clarendon Suite and you are booking under the special rates.

Thistle Birmingham Edgbaston - 225 Hagley Rd, Birmingham, B16 9RY - 0121 455 9777

If you are a trader please contact me by email on Richard@UKGamesExpo.co.uk and I will send you an exhibitor pack. As a gamer you will be able to book into the event either via the web site from later in the year, or else I will add a postal booking form to a later issue of QLA. If you want any further information in the mean time email me (my preferred option) on Richard@UKGamesExpo.co.uk or phone me on 0121 373 8522 (answer phone available). If you email or phone indicating you want to come we will take details and alert you when booking is available.

So why not get the date (2nd and 3rd June 2007) booked into your diary right now.

Forthcoming Conventions

MidCon 2006 The Thistle Hotel, Birmingham www.midcon.org.uk 10-12 November 2006	OxCon 2007 The Mitre Inn, High Street, Oxford 20-21 January 2007	BayCon Exeter Court Hotel, Kennford, Devon www.baycon.co.uk 12th to 15th April 2007
MayCon Heathrow, London www.maycon.org 25-28th May 2007	UK Games Expo The Clarendon Suites, 2 Stirling Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham www.UKGamesExpo.co.uk 2-3 June 2007	ManorCon Stamford Hall, University of Leicester www.manorcon.org.uk 20-23 July 2007

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Editor : Jeremy Tullett
Coordinator : David Norman
Distribution: Nick Kinzett

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.

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

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