

The Queen's Lane Advertiser

(Incorporating Convention News)

Issue Number 38

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Edited by Jeremy Tullett

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

Forthcoming Conventions

OxCon 2012 21-22 January 2012 The Mitre Pub High Street Oxford OX1 4AG	SorCon Ramada Hotel Colchester 2-4 March 2012 www.sorcon.co.uk	Pasteboard and Plastic 17 The Scout Hut, Saltdean, Brighton. 3 March 2012 http://tinyurl.com/3ex38k
TringCon XXIV Marsworth Village Hall Marsworth Nr. Tring Buckinghamshire 31 March 2012 www.fwtwr.com/tringcon	Raiders of the Game Cupboard XVIII The Salvation Army Citadel Mosley Street, Burton upon Trent DE14 1DR 31 March 2012 www.raidsofthegamecupboard.co.uk	BayCon 2011 Exeter Court Hotel Kennford Devon 12-15 April 2012 www.baycon.co.uk
Telford Mini-Con III Shifnal Village Hall Aston Street Shifnal TF11 8DW 28th April 2012 www.gameslore.com	Beer and Pretzels The Town Hall Burton-on-Trent Staffordshire 12-13 May 2012 www.spiritgames.co.uk/bnpdetails.php	UK Games Expo The Clarendon Suites 2 Stirling Road Edgbaston, Birmingham 25-27 May 2012 www.UKGamesExpo.co.uk
Raiders of the Game Cupboard XIX The Salvation Army Citadel Mosley Street, Burton upon Trent DE14 1DR 23 June 2012 www.raidsofthegamecupboard.co.uk	Summer StabCon 6th - 8th July 2012 Britannia Hotel Stockport bookings (at) stabcon.org.uk	Pasteboard and Plastic 18 The Scout Hut, Saltdean, Brighton. 7 July 2012 http://tinyurl.com/3ex38k
Manorcon XXX Stamford Hall University of Leicester. 20-23 July 2012 www.manorcon.org.uk	Raiders of the Game Cupboard XX The Salvation Army Citadel Mosley Street, Burton upon Trent DE14 1DR 29 September 2012 www.raidsofthegamecupboard.co.uk	TringCon XXV Marsworth Village Hall Marsworth Nr. Tring Buckinghamshire 29 September 2012 www.fwtwr.com/tringcon
Pasteboard and Plastic 19 The Scout Hut, Saltdean, Brighton. 10 November 2012 http://tinyurl.com/3ex38k	MidCon XXXIV Hallmark Hotel, Derby 9-11 November 2012 www.midcon.org.uk	Raiders of the Game Cupboard XXI The Salvation Army Citadel Mosley Street, Burton upon Trent DE14 1DR 29 December 2012 www.raidsofthegamecupboard.co.uk

ManorCon XXIX (David Norman)

ManorCon XXIX
Stamford Hall, University of Leicester
20-23rd July 2012

Following on from last year's successful convention, ManorCon will once again be held at Stamford Hall, University of Leicester, in 2012. With no major problems in 2011, ManorCon should be very similar in 2012. Following the refurbishment of some of the en-suite rooms in 2011, we will be using these in 2012. The remainder will be in the process of being refurbished in 2012. You are therefore advised to book early if you wish to guarantee an en-suite room. There should be plenty of standard singles as required.

Running from Friday lunchtime to Monday lunchtime, ManorCon will once again feature the Second Hand Game Sale on Friday and Saturday. The pop quiz will be on Saturday evening and the treasure hunt will once again be run on Sunday afternoon. Of course, there will be more games than you can shake a stick at.

There will be the usual tournaments, though with some of these having low numbers in 2011, we are looking for suggestions for new events to run. Please contact a member of the committee if you have any suggestions.

Cardiff Games will once again be running the games stall in 2012. If you have any special requests, let them know in advance and they will try their hardest to bring them along. There will also be a Second Hand Games Stall that, as happened in the past, will be in a separate room, and will be open on Friday evening and Saturday afternoon.

As in 2011, we have single and en-suite accommodation available on-site. However, once again, we will not have any twin accommodation available. For those of you who would prefer a twin (or double) room, we recommend either the Regency Hotel or the Belmont Hotel. Both are on the London Road, just inside the roundabout with the ring road. We had people staying at both of these in previous years, and both got good feedback from our attendees.

There is of course a bar, and we are working to make sure that the Real Ale is up to standard.

Included with this issue of QLA, you should find a booking form. You can also download the booking form (and find lots of other ManorCon information) on the ManorCon website, www.manorcon.org.uk. Please note the booking deadline - 16th June 2012. If you need any further information, please feel free to contact us:

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

By phone: ++44 (0)1234 405878

By e-mail: info@manorcon.org.uk

OxCon 2012 (Robert Pope)

OxCon 2012 will be held on the 21st and 22nd of January, at The Mitre Pub on Oxford High Street, (OX1 4AG). The room is booked until the closing time of the pub on both days. Casual games will be going on through both days, along with the Puerto Rico tournament on the Saturday and the Settlers of Catan tournament on the Sunday. While we have a few copies of these games, any extra copies that could be used for the event would be greatly appreciated. The tournaments will begin at 11:00 on each day but we ask that competitors arrive 10 minutes before this so that we can start

promptly. There will of course be prizes for the winners of these tournaments.

On Friday 20th there will be the traditional pre-OxCon going for a meal (probably Pizza Express) before returning to the society's usual meeting place for some games. If you are interested in this please email me at the address below so I can get an idea for numbers. I'm sure there will also be a trip to a local Indian restaurant on the Saturday that people are welcome to come along to.

The cost will be £4 entry (for the whole weekend) plus £3 for each tournament you wish to enter. We hope to see lots of you there, with lots of exciting games, as well as some classics. If you have any questions, please get in touch with me at robert.pope@sjc.ox.ac.uk.

MidCon XXXIII Report (Jeremy Tullett)

I think that it is safe for me to say that 2011's MidCon at its new venue in Derby was a great success, as was EDC XIX, of which more later.

This is not just the view of the committee. All of the spontaneous feedback that we received from the games players was highly supportive, and the hotel staff also remarked what a pleasure it had been to host the event.

The total number of registrations was the second highest recorded under the present committee's stewardship, which also vindicated our decision to move, and we were pleased to welcome back some 'blasts from the past' who had essentially stopped coming to MidCon after becoming thoroughly disenchanted with the Thistle in Birmingham.

After the event, I solicited further feedback, and these are the comments that I received. I have not reproduced all of them, but the following captures the general flavour.

FEEDBACK FOR MIDCON 2011

The hotel and gaming facilities were good though my shopping consultant did have reservations about the retail therapy provisions.

[JT] Derby hasn't quite the retail centre of Birmingham's Bull Ring, or Meadowhall, it is true, but I think there's more there than might have been imagined. I understand that the shoppers did get their retail therapy fix during the weekend, however.

I thought the hotel staff was excellent. Facilities were ok and room was fine. No complaints here. Looking forward to next one :) It won't be 5 years gap this time.

[...] great venue, which I really enjoyed. Appreciate the extremely close location to railway station! Prices reasonable too.

The only thing I would like to improve would be a room with the possibility to open some windows. After 4 hours negotiating you will feel it what it means not have a breath of fresh air once in while - some get even very tired or they get a headache.

Pricier than the Angus, until you factor in the car parking charges, at which point it becomes cheaper.

[JT] Actually, the rooms were the same price as Birmingham in 2010, and less than the Thistle had proposed for 2011. Car parking was free, as opposed to around £25 for the weekend.

[...] it would be good if some water could be made available, perhaps on the bar near where the tea and coffee flasks were. This would mean less disruption to gaming if we were able to fetch our own water rather than having to find a member of staff and request it. Tap water would be fine...!

The hotel was a world away from the Thistle experience (in a good way) even the breakfast (which was about the best bit of Birmingham) was better. I have no major observations, maybe the new games stall was a bit cramped but being by the bar is probably good for sales! We went to the Ghurkha restaurant on London Road on Saturday night and it wasn't closed or looking likely to close, I thought that it was very good.

[JT] My apologies for getting the two Nepalese Restaurants mixed up in the convention booklet. A number of people came back with positive reports about this place, and I also heard favourable reports about El Toro's tapas menu, and the hotel's own restaurant.

This was my second year of attendance and I enjoyed the con tremendously. I was in the hotel over the road and I thought it was excellent. I could not fault the organisation - friendly and helpful. My only gripe (and it is a very small gripe) is that the lighting at one or two of the tables in the main room was a bit dim in the evening. I appreciate that well lit gaming tables are not necessarily their core market, but perhaps a few free standing lights might help in future.

My suggestion to make it better is for the hotel to have some air coolers in the game rooms, after a couple of hours gaming the rooms – particularly the Caution Trains room became quite stuffy.

I thought the gaming rooms got rather full at peak times; because I tend to find a table at 9:00 and stick to it until evening, that wasn't a problem for me but I did see some groups of players looking for a place to sit down and play.

The only thing is that the bar was far away and to go for a quick fag (Diplo is so stressful!!) between two rounds was difficult.... so a closer exit door would have been appreciated.

[JT] For 2012 we have a smaller room lined up for the Diplomacy, which is much closer to the front door and the main bar. The main room was at its most crowded on Sunday morning, which was a bit of surprise, but the staff was very helpful about locating extra tables.

The manager did adjust the air-conditioning during the course of the weekend, but people should feel free to ask about such things. I assume that the windows are locked shut. As for lights, I can ask, but, even if they have them, trailing power cables might be rather hazardous.

We will probably relocate the games stall in 2012. Although it was handy for it to be by the bar, the space might have been better used. Overall, I think that we do have enough room for the event, but we can probably manage it a bit more cleverly, having seen how things panned out in 2011.

The selection of wine at the bar in the venue was not great. That was my only little quibble.

There was one large negative for us: the food. The hotel food was expensive and very poor, at least the food that we had. If the food could be improved or alternative arrangements made possible, that would improve the experience significantly in my opinion.

[JT] Not long after the present committee took over, we took a poll about the convention food, and at that time, people were reluctant to pay more than about £5 for their meal. Allowing for inflation, that is pretty much what you pay now, and, of course, you get what the chef can cook for that.

I am happy to put the price up, which might improve the standard a bit, although I felt that what we got for the money was at least acceptable, and the hotel appears to have been happy about the level of sales.

We probably did not make it clear enough that the hotel's main bar (near the main reception desk) was open throughout, and served a 'proper' bar menu, although at about £12 per meal it would probably be considered expensive. That bar also has a full range of drinks, and a pretty extensive (although not cheap) wine list, including several available by the glass

As a newcomer to MidCon it was not entirely obvious how I might get involved in games. As it happened, it didn't matter: I had John and Francis. However I wonder if a board inviting players to forthcoming games might be a useful attribute - or just a flag at the tables indicating that additional players would be welcome. If I'd been on my own it might have helped.

[JT] I can remember my first convention, and it is daunting if you don't know what to expect. Generally newcomers seem to land on their feet, although I should not assume this, of course. If I see someone looking very lost, I do try to find a 'mentor' – and players should always be comfortable to seek help from a committee member. Various ideas have been tried before, at MidCon and ManorCon, and have not worked, so if any reader has any suggestions, I'd be pleased to receive them.

MidCon XXXIV (Jeremy Tullett)

MidCon XXXIV (2012) is now confirmed for 9-11 November 2012, once again at the Hallmark Hotel, Derby.

Rooms are available at both the Hallmark Hotel and the Hallmark Inn, and room prices are unchanged from 2011, except for a small rise in the price of a single bedroom. The registration fee will rise, to cover the cost of three meeting rooms.

As usual, we encourage people to book rooms as soon as possible. There will be a booking form out shortly, but you don't really need one. If you want to get ahead, just email me your details.

UK Games Expo 2011 (Mick Pearson)

UK GAMES EXPO 2012

“Everything about games”

25th to 27th May 2012

The Clarendon Suites

2 Stirling Road, Edgbaston,

Birmingham B16 9SB

www.UKGamesExpo.co.uk

Dates and Times

Please note the change of weekend for UKGamesExpo 2012 – it is now the last weekend in May, this is due to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee being held on the first weekend in June and availability of the venue.

Boardgame Tournaments for 2012

The Grand Board Game tournament will now include a new trophy, in memory of Doug Massie, who many of you will know. Doug, a keen board gamer, tragically died earlier this year and the

trophy will be awarded to the winner of the Grand Board Game Tournament on an annual basis. Doug played in the Grand Board Game Tournament at Expo a number of times, and won it in 2008. Further details will be in the next issue of QLA. The Tournament will again be organised by David Norman and details of games are shown below.

Grand Boardgame Tournament Line-up

Saturday: Agricola, Settlers of Catan

Sunday am: Carcassonne, 7 Wonders

Sunday pm: Puerto Rico, St Petersburg

Settlers of Catan World Championship

Expo 2012 will be a very special time for Settlers of Catan players; the winner of the Settlers tournament at Expo will represent the UK at the World Settlers of Catan Championship, being held in Pennsylvania in the USA. The dates are 14-16 September 2012, which is Friday to Sunday. The location will be Normandy Farms, Blue Bells, Pennsylvania. The winner will be flown into Philadelphia Airport, Mayfair Games will collect contestants and take them to their hotel, which will also be paid for by Mayfair.

The 2011 UK Games Expo Settlers winner, Bijan Mehdinejad, will be there, but who will join him?

Could it be you?

The format for the World Championship play-off will be announced in the next issue of QLA.

In addition to Mayfair's involvement in the Settlers of Catan World Championship, the company will be at Expo as a major sponsor. They have a number of tables at Expo and will be demo-ing games throughout the weekend (further details of what games they will be demo-ing are a closely guarded secret at the moment). We are excited by this, as it will be the first UK Games Expo where a major US manufacturer will have such a presence at our show. We are looking forward to having Mayfair on board next year and hopefully into the future.

Carcassonne

As in previous years the winner of the Carcassonne tournament will be given entry to the 7th World Carcassonne Championship to be held during October 2012. Full details will appear in the next QLA.

Traders

Trade space for Expo 2012 is already selling fast and we are pleased to announce that so far we have 15 Board Game publishers who are taking space, they are: Mayfair Games, Spiral Galaxy, Tresham, CoiledSpring, Gungho, ATB, Chronicle City (former Cubicle 7 stalwart Angus Abranson's new company), Burley, Surprised Stare, Ragnar Brothers, Chaos Publishing, AEG, Medusa, Cubiko and Arctic Fox.

In addition the list of Retailers is as follows: Heron Games, Spirit Games, Gameslore, Northumbria Games, Prime Games and Leisure Games. There are likely to be more joining them.

Facebook

Due to changes in the Facebook terms and conditions as they apply to groups, which are now called pages, anyone who wants to remain (or join) the UKGamesExpo group should go to www.Facebook.com and find the group "UK Games Expo", then just click on 'like' to join. Alternatively you can sign up to both our Facebook page and Twitter feed from the front page of

our website. The link to our page is: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/UK-Games-Expo/119962004777238>

If you have any questions email me at mick@ukgamesexpo.co.uk

EuroDipCon XIX (Dave Simpson)

This year's Diplomacy tournament at MidCon was also EuroDipCon XVIII, so 22 players based in the UK were joined by 11 players from overseas in what was the largest tournament held in Britain for five years. Three rounds of Diplomacy over the Friday night and Saturday were the qualifying rounds to determine the top board, from which the winner of the tournament would come. The tournament format saw all games ending after a maximum of 7 game years, with c-Diplo scoring rewarding the player who topped the board, regardless of the gap between players. This is a European system, but one which has been played at MidCon before, so quite a lot of the Brits were familiar with it.

The Friday night saw all 33 players in attendance, so to make up 5 boards, Tournament Director Dave Simpson and evidently insane Mark Wightman both took two positions. The best results this round were Toby Harris (Germany) with 11 centres, Dan Lester (Austria) 10 and Peter McNamara (France) 9. All three of these players would make the top board.

Both of Saturday's rounds saw four boards being played. In the morning, the highlights were Rene van Rooijen (Russia) 12, Chetan Radia (Germany) 11 and Alex Lebedev (France) 9. Rene and Chetan went on to make it to the top board on Sunday. In the afternoon, Gwen Maggi (Germany) 12, Toby Harris (France) 11, Fabian Straub (Russia) 9 were the stand out individual performances, with Gwen making the top board also.

The final player to qualify for the top board was Vincent Reulet, who did not have to finish top of any of the three qualifying boards as he was incredibly consistent in all three rounds. Each of the players on the top board earned a 15% bonus on their score up to this point to help keep them ahead of the masses.

The Saturday afternoon round was also the team round, with nine teams of three players contesting that sub-tournament. Some teams were formed in advance over the interwebs, whilst some teams were so last minute that there was not really time for the team members to think up a name! (Yes, I'm looking at you, members of "Drive Faster Next Time" in which the TD exercised his prerogative to try to be funny and "Too late To Make Up A Name" where the TD evidently lost any inclination to be creative). The team competition was very close indeed, the top three teams being as follows:

54 points – Saddam, Gadaffi and the Ayatolla (Duncan Adams, Brian Frew, Toby Harris)

65 points – When I Reulet the World (Laurent Joly, Graeme Murphy, Vincent Reulet)

66 points – The Smokin' Joes (Gwen Maggi, Peter McNamara, Mark Wightman)

Sunday's top board was run in a separate room, with two other boards taking place in the main room. Only the winner of the tournament was guaranteed to come from the top board, so there was still plenty to play for on those other two boards. Mark Wightmans 10 centres and Igor Kurts 8 centres were enough to win those boards. On the top board, the first two years was quite cagey, then an alliance between the two French Players, Gwen (France) and Vincent (Germany) steadily disposed of Chetan's England, whilst the east continued to struggle to resolve itself. By 1905, Gwen was clearly ahead and he managed to maintain that advantage until game end to become the new European Champion.

This tournament was also the last event of the 2011 Tour of Britain, a series of tournaments which this year were dominated by one player, Graeme Murphy, who claimed his Tour of Britain victory on the back of two wins from the three events.

Congratulations to Gwen, Graeme and the Smokin' Joes on their wins!

	Player	Score	Awards		Player	Score	Awards
1	Gwen Maggi	128.35	Best Germany, Best Diplomat	19	Duncan Adams	34.4	
2	Toby Harris	113.33	Best France, Best Strategist	20	Emmanuel du Pontavice	31.2	Best Defender
3	Dan Lester	88.95	Best Austria	21	Tom Garrety	30.4	
4	Mark Wightman	88.4	Best Turkey	22	Bernard Andrioli	29.8	
5	Vincent Reulet	88.39		23	Francesco Conte	28.4	
6	Rene van Rooijen	87.75	Best Russia	24	Emeric Miszti	26.1	
7	Peter McNamara	81.95		25	Holger Fiedler	23.9	
8	Igor Kurt	75.0	Best England, Best Tactician	26	Robin Walters	18.8	
9	Fabian Straub	71.7		27	Andrew Havery	16.4	
10	Alex Lebedev	69.3		28	Rob Kinsey	12.6	
11	Chetan Radia	65.4		29	David Norman	7.0	
12	Brian Frew	58.7		30	Steve Agg	5.2	
13	Keith Smith	46.8		31	Stewart Nairn	5.0	
14	Graeme Murphy	43.8		32	Craig Nye	1.0	
15	Laurent Joly	42.64		NC	Dave Simpson	10.5	
16	Richard Bolton	39.8		NC	GM Position #1	2.0	
17	David Wigglesworth	39.5	Nicest Player	NC	GM Position #2	1.0	
18	Shaun Derrick	39.0	Best Italy				

The Queen's Lane Advertiser (incorporating Convention News)

Editor: Jeremy Tullett

Coordinator: David Norman

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\(at\)ellought.demon.co.uk](mailto:david(at)ellought.demon.co.uk)

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