

# Rules of the Diplomacy Virtual Tour of Britain 2023

## 1. Schedule and General Info:

Organizer and Tournament Director: Garry Sturley

Assistant TDs: Christopher Ward

Contact details:

Email: [maccdiplomacy@outlook.com](mailto:maccdiplomacy@outlook.com)

Website: [www.maccdiplomacy.org.uk](http://www.maccdiplomacy.org.uk)

Discord: @Garry Sturley#9081;

Location:

Games will be played on Backstabbr

The vWDC Discord server will be used to host all verbal and text chat, including roll call, negotiations, and all other aspects of communication.

Dates:

ROUND 1	Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup> March 2023
ROUND 2	Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup> April 2023
ROUND 3	Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> May 2023
ROUND 4	Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup> June 2023
ROUND 5	Saturday 8 <sup>th</sup> September 2023
ROUND 6	Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup> October 2023
ROUND 7	Saturday 11 <sup>th</sup> November 2023
ROUND 8	Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> November 2023

## 2. Rules:

- The Tour of Britain will use *The Rules of Diplomacy*, 5th Edition (2008). Available: [http://www.wizards.com/avalonhill/rules/diplomacy\\_rulebook.pdf](http://www.wizards.com/avalonhill/rules/diplomacy_rulebook.pdf)
- Tournament Rules take precedence over 2a.
- The TD for a round takes precedence over 2b.

- All negotiation will be conducted via Discord only. Voice channels are provided in each game board area for negotiation between powers. Direct messages on Discord are also permitted. The sanction for breaching this rule is disqualification from the round, and for a second offence disqualification from the tournament.

### 3. Player Eligibility

- a. To be eligible to play in the Tour, a player must provide the Organizer with a name, an email address, a Backstabbr ID, and they must join the vWDC Discord server. Players will not be permitted to play under an anonymous name, to ensure fair play (exception - players under the age of 18).
- b. The Tour is an open event, meaning that everyone, regardless of experience or ability, is welcome to play in each round. The only exceptions are players who have been banned by the TD, and players who are subject to disciplinary action under the Code of Conduct.
- c. Tournament Directors and GMs are eligible to play, but they will relinquish all TD and GM responsibilities to another TD/GM during that round, and will only play where there is no other option to make up the numbers. The TD/GM who is playing must act and be treated solely as if they are a normal player, with no additional rights or responsibilities during that round, and subject to all rules and TD/GM discretion. When a TD or GM will be playing, that must be announced by the acting TD/GM during board call.
- d. Substitutes can be asked to take over a position where a player cannot continue to play for any reason. Ideally a substitute will be a player who is already registered for the Tour, but who has not played in the current round. If unavoidable, a player eliminated from another board in the current round can be used. There is a general expectation that substitutes will act in good faith, for example only renegeing on existing alliances for sound reasons and not using the substitution as an opportunity to pursue grievances against other players on the same board. It is recognized that this is difficult to quantify and to police, so the GM will try to choose a substitute with a known track record of fair play. For scoring purposes, where a player is substituted the score shall be allocated to the player who finished the game only.

### 4. Assignments

- a. Board and country will be assigned randomly by the seeding software at <https://diplomacytv.com/>
- b. No player will play the same country twice in the tournament, if possible. However, with there being 8 rounds, some duplication is inevitable if a player plays in many or all of those rounds.
- c. Players must identify if they are physically co-located with other players or related to other players. Family members and individuals physically co-located with other players will not be seeded on the same board, if possible.

- d. If unavoidable, players may be asked to play on multiple boards. If a player plays on multiple boards, only their best result will count towards their score.
- e. If all else fails, a player may be asked to sit out a round. This player will receive zero points for that round but will have the TD's eternal gratitude and will be guaranteed a place in any one future round should they so wish.

## 5. Turn Deadlines

- a. Spring and Fall movement phases will be 15 minutes, as timed and adjudicated on Backstabbr.com
- b. 1901 phases will be played with a grace period, but after 1901 TDs will shift games to "Drop Dead," meaning that the negotiation and order writing phase is combined with the deadline being held as the point where all orders must be in. Players should ensure that they have orders in the system as the deadline approaches.
- c. Retreats and Adjustments will be no shorter than 3 minutes. Players are encouraged to select early adjudication to speed games forward.
- d. No negotiation is permitted after orders deadline or during Retreats and Adjustments. When the time limit for a Spring or Fall movement phase has ended, all players will return to the "Game Table" voice channel for their board and remain there until the start of the next movement phase.
- e. Players found by the TD to be wilfully obstructing turn advancement or draw votes (e.g., by refusing to submit builds/retreats in a reasonable amount of time) will be first warned, then have the necessary order(s) submitted by the TD, and then (if the behaviour continues) ejected from the game, and their position replaced by a fill-in player.

## 6. Orders

- a. Orders will be adjudicated, as submitted, by Backstabbr. To explore how Backstabbr adjudicates edge cases, and to gain overall familiarity with the platform, players are encouraged to utilize the "Sandbox" feature. (The "+ New Sandbox" button is located to the right of the all-white "Backstabbr" logo in the upper left of the main landing page.)
- b. Backstabbr requires support orders to specify a coast, and if the wrong coast is indicated it invalidates the order. This is not the case in standard rules. For example, normal order syntax is A Mar S F MAO-Spa, F MAO-Spa(sc). On Backstabbr, you need to specify a coast when you write an order for Mar, and if you had indicated (nc), the order would be invalid.

- c. Players are responsible for ensuring that the orders they wish to see adjudicated are entered (submitted for adjudication). Orders must be submitted or updated by pressing the “Submit Orders” and “Update Orders” button.
- d. Orders are entered by clicking territories and selecting “Support” or “Convoy” etc. And while the graphical display of these orders may be confusing for the newer user of Backstabbr, the orders - as displayed graphically - are written in text either to the right or below the map. If a player is unable to enter orders desired, he or she must contact the TD immediately so that the game can be placed on pause. Additionally, displayed orders are only “entered” if the player has clicked “Submit Orders” or “Update Orders.”
- e. To repeat and clarify: Players are responsible for their orders. Both new and experienced Backstabbr users sometimes forget to press the “Submit Orders” and “Update Orders” button when using the interface. TDs recommend refreshing the Backstabbr game page and ensuring that the orders desired for adjudication are the orders entered into the interface.

## 7. End Conditions

- a. Games will end in a Solo or a draw including all survivors.
- b. A Solo victory occurs if a player controls 18 or more centres during an Adjustment phase.
- c. Starting in 1904, a player may call for a vote to draw by contacting the TD. Votes may only be voted upon during a Winter adjustment phase. Only one vote may be called per phase. Immediately after a call for a vote, any player may openly veto the vote, ending the process and causing play to continue as normal. If the vote is not openly vetoed, the TD will conduct a secret vote **ON THE CLOCK** to determine if the game will be drawn (games **WILL NOT PAUSE**). Every player still on the board must vote “Yes” or “No” in a private Discord message to the individual adjudicating the draw. A draw vote must be unanimous in favour of drawing to take effect; a single “No” vote will require play to continue. Players will be informed if the draw passed and, if not, be told how many “No” votes were received, and the game will continue. No negotiations are to be conducted during draw votes.
- d. Solos may not be conceded. Players may not vote themselves out of a draw. A draw vote is a vote to end the game with scoring based on the Supply Center ownership during the Winter adjustment phase within which the vote is held.
- e. Unless a draw is agreed at an earlier point, games will end after the adjustment phase in Winter 1910, and be scored accordingly.

## 8. Scoring

Game scoring will be by the 7Eleven Method, as follows:

Players shall be ranked according to the number of Supply Centres held at the end of the game, whether by draw or at the end of 1910.

The top-ranked player, having the most supply centres, shall score 7 points.

The second-ranked player shall score 6 points, third-ranked 5 points, fourth-ranked 4 points, fifth-ranked 3 points, sixth-ranked 2 points and seventh-ranked 1 point.

Where two players end the game with the same number of supply centres, the GM shall “look backwards” to the previous year to separate the two players in question, assigning the player with the highest number of SCs in the previous year with the higher end-game ranking. Should this not split the players the GM shall look back a further year, and continue in this way until the players are separated. In the rare event that the two players had the same number of SCs for the entire game, then they shall each score the average of their place and the place below.

Each player ending the game with more than 11 Supply Centres shall score one bonus point for each such SC, to a maximum of 7 bonus points, unless the top-ranked player has a solo win, in which case only the soloist shall score bonus points. For the avoidance of doubt the maximum score possible in one game is 14 points (7+7), no matter how many centres a player ends the game with.

An example of scoring might be helpful.

The game ends with the following supply centres held, and scores as shown:

Final SC Count after 1910	Score
Player 1 = 16	7 + 5 = 12
Player 2 = 6	6
Player 3 = 5 (6 in 1909)	5
Player 4 = 5 (4 in 1909)	4
Player 5 = 2	3
Player 6 = 0 (eliminated in 1908)	2
Player 7 = 0 (eliminated in 1905)	1

In this example, had Players 6 & 7 both been eliminated in the same year and always had the same SC count in each year played, they would have scored 1.5 points each.

Had this situation applied to players 3 & 4, they would have scored 4.5 points each.

It is worth clarifying that there is no further bonus for a player who solos, nor any penalty for players playing on the same board as a soloist.

The tournament winner will be the person scoring the highest aggregate score from their best four rounds. In the event of a tie, the player who scored the highest single score shall be placed higher. If that fails to break the tie, the player with the highest total number of SCs held at the end of their four

qualifying games shall be placed higher. If the tie is still not broken, the player with the highest aggregate score across ALL their games in the tournament shall rank higher.

## 9. Awards

- a. Physical Awards will be awarded to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place, based on the aggregate score of the players' four highest qualifying boards.
- b. Seven Best Country awards will be determined by the highest single round score per country and publicly recognized. Ties will be broken by TD discretion, with the player who showed most panache and creativity in achieving the qualifying score being deemed the winner. So if you're going for Top Country, do it in style!
- c. A Players' Choice Award will also be awarded at the end of the tournament, voted for by the players themselves.
- d. Additional Awards may be given out at the discretion of the TDs.

## 10. Code of Conduct

The TDs are committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for all players, volunteers, and friends associated with this event. We may be competitive, manipulative, and even dastardly, but we are all here to have fun **and make the game fun for others**.

The TDs recognize that Diplomacy is an emotional game. Tensions may run high and betrayal is all but inevitable. Nevertheless, there exist some norms of civilized behaviour that should be respected at all times at this event, both on and off boards. At all times for the entire duration of the Virtual Tour of Britain, whether during games or not, every participant should:

1. Treat everyone with respect, regardless of race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, age, or any other category of personal identity.
2. Refrain from behaviour that disturbs the ability of other participants to enjoy themselves or that disrupts activities unrelated to the competition, including but not limited to verbal abuse, threats of violence, unwanted physical contact, and unwelcome sexual attention.
3. Safeguard the integrity of the competition by making good faith efforts to follow the rules.

Players are encouraged to report any believed violations of the above provisions to the TDs or designated representatives. The TDs and/or their representatives will mediate in good faith and take whatever action they deem appropriate to resolve the situation, including pausing a game, censuring players, or requiring players to leave the event. Any reported violations of the above COC may result in sanctions from the TDs. Any attempt to abuse the COC to gain advantage in any game will be considered a violation of the integrity of the competition and may result in sanctions from the TDs.

