

After that, it was considered that there were not enough players to make the tournament worthy of the name. Odd small Diplomacy Tournaments have continued to be played occasionally at MidCon since (I think the most recent was 2019, won by Graham Dent) but without being described as the UK NDC (supposedly you can make an entry for EuroDipCon XI, which was held at MidCon 2019 and being at least worthy of an NDC as it had 33 players. And I know that Bradley Grace considers SpireCon 2022 to have been a NDC as he won it. © In my book the “official” National Diplomacy Championship started from 1981 until 2005 some 24 years later (June 2024)

In general terms, the hey-day of UK FtF Diplomacy was from the mid-80s to the mid- 90s. Occasional **ManorCon** occurred when a UK Con was hosting a EDC or a WDC, but by and large the FtF Tournaments declined sharply after 2000. Nick Kinzett’s article reprinted below in this issue is a pretty good analysis of why the decline happened. There were also regional trophies from time to time (The most trophy of the NDC at MidCon Britain was followed in April 1982 by the 1st Diplomacy Tournament organised by Peter Con, MasterCon incorporated the, Unusually the Diplomacy Tournament 2012 played (probably), which was established as an annual event the 1st time at the NDC FtF Diplomacy 1983 this tournament became part of ManorCon, giving rise to both the ManorCon individual Diplomacy Championship and a team competition. The spikes in the graph are sometimes explained by WDCs held at ManorCon in 1988, 1989 and 2004 and EDCs held at ManorCon in 1995, 1998, 2006, ManorCon in 2015 and MidCon in 2011 played in a single round - and the addition of a team competition went further to motivate the one-round player. ManorCon was also usually a bigger con than MidCon and held in the summer - which always attracted a lot of Diplomacy players played at both. From 1986-1994 every ManorCon had over a 100 players playing Diplomacy, for at least one round.

As far as I can tell, the first UK National Diplomacy Championship that actually called itself that was held at MidCon in 1981 and was won by David Long (out of a field of 63 players). The spike in the number of players in 1993 is because the number includes those who played in regional qualifiers for the NDC, even if they did not attend the finals at MidCon. This was a result of the efforts of John Dodd, a hobby not time sadly no longer with us. At the prompting of Neil Kendrick, who had pushed the idea of an NDC with regional qualifiers in his time in 1998, John Dodd lost the Tournament the second time and was self into the idea with enthusiasm. The idea that year was that the NDC would consist of a qualifying stage and a final over two days at MidCon. To take part in the final you would have to prequalify by either (

- a) being a previous NDC Champion,
- b) having come in the first 7 at the previous years NDC,
- c) have prequalified at a regional heat (John envisaged 3/4 players per board qualifying)
- d) be among the best 20 players at ManorCon who would also be pre-qualified.
- (e) qualify at a latecomers round to be held on the Friday evening of MidCon.

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Last updated: 2024/07/12 07:25



Regional tournaments would be a single round, either at a con or housecon in the nine months leading up to MidCon, the game terminating in 1911. You could play in more than one regional tournament. If you don't pre-qualify for the NDC then you can still play at MidCon, but if you win you will only collect the MidCon Trophy, not the NDC itself. Regional qualifiers were announced for Exeter, Oxford, Burton on Trent, Brighton, Birmingham and Nottingham (all held within other games cons) and other housecons were also added soon thereafter.