This column is devoted to various word games in which readers can match their wits against each other. Rules of play, if not given below, can be found in earlier Logomachy columns.

CAN YOU SCRABBLE? (Darryl H. Francis)

Two readers -- Murray Pearce and Mary Youngquist -- discovered solutions for the May Scrabble puzzle scoring 126 points. Either QUARTZY or SQUEEZY can be placed in four different ways on the Scrabble board (either Q or Z must be placed on a double-letter square)

If the rules given in the February 1971 Logomachy are relaxed, higher-scoring solutions are possible. Plurals are allowed in a regular Scrabble game even when they are not explicitly shown in boldface type. Mary Youngquist suggested MUZJIKS for a score of 128, and Murray Pearce matched this with JIZYAHS. If regular Scrabble rules are allowed and any dictionary is permitted, the highest-scoring word appears to be ZYXOMMA (Funk & Wagnall's) with 130 points. Finally, if capitalized words are admitted, Ralph Beaman's QYRGHYZ (usu cap, var of kirghiz) scores 140 points.

Two individuals draw the following sets of letters in a game. The game is completed in just 14 moves, each player making 7 moves. Each of the players is lucky enough to dispose of all 7 of his letters on every move. Can you reconstruct the game of these two Scrabblers? Are there any alternative solutions? If so, what is the highest combined score?

Player A

1. AELQTUZ
2. CDINNUU
3. EENORVY
4. ABCEIKW
5. EGINORW
6. BEEET*
7. AHIMPPSS
8. DGIOORS
9. AFFIORT
10. GLLOOPY
11. ADDEERT
12. AAIMSTV
13. AAEHLNX
14. ANORTU*

Player B

Two tiles (E and I) are left over; asterisks represent blank tiles. I am indebted to Josefa Byrne for the construction of this problem.
CORRESPONDENCE CRASH (Mary Youngquist & David Silverman)

Since the report in the last issue, we have one newcomer to the Crash proceedings, Bill Rawlings. More crashers would be very welcome. Most of the old-timers are still crashing away at each other; this report will detail some of the most exciting games.

In the third game between Murray Pearce and Mary Youngquist, Mary thought she had a chance after her first lucky salvo. But the moral of this game is: Don't let a mediocre first salvo discourage you (especially if you're clairvoyant!).

1. Mary: HAREM 0, COLON 0, REVUE 1, LIMIT 0, SUGAR 2
   RUGBY 1, SUCRE 2, SUAVE 2, SUNUP 5
   Murray: EERIE 1, AHEAD 0, UPSET 0, ONION 0, ICTUS 0
   MYRRH 5, RADII 0, SQUIB 0, ZEBRA 1

More Pearce clairvoyance in this game with Darryl Francis:

2. Murray: BAYOU 1, ALIBI 0, USUAL 0, GUANO 0, VIOLA 0
   MCCOY 5, WALTZ 0, CRYPT 0, BEGIN 0
   Murray: ALERT 0, ERODE 0, DETER 0, TIMID 1, PHIAL 0
   RADII 0, ZOMBI 1, TABOO 0, VIRTU 0

Care to guess Murray's secret word? Answer below.

But Murray doesn't have a corner on clairvoyance; note Ross Eckler's performance below:

3. Ross: BLEED 1, WRIST 0, METAL 0, CHORE 0, STAIR 0
   BANJO 0, ASKEW 0, FLUFF 5, PIETY 0
   Murray: ALERT 0, ERODE 0, DETER 0, TIMID 1, PHIAL 0
   RADII 0, ZOMBI 1, TABOO 0, VIRTU 0

Care to guess Ross's word? Answer below.

In Game 4 Ross uses the same first salvo as in Game 3; he wins it by picking an "easy" word, FIGHT.

4. Ross: BLEED 0, WRIST 0, METAL 0, CHORE 0, STAIR 0
   NABOB 0, PUKKA 2, VIRTU 0, ZOMBI 0
   YUCCA 5, LUCKY 2, PUDGY 1
   Murray: QUIET 1, OCEAN 0, PIOUS 1, EERIE 0, BOARD 0
   KUDOS 0, PUKKA 0, NISEI 1, GAMUT 1
   SIGHT 4, TINCT 2, MIDST 2

At the end of Game 5, while Darryl rather fantasized, Ross felt ahead of the game.

5. Ross: DIRTY 0, YUCCA 6
   Darryl: KANGAROO 0

Readers who wish to guess Murray's secret word will find it at the end of this report.

But Murray doesn't have a corner on clairvoyance; note Ross Eckler's performance below:

6. Ross: BLEED 0, WRIST 0, METAL 0, CHORE 0, STAIR 0
   NABOB 0, PUKKA 2, VIRTU 0, ZOMBI 0
   YUCCA 5, LUCKY 2, PUDGY 1
   Murray: QUIET 1, OCEAN 0, PIOUS 1, EERIE 0, BOARD 0
   KUDOS 0, PUKKA 0, NISEI 1, GAMUT 1
   SIGHT 4, TINCT 2, MIDST 2

At this point, even though everyone found the two words, Bill was flipped a lucky word, LURCH.

7. Bill: CHAOS 0, DITTO 0, HOLLY 1
   Murray: ALIBI 0, NISEI 1, MIDST 2
   Bill: CHAR 0, MIDST 2, AIPE 0

In the next game, there were no newcomers to join the Crash proceedings. Mary J. Younquist's answers:

Answers: Game 1: LURCH (the newcomer)

All games reprinted from Pocket Dictionary.
That game might have been a tie if Murray had had a little more fight instead of so much sight.

Ross feels now that he should stop for a moment while he is ahead of the game. He used the same target, FIGHT, on Darryl:

5. Ross: DIRTY 0, METER 1, BREAD 0, CHORE 0, WAIST 0
   VOWEL 0, ABHOR 0, REBUS 0, ISTIC 5
   Darryl: KEBAB 0, JOKER 0, VATIC 0, WHALE 0, FIRST 3
            MIDST 2, FIRTH 2, FROST 2, BURST 1

At the end of the first salvo, Ross had 73 words to choose among, while Darryl had only 6 (the 4 above J plus WURST and FIGHT); rather fantastic odds!

A first salvo like Darryl’s in Game 6 must be the luckiest yet recorded. Even so, he had three possible words, but picked the right one.

6. Darryl: BEAST 0, DANCE 0, PIETY 0, SOLID 0, TUMOR 4
   HUMOR 5, TUTOR 3, RUMOR 4
   Mary: AHEAD 0, EERIE 1, ICHOR 0, OFTEN 0, UNCUT 0
         EPOCH 2, HELLO 0, PUPIL 1, RANGE 0

At this point, Mary found two possible words, and kept on guessing even though she’d already lost (with fairly good HUMOR). Can you find the two words? See below if the search gets laborious.

Bill was as lucky in his second salvo in Game 7. However, Mary flipped a lucky three-sided coin and picked the right one of the possible words for a tie.

7. Bill: CHAOS 0, BRIEF 0, SKEIN 0, USUAL 0, ALOUD 0
   DITTY 0, POSSE 1, HELLO 4, MANNA 0
   HOLLO 5
   Mary: HAREM 0, COLON 0, REVUE 1, LIMIT 1, SUGAR 0
         MIXUP 1, TEMPO 0, PIOUS 1, WITHE 2
         AISLE 5, BINGE 2, BIBLE 3

In the next issue, we hope to give the scores for all completed games and bring you up-to-date on games in progress. We invite newcomers to join the fun. Requests for opponents and game reports go to Mary J. Youngquist, 299 McCall Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14616.

Answers: Game 2 - YAHOO, Game 3 - YUMMY, Game 6 - PORCH, LURCH (the target)

All games reported above were based on the Merriam-Webster Pocket Dictionary.