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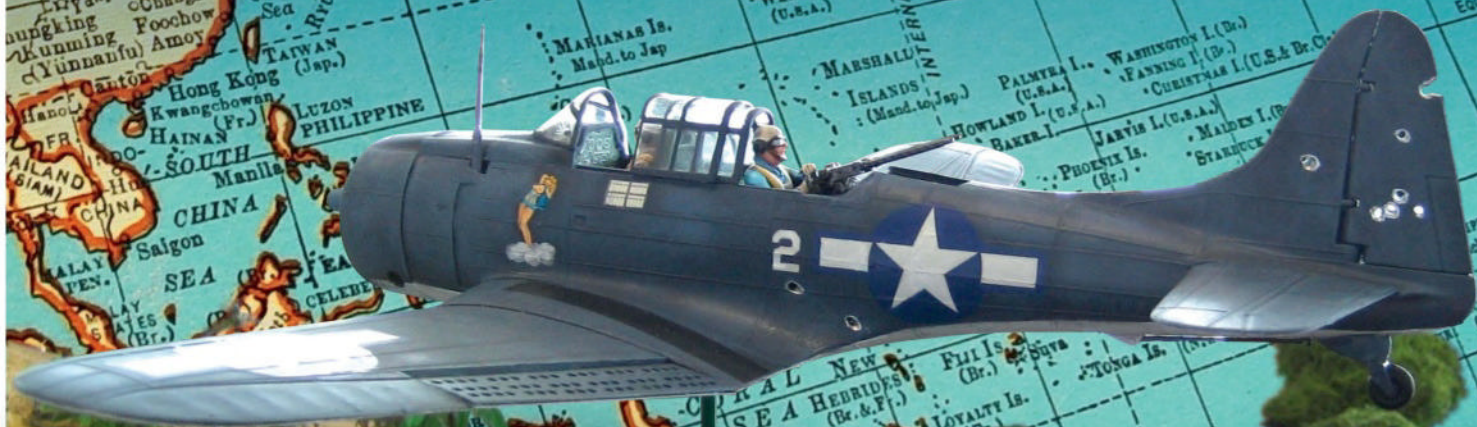
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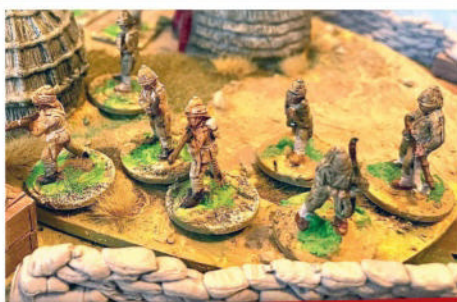
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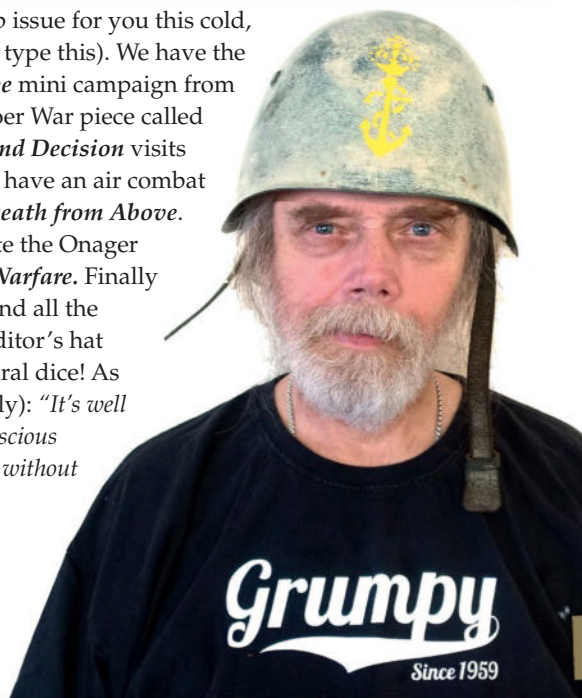
WELCOME

GREY DAY

We have another superb issue for you this cold, overcast January (as I type this). We have the last part of a *Stargrave* mini campaign from Conrad Kinch and a Colonial Boer War piece called *Duffer's Drift* in 20mm. *Command Decision* visits the Pacific in WWII and we also have an air combat piece in the same genre called *Death from Above*. For scratch building we complete the Onager and we have a show report on *Warfare*. Finally there's a *Trek* themed scenario and all the usual reviews plus – with my Editor's hat on – I proselytise about polyhedral dice! As *Graham McPherson* sings (Madly): "It's well past midnight as I lie in a semi-conscious state, I dream of people fighting me without any reason, I can see". Roll on wargaming!



John Treadaway
Editor



Get in touch



MINIATURE WARGAMES

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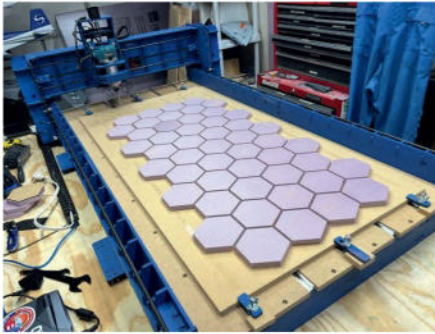
Finish your kick–ass model of a scratch built Roman onager.

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With The Editor professing his love of weird dice.

FORWARD OBSERVER

News, previews and community submissions from the wargaming world



A HEX ON YOU ALL

Ready made war game hexes
Gamecraft has launched a new product line of Terrain Hexes which in both 4" and 8", CNC cut from XPS foam, with an option to for MDF bases. Because they are machine cut, this ensures accuracy plus seamless integration. Being XPS foam they are customizable: gamers can paint them for different settings and the two sizes are flexible with the 4 inch (between flats) suitable for smaller scales like 3mm – 10mm and the 8 inch better for 15mm and higher. They come as singles and multiples and have the option of an MDF bases (again CNC cut) to insure perfect precision plus extra robustness. They also make a gluing jig to help with assembly where needed and – obviously – they can all be



painted, flocked and decorated to your heart's content. The final advantage of XPS foam is that gamers can even cut into the foam to make sunken rivers, roads and trenches. You can also stack hexes to make higher terrain to block line of sight. Prices vary on a number of factors – size, thickness etc – so it's best to go to their website gcmmini.mybigcommerce.com/terrain-hexes



DESERT DOMICILES

6mm SF from **Brigade**
Brigade have three new desert buildings in their 6mm SF range. The first is a *Caravanserai* providing food and lodging for the weary traveller, and also for their horses, camels or riding lizards. Plus somewhere to plug the grav-sled into for a recharge.... This has a large entrance



leading to a courtyard with rooms leading off from there. Then there's a *Fondouk*, which has a similar purpose but more likely to be found in urban settings. Finally – and vital for the desert regions – is a *Small Water Tower* to keep everyone hydrated. They are between £1.50 and £5 each and cast in resin. Go to brigademodels.co.uk for more info.



MORTAL ENEMIES

More Frostgrave!
Enhance your *Frostgrave* campaigns with recurring villains that grow more powerful over time and give your wizards somewhere to hide with this new supplement of expanded rules. This latest book for *Frostgrave* – the ever popular skirmish set in the Frozen City – presents rules for creating recurring villains in both competitive and solo campaigns. These characters are unique individuals who return over the course of a campaign to plague the players' wizards, all the while gaining experience, recruiting allies, and becoming even more deadly with each appearance. Against such threats, a wizard's base becomes as much a hideout as a headquarters, and there's a range of options for enhancing bases provided, as are rules for defending your own... and attacking those of your rivals! Released soon as a well illustrated (with art and inspiring model shots) soft back book for £20, go to ospreypublishing.com for more info.



BEWARE THE BARROWDOWNS

28mm Fantasy

Fenris have a huge selection of models in resin and other materials to aid fantasy and sci-fi tabletop war gaming, mostly in 28mm, including moulds to cast your own! One of the latest is a stone tomb entrance (which complement smaller ones they already make) and is designed to be part of a hillside or larger scenic piece, allowing you to make fast and simple scenery for your Barrowdowns settings. Cast from plaster, carefully assembled to look like part of an ancient hillside for £15. Go to fenrisgames.com



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Sunday 17th March

Aldersley Leisure Village,
Aldersley Rd
Wolverhampton, WV6 9NW

alumwellwargames.co.uk

SALUTE

Saturday 13th April

ExCel, London, E16 1XL

salute.co.uk

COMMUNITY CORNER

ORC EXPRESS



This month we talk to Reuben Turner, member of *Peterborough Wargames Club* and Show Manager for *Hereward* wargames show. Reuben has been a miniature wargamer since the age of 13, starting, as many do, with *Warhammer 40K*. With logical rules, and “highly amusing ways to inflict damage on your opponent’s army”, it’s a love that stayed with him to the present day.

Turner fluctuates between WWII and older *Warhammer 40K* miniatures “depending on how I feel and what rules I like at any given time. Recently it’s mostly been old 40K models which I’ve been using for games of *Xenos Rampant* and *Grim Dark Future*.”

For this, it was an early foray into new paints that prompted it being chosen.

“I was a bit sceptical about the trend towards speed paints but I recently purchased the first wave of **Vallejo Xpress Colour** paints and wanted

to see just how quickly I could paint a miniature with them and what sort of standard I could achieve. I really loved the way the **Xpress Colour Orc Skin** paint looked in the bottle so decided to do paint something... Orc-y with it. Rummaging through my bits box I found I had a single *Orruk Gutrippa* and he seemed perfect.”

“I undercoated the model with a couple of thin coats of **Army Painter Matt White** then set to work with the **Vallejo Xpress Colours**. The skin is *Orc Skin*, the robes are *Copper Brown*, the shield and other red details are *Cardinal Purple* (which needed two coats to achieve a satisfactory colour) and the shaft of the spear is *Mystic Blue*. Metal parts are **Army Painter Plate Mail Metal** and the teeth are **Army Painter Skeleton Bone**. Once I done all that I thought it looked a bit too bright so gave the whole model a wash with **GW Agrax Earthshade**. I applied **Javis Desert Sand** to the base then painted it with **Vallejo Flat Earth**, washed with more **Agrax Earthshade** then dry brushed with *Skeleton Bone* and some *Matt White*. Finally a few pale tufts of dubious origin (they were in my box of left overs!) were added and the base rim painted black.”

“The actual painting time was about 30 minutes which certainly felt like it was a lot quicker than I would have achieved if I had been using traditional paints. Once you are used to them the **Vallejo Xpress Colours** are very easy to apply and I like the finish they leave. I’m definitely a convert to this way of painting!”

If you'd like to submit something for Community Corner, contact MiniatureWargames@warnersgroup.co.uk

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

BATTLE OF IWO JIMA

19 FEBRUARY – 26 MARCH 1945

The USMC and US Navy landed on and eventually captured the island of Iwo Jima from the Imperial Japanese Army. Named *Operation Detachment* it’s objectives were to control the two airfields and the five-week battle saw some very heavy fighting. Japanese combat deaths numbered three times the number of American deaths, but unique among Pacific War Marine battles, the American total casualties (dead and wounded) exceeded those of the Japanese. Of the 21,000 Japanese soldiers on Iwo Jima at the beginning of the battle, only 216 were taken prisoner. Despite overwhelming American superiority in numbers the battle still led to the loss of the USS *Bismarck Sea* (with 31 aircraft on board), and the USS *Saratoga* was so severely damaged it removed her from action for the rest of the war.

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THE COLD DEAD

A very silly solo campaign for *Stargrave*: Part Three

Words and pictures by **Conrad Kinch**

This mini-campaign is for the *Stargrave* ruleset using its solo supplement *Dead or Alive*. *DoA* is a free download available from the *Osprey* website and this campaign assumes that you have both a copy of the *Stargrave* rules and *DoA*. This is the concluding scenario: the earlier scenarios plus the initial background for the campaign can be found in last two issues. This third part is very, very silly and was mostly inspired by listening to the Anglo-Swiss metal band *GloryHammer*. CK.

OUR STORY SO FAR...

The planet of Inisfawl has fallen to the machinations of the Chaos Wizard Gormanrod. He has seized control of the LionstarHaus space station and plans to use the psychic power of the population to free the wizard Zargothrax from his icy prison. Having used an orbital bombardment to cow the population, he has sent three groups of his minions to the surface to enact a giant ritual across the whole planet.

These minions were tasked with maintaining a ritual circle on the surface of the planet but were disrupted or killed by our fearless heroes. Bloodied and battered, it is time to take on the fell wizard Gormanrod in his orbital lair.

Blasting off from the planet's surface, the crew ready their weapons and prepare to board the space station. As the grey bulk of the space station swings slowly across the ship's viewing screen, the ship's communicator crackles and a grainy image of an anxious looking bearded man in a white coat swims into focus.

"Unknown vessel bound for LionstarHaus space station, this is Dr Xavier Pozician calling. The Chaos Wizard Gormanrod still hopes to free the terrible Zargothrax, cursed be his name. I know from your actions defeating his minions on the surface that you are no friends of his. Thankfully you foiled his schemes on Inisfawl, but he is making a last desperate attempt to free his master."

He intends to harness the power of a long dead species of aliens to cause the Sun to go nova. It will doom the planet, but will free Zargothrax." He pauses to mop his brow with a bright red handkerchief.

"You must stop him. He is calling the restless alien dead to him as we speak and he will doom us all. He has managed to project a protective shield around the top of the space station, so if you attempt to board there, your ship will be instantly destroyed. But his power can only go so far and the lower levels of the station are not covered by the shield. I will am transmitting the codes to access the lower levels now. Once you are inside you will need to make your way to the central spine of the station, which will allow you to access the upper level. Make haste. Time is not on our side. All of Inisfawl goes with you."

The transmission crackles and dies as you near the space station. It is shaped like a spinning top: a long grey spindle against the blackness of space. Around the tip of the spindle, there



ABOVE: Flanked by the Cold Dead, the Chaos Wizard Gormanrod faces the crew.

SEND THREE AND FOURPENCE

WHAT SPACE STATION?

To be frank, I designed the space station this way because I had an old copy of *Space Crusade* which I am very fond of and the boards included make for a cracking piece of sci-fi terrain. I used the board sections for the Lower Deck (see picture) and found that they served very well. But you may ask, "Kinch, what if I don't have a copy of *MB Games classic space dungeon game from 1990 lying around?*" The obvious answer is that you should immediately take to **eBay** and order multiple copies of this delightful game, but failing that there are other options.

You could take to the Internet and do a quick Google of "Space Crusade Board Sections", which I am told will take you to a website where a community minded individual has posted scans of the boards of this thirty three year old game. These printed and glued to card will do the job nicely (and were what I played *Space Crusade* on, before I got a copy off eBay). Alternatively, you could make your way to **Crooked Staff Publishing** on **DriveThruRPG**, who has a whole host of printable deck plans and paper terrain available for download on his shop front. **CSP** is great because - while the *Colony19* deckplans are available for a small fee (about the price of a pint) - he has a whole host of sci-fi paper terrain available for *Pay What You Want*. This means that you pay what you wish to for the files, which can be nothing, if you wish. Not only that, but he has a whole playlist of **YouTube** tutorials describing how to best assemble his wares.

is a viewing area with big panels of armoured glass allowing visitors to look out at the inky darkness beyond. Tendrils of coruscating emerald energy run along the surface of the viewing deck.

SETTING UP THE TABLE

The board is divided into two levels: the **Lower Deck** and the **Upper Deck**.

The **Upper Deck** is covered in psychic lightning caused by the awful magic that Gormanrod is messing with and is therefore inaccessible other than via the **Lower Deck**. The crew will have to dock their vessel somewhere along the Lower Deck and fight their way in into the centre of the board.

This is an unusual board setup for *Stargrave*. The board is made up of twelve inch square sections. The Lower Decks made up of five of these section arranged in a three by three cross (see below). Place these on the table.

LOWER DECK

Space	Section A	Space
Section B	Central Spine	Section C
Space	Section D	Space

UPPER DECK

The Upper Deck of the space station is represented by another twelve inch square section. You could, if you wanted, place this on some sort of stilts over the Central Spine section of the Lower Deck. I've seen some *Dungeons & Dragons* players balance upper levels of a dungeon on upturned pint glasses, but this seems like a bit of a faff to me. I would recommend putting the Upper

Deck section *next* to the Lower Deck section on the table and just moving figures from one to the other as needed.

The board edge connecting the *Lower Deck Section* to the Central Spine is called the *Inner Bulkhead*, the board edge opposite is called the *Outer Bulkhead*.

THE LOWER DECKS

If you are going to assemble the boards yourself, each board should have four to five rooms and a corridor. The corridor should bend *at least once*, so as to keep the lines of sight from being too long. The general layout should be quite tight and more cramped than a standard *Stargrave* board. There should be two doors on each board at the Inner Bulkhead connecting it to the Central Spine. Rather than an actual map, you will see a suggested board layout in the pictures accompanying this article.

DOORS

The doors between rooms in the station are automatic and will open as soon as any figure moves within two inches of them, but will otherwise remain closed. They can be destroyed either by gunfire or in close combat (they are automatically hit and have **Armour 8** and six hit points) in which case they will remain permanently open.

DOCKING THE SHIP

The crew's starship will need to dock with the station to land the crew so that they can fight their way up to the Upper Deck. Unfortunately, as the Chaos Wizard Gormanrod attempts to complete his ritual, the interior of the space station is wracked with technical faults and other strange phenomena. There is no telling what the crew could run into when they go through that door...

To represent this take eight slips of paper and write A, B, C and D on them. Place them in a hat or cup, mix them up and draw one out. This is the Section of the Lower Deck that the crew have boarded.

Note: If the crew managed to complete all three scenarios on the planet's surface, the player can draw two slips and choose whichever he prefers.

Once the ship docks, the player may place up to five figures from his crew *anywhere* along the *Outer Bulkhead* on his first turn. The turn after the initial five figures are placed, the rest of the crew can disembark. Alternatively, the player can



ABOVE: After breaching the ship's hull, the crew scramble aboard only to immediately be confronted by two of Gormanrod's muscle bound thugs.



decide to land the rest of his crew on another part of the station. Draw another slip from the cup and set up that board section.

SECTION A: DECOMPRESSION

This portion of the Lower Decks has suffered a catastrophic breakdown of hull integrity and the whole compartment has vented into space.

Flamers do not work in this section. All figures entering this section must wear space suits (this does not apply to figures wearing combat armour or robots). Figures wearing space suits have -1 move and may only make one movement action per turn. Any figure suffering damage while in this section must spend an action to patch their suit or suffer 2 damage every turn they do not do so. Figures boarding this section from the crew's ship are assumed to have donned space suits before they enter. However figures entering this section without a space suit (i.e. from the central spine) suffer 5 damage on entry and 2 damage each turn thereafter.

SECTION B: LOOSE ROBOTS

There are three Repairbots loose in this section of the Lower Decks (stats as per *Stargrave* page 149). Place them randomly in the Section so that no robot is within six inches of a crew figure. Their circuitry has been fried by the tremendous forces running loose in

the station and they move randomly around the board.

SECTION C: ALIEN INCURSION

The section of the Lower Decks is showing signs of the return of the Cold Dead. Divide the Section into four quarters. Randomly place a black glowing pillar or stele in one of those quarters, but roll again if it is the quarter that the crew have deployed in.

The Pillar/Stele sizzles with occult energy and is discharging arcs of green lightning throughout the deck. Each turn randomly select a figure (friendly or hostile) within line of sight of the pillar. That figure is hit by a +X shooting attack where X is the number of turns played -2.

SECTION D: STATION BREAKDOWN

This section of the Lower Decks is just falling apart. Cables hang from the ceiling and the crew must step over buckled deck plates to make their way through.

At the start of each turn, the player must randomly select one figure on the board (friendly or hostile) This figure automatically suffers a +1 shooting attack. Any figure taking a second move action

ABOVE: Proposed table setup using Space Crusade Tiles, for illustrative purposes. Note the Upper Deck, off to one side. I just used another tile and ignored the walls and doors for the Upper Deck.

will automatically suffer a +1 shooting attack as they blunder into danger.

THE CENTRAL SPINE

This is the Section of the Space Station that contains the access to the *Upper Deck*. I used a Space Crusade tile. Nominate one of the central rooms as the access point. Figures can use a single move activation to move from the access point to the *Upper Deck*.

THE PIRATE CREW

Roll up a standard Pirate crew as per the rules in *Dead or Alive*. The figures normally placed at NF1 go on the first Section that the crew, the figures for NF2 on the next board Section after that. If the crew enter more than three Sections, simply roll again.

SEND THREE AND FOURPENCE



ABOVE: As the crew searches the lower decks, Servitor E-Knock malfunctions again and starts standing by a door.

Gormanrod's crew of Space Pirates are hardened ruffians, rippling with the muscle and accustomed to pain due to their unusual initiation rituals. Treat them as normal figures, but they do +1 damage in fighting due to their chiselled physiques. However, they are ordinary men and will start to get cold feet once The Cold Dead show up. Any figure using the Bribe power can use a Bribe token to simply take control of one pirate crew member for the rest of the game as he switches sides.

LOOT

As befits a government facility, there is quite a lot of cool stuff just lying around. Place two loot tokens, one physical, one data on each board section, including the *Central Spine*. Divide the board into quarters and roll to distribute them randomly between the four quarters. There's a lot of loot on the table, relative to its size, whether the crew will have the time or ability to collect it is another question.

THE UPPER DECK

The *Upper Deck* is a board section twelve inches by twelve inches square. Place three pillars in the centre of the board six inches apart forming a triangle. These pillars are identical in design to the pillars from *Section C: Alien Incursion*. On the turn after the crew enter the *Upper Deck*, one pillar per turn will begin arcing lightning like the pillars described in *Section C*, though in this case X is equal to the number of turns the crew have been on the *Upper Deck*.

Place the Chaos Wizard Gormanrod in the centre of the board. Place the relevant

CHAOS WIZARD GORMANROD

Move	Fight	Shoot	Armour	Will	Health	Notes
6	+2	+0	12	+5	17	Psychic Choke

THE COLD DEAD

Move	Fight	Shoot	Armour	Will	Health	Notes
4	+2	+2	13	+3	3	Disintegrators, Already Dead, Immune to Disintegrator Fire

Pirate Crew figures randomly two inches outside the triangle. Nominate a corner of the *Upper Deck* and place any crew figures that have made it to the *Upper Deck* from the *Lower Deck* at that spot.

On the first turn that crew figures make it to the *Upper Deck*, Gormanrod and his minions will ignore them as they are too preoccupied with the ritual to summon Zargothrax.

ACTION PRIORITY LIST

Gormanrod uses the following priority list to determine his actions.

Step 1: Is Gormanrod in combat?

Yes

He will use his first action to fight. If he wins the combat, he will push back his opponent.

Gormanrod will use his Psychic Choke ability to fight. If he wins the combat, substitute his Will for his Fighting before calculating damage. This attack ignores armour. The injured figure is then thrown six inches towards the nearest friendly figure. If this moves them into contact with another figure before they've travelled the full six inches, both figures take the difference in falling damage.

No

Proceed to Step 2.

Step 2: Gormanrod will focus on casting the awful spell required to free Zargothrax. Place a summoning counter next to him. Proceed to Step 3.

Step 3: Are there **three** summoning counters next to Gormanrod? Place a Cold Dead next to one of the pillars on the *Upper Deck*.

Are there **five** summoning counters next to Gormanrod? Zargothrax is summoned, the crew have failed and all that remains is to flee for your lives!

If/When Gormanrod dies: The ritual to free Zargothrax will be disrupted and the eldritch powers harnessed by Gormanrod will run wild. All that remains is to flee the station for your lives!

Place any Lower Deck Sections that weren't placed when the crew were making their initial boarding. Select randomly two of the *Lower Deck Sections* that don't already have a pillar. Divide those Sections into four quarters. Randomly place a black glowing pillar in one of those quarters. Each turn after Gormanrod's death place one of the Cold Dead next to a pillar on the *Upper Deck* and place two Cold Dead next to two of three pillars on the *Lower Deck* (determine which randomly).

The Crew's ship can collect all figures in contact with the *Outer Bulkhead* of one *Lower Deck Section* per turn in the Creature Phase. Any figures reduced to 0 Health that aren't carried off by their pals (treat them as a Physical Loot token for the purposes of carrying) must roll on the Survival table with a -5 penalty.

THE COLD DEAD

Inhabitants of the Icy Prison that holds the Chaos Wizard Zargothrax, the Cold Dead are an unholy combination of demon and robot. They hate all life and are perfectly happy to serve Zargothrax in his quest to destroy the known

universe. They are less enamoured of Gormanrod, who they see as a far less impressive sort of personage.

COLD DEAD FIGURES

I have a collection of converted Necrons that I used for these chaps, but you could easily use standard GW *Necrons*, old *Space Crusade Chaos Androids*, *Mantic Terminators* or anything else for them so long as they are a scary robot with a gun.

DISINTEGRATORS

The Cold Dead are armed with terrible weapons that fire arcs of green fire from hell itself. These have a range of eight inches and +0 damage. You will need a template for these weapons, measuring one inch wide and eight inches long.

If a figure is targeted by a Disintegrator, line the template up on the target figure and adjudicate as normal. However, all other figures under the template, regardless of whether they are hostile or friendly, are hit with a +2 shooting attack, which

ignores terrain and LOS. It is perfectly possible for a figure in a different room to be shot through a wall or a door by Disintegrator fire. Note that the Cold Dead are *immune* to Disintegrator Fire.

ALREADY DEAD

It's hard to keep a good demon down. Once put out of action, place the figure on its side. Roll a d20 at the start of the following turn. On a 1-5, the figure gets back up again and can act as normal.

The Cold Dead use the standard Creature action table, but treat the nearest crew figure as their target point. If there isn't a crew figure in LOS, they will take the shortest route to one.

REWARDS

Experience is as normal. However, the limit that the crew can earn in experience is 500 rather than 300. +50 Experience for each crew member that made it off the station

The crew also recovered 500 credits worth of loot from the debris. Local people will repair their ship for free (using the rules in *Stargrave Bold Endeavour*) and install an upgrade of their choice.

Also any loot tokens recovered from the

station are particularly good, roll twice for each and take the result of your choice.

In the event that Ray survives the campaign, he will become a successful local politician and will enact a law stating that the crew may drink for free in any pub on Inisfawl for the rest of their lives.

CONCLUSION

This is a tough scenario. The smaller than usual board and the reduced lines of sight will make melee focused characters more powerful. However, the Pirate crew are more of a distraction than a threat. The real threat are the Cold Dead, who while slow, are relentless. It may be worth boarding the *Lower Decks* in two places, not only to spread out Gormanrod's forces, but also to give the player a better idea of his escape route. The player will have to make up his own mind on that one. If you do play this, let me know how you got on at conrad.kinch@gmail.com or [aquestingvole](https://twitter.com/aquestingvole) on Twitter.

LINKS

Crooked Staff: preview.drivethrurpg.com/en/publisher/3785/Crooked-Staff-Publishing ■

BELOW: "Prepare for pain!" An isolated member of the crew is surrounded by the Chaos Wizard Gormanrod's minions.

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WATERLOO

“They have spoiled my battlefield”

Words by **Arthur Harman**. Photos by **Mary Bautista-Harman**

A couple of issues ago Mr Harman gave us ideas on how to trick up the **Palitoy Battle of Balaclava Boardgame**. This time he turns his attention to another board game by the same manufacturer. *Ed.*

The subtitle is an Apocryphal remark attributed to the Duke of Wellington on seeing the effect of building the Butte de Lion...

THE ORIGINAL PALIToy GAME

The Battle of Waterloo is a simple family boardgame, designed by Malcolm Greensmith, who also designed *The Battle of Balaclava* game that was the subject of my previous article, published by **Palitoy** in 1975. The board is a stylised schematic representation of the battlefield, on which units move by die roll along a number of arrow-shaped tracks, divided into squares, which represent the principal attacks

ABOVE
The original box lid of the Palitoy board game.

and counter-attacks made during the battle and also the advance of the Prussians.

Along each arrow, some squares mark ‘quasi historical’ events which can either aid or impede the advance of units. Some of these enable attacking units to advance nearer to their objectives, such as Hougoumont or La Haye Sainte; others either cause units to retreat or to be eliminated by artillery fire and removed from play.

The object of the game is to have the most points remaining upon the board at the end of the game, which can be triggered in two ways: ‘when a piece reached the end of an attack line, but is unable to take an opposing piece’ or when neither player is able to move after their dice have been thrown. The winner is the player whose army has the higher score left on the board, counting an artillery piece as worth 6 points, a cavalryman, 4

Eliminating the enemy’s artillery and cavalry pieces will play a large part in securing victory; there is no need to capture Hougoumont or La Haye Sainte. Infantry pieces remove infantry first,



WATERLOO

followed by cannon; they *cannot* remove cavalry – a note states, ‘for the sake of the game’ – but cavalry can remove infantry/cannon/cavalry in that order.

The units supplied with the game are plastic figures representing the forces present at Waterloo: a small head in a shako and upper torso represents the infantry; a horse head – not unlike a tiny chess piece (similar, but much larger, pieces were used in the **Channel Four** series *Game of War*) – the cavalry; and artillery is represented by small model guns. British and Allied units, including the Prussians, are red; French units are blue.

The game is comprised of the board, a short rules pamphlet which also includes brief historical information about the battle and some colour illustrations, a d6 die and the following pieces: 2 red Allied guns, 6 red Allied cavalry and 10 red Allied infantry; 3 blue French guns, 7 blue French cavalry and 8 blue French infantry. Both sides have eighteen pieces, albeit in slightly different combinations; thus, the game does *not* reflect the numerical advantage of the Allies after the Prussian arrival.

FRENCH FOLLIES

It would appear from **Rule 20** – ‘*Any French infantry pieces may attack the British at Hougoumont and on the dark blue line nearby*’ – that the French player can send the Imperial Guard to attack the Allied position at any time during the battle.

If a French piece reaches the end of the attack arrow pointing to Plancenoit, it removes the foremost piece on the yellow, Prussian arrow. But if there is no enemy piece on that arrow, **Rule 16** states

BELOW
Bonapart considers his options. Painted by Graham Green.

that ‘*a piece is removed from the enemy ranks*’, that is, from the Allied position at Mont St Jean!

Rule 19 is a rather complex, ‘special rule’ that applies to the French cavalry charges near Hougoumont.

A cavalry piece that ends its move on **Arrowhead A** cannot pass that point immediately afterwards, but must wait until it is joined there by another piece before proceeding to **Arrowhead B**. But once a piece has moved on from **A**, other pieces at **A** can be overtaken. Similarly, a cavalry piece at **B** cannot charge home to **C** until it has been joined by another piece, but ‘it cannot leave **A** [surely this is a misprint and should refer to **B**...] unless (or *until*) there are at least two pieces at **A**.’ When a French cavalry piece arrives at **C** it removes not one, but two enemy pieces, thus making the French cavalry attacks far more effective than they actually were.

As with the Imperial Guard, nothing in the rules prevents the French player from launching a massed cavalry attack much earlier in the battle.

French infantry can – provided all Allied pieces have vacated their original deployment circles – branch off the main attack arrow at La Haye

Sainte to attack the artillery. However, ‘*if an Allied infantry piece should complete an attack and*

return to the ranks [which is what the game rules allow to happen], then any French pieces on the artillery attack line cannot proceed until all Allied infantry have once more vacated the ranks.’ This rule seems to be designed to reflect the fact that the French did not capture La Haye Sainte until late in the battle.

Strangely, the original rules do not state that – if the Allied artillery has been eliminated – French troops may thereafter ignore the ‘bomb burst’ (as explosion squares are called)





spaces of the French attack arrows, but this has been suggested in the comments on the *Boardgame Geek* entry on the game. It has also been suggested that – if all three French artillery pieces have been eliminated (admittedly, very unlikely) – then the space on the dark blue French attack arrow, for the Old Guard attack, which causes an Allied piece to be eliminated, should be *ignored*.

IMPROVING THE GAME

There are two ways in which this game could be improved: its aesthetic appearance and the realism of its rules.

One could simply replace the original infantry and cavalry pieces by individual Napoleonic wargame figures of whatever size – 10 mm, 15/18 mm, or 25/28 mm – as one prefers (*I have included some illustrations of suitable figures to accompany this article! Ed...*). This will enable one to represent the polyglot nature of the Anglo-Dutch army by having appropriately painted figures of British, Dutch, Belgian, Brunswick and Hanoverian troops and to identify the Prussian forces arriving on the battlefield.



TOP LEFT & BELOW LEFT
Napoleonic on hexes from Salute 2018.

TOP RIGHT
Au naturel As it comes: the Waterloo game from Palitoy (1965) with its game pieces.

ABOVE
Seulement Just the game board on its own.

To create a better impression of large troop formations, several small-scale soldiers – 6 mm or 10 mm would be the best sizes – again suitably painted to represent the various nationalities. These, could be fixed onto bases that will fit the initial deployment circles and the squares on the attack arrows. Manufacturers such as **Baccus**, **Irregular Miniatures**, **Pendraken** and **Newline Designs** produce suitable wargame figures in these two scales. These figures could, of course, also be used in other wargames, using rules such as those in Bob Cordery's *Portable Napoleonic Wargame*.

TAKE THE RISK...

Another, even more economical option would be to replace the original pieces with bases on which are mounted the small – approximately 10 mm size – plastic pieces from the Napoleonic version of the boardgame *RISK*. I have done this, using card bases cut from a cereal packet that are 20 mm square, using red for the British and Allied troops, blue for the French and green for the Prussians, as shown in the accompanying photographs. They could, if one wished, be painted for an even better aesthetic effect.



WATERLOO



ABOVE
Risqué
Waterloo 1965
game plus RISK
figures.

ALL ON BOARD

The gameboard could be embellished with small buildings, such as houses from the game of *Monopoly* to represent Hougoumont, La Haye Sainte, Plancenoit etc. and model trees or clumps of lichen for the orchard and the Soignes Forest behind the Allied line.

SET-UP

Rather than allowing the British player to redeploy troops from the Mont St Jean ridge onto the Prussian attack arrow, as do the original rules, I would begin the game with a predetermined number of figures, easily identifiable as Prussian by their colour, off-board, from which the Allied player can draw only to attack Plancenoit by advancing down the yellow arrow. Allied troops deployed along the ridge would not be permitted to use this arrow.

These Prussians would not, however, be available *immediately*; I would dice for the timing of the arrival of these Prussian reinforcements, to prevent them arriving so early that French, who have no additional troops to reinforce them, have no chance to win by defeating the Anglo-Dutch forces before the Prussians appear. Alternatively, one could create a 'counter-factual history' option in which Grouchy either arrives on the battlefield *himself* – by having extra French pieces off-board that can use the yellow arrow to reinforce Napoleon – or simply prevents the Prussians from marching from Wavre to reinforce Wellington's position.

DICING WITH DEATH

I suggest using D3 dice instead of D6 (or use a D6 but regard multiples of 3 as 3, multiples of 2 as 2, and 5 as 1) to reduce the original variability in movement or have movement modifiers to reflect the difficulty of moving across certain terrain areas, such as woods or ground already waterlogged by heavy rain and churned up by previous attacks.

Instead of moving each piece involved in an advance along the attack arrow individually, I would allow several pieces to become a formation that could be moved by one die roll. I would also abandon the rule that a piece that reaches the end of its attack arrow, therefore eliminates an opposing piece, returns to its original deployment position and then can advance again next turn, resolving the combat in a way that would allow the attacker to be halted, or defeated and forced to retire back down the arrow to rally.

To prevent the Allies and the French from shifting troops across the battlefield far too easily to fill gaps in their lines or to redeploy to face a new threat, as is allowed in the rules, I would impose at least a turn's delay before troops could move laterally across the board, and/or limit such reinforcements to troops on 'reserve' circles close to the gaps.

One could also identify group the starting circles into corps – for example, for the French, the corps would be Reille, D'Erlon, Lobau and the Imperial Guard – or divisions, and rule that only troops of the same



formation can reinforce it, by replacing lost pieces. This would also allow more than two players to participate, by having each player take command of a corps; although the box lid states *'For two or four players'*, the rules make no reference to games with more than one player commanding each side.

FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS

To improve the game further and allow players to adopt *alternative* battleplans, it will really be necessary to create a new gameboard, with a better depiction of the battlefield, upon which separate attack arrows could be placed when needed, rather than being permanently fixed in place. There will be no starting positions permanently marked on the map either; players can position their troop bases to reflect the historical deployment, or in different ways. Suitable maps from which such a gameboard can be designed will be found in the books listed under Sources/ Further Reading, below.

For an even better aesthetic effect, one could replace the gameboard with a simple relief model and lay attack arrows made from thin cloth that could bend over the contours upon it.



Different attack arrows would be provided for infantry and cavalry to reflect their different speeds of movement. 'Hazard' squares at certain distances from the points of these attack arrows could force a player to draw a chance card or perform a calculation to represent skirmishing, or find the effect of close range defensive artillery fire and musketry upon the attackers, possibly causing them to halt and engage in a firefight, to retire or to rout. But if the 'hazard' squares fail to prevent them from continuing forward, the by now shaken defenders may break and run.

Troop bases would be allocated to the different French corps and Allied formations. Prussian troop bases would be kept off-board/table until they arrived. Some allowance would be made for the quality – a combination of training, experience and morale – of the troops, so that Imperial Guard would be rated better than Prussian Landwehr, for example. The player taking the role of

Napoleon would be made aware that any defeat of the Imperial Guard would reduce the morale, and hence the quality, of all his other troops immediately.

Instead of attacks being made by individual troop bases, several bases could be combined to represent a division and advance together along the attack arrow, one die roll determining the movement of the whole formation.

To prepare an attack, by issuing orders to subordinate commanders and for them to issue the appropriate orders, despatch aides de camp to their formations, would have taken time and effort. Army or corps commanders would have to allocate 'Pips', command dice or whatever mechanic is used to portray the expenditure of effort and staffwork – always proportionate to the size of the formation(s) involved, arrangement of a preliminary bombardment of the enemy position by corps or army artillery assets – before an attack arrow could be placed upon the gameboard or miniature battlefield.

I would replace the original, very simplistic resolution of cavalry charges, musketry volleys and bayonet attacks by removing enemy pieces when troops reach the end of an attack arrow, by an equally quick and simple, but more subtle, system using opposed die rolls, such as the American *Strategos* system I used to umpire *Waterloo* for the Channel Four television series, *Game of War*, together with a very few modifiers (for such matters as troop quality, defending strongpoints like Hougoumont and La Haye Sainte, and losses already suffered) to determine the outcome and losses (either in figures or in Combat Strength Points on a roster) on both sides.

One could also allow an attack arrow – and therefore the troops thereon – to deviate (subject to a die roll for the new direction) slightly from the original line of attack if troops took heavy fire from either flank or from ahead, so that the attack might fail to strike exactly where intended.

The beauty of a boardgame with movable arrows is that it will enable players to experiment with different initial deployments and battle plans, which must be part of the fascination of Waterloo: what *might* have happened?.

SOURCES/FURTHER READING

There are many (too many!) books on the Battle of Waterloo. This deliberately short list contains just a few that contain useful maps that could be used to create an alternative gameboard or tabletop terrain.

The Waterloo Companion: The complete guide to history's most famous land battle, Mark Adkin, Aurum Press Ltd., 2001

Waterloo 1815 (3) Mont St Jean and Wavre, John Franklin, Osprey Campaign 280, 2015

Wargaming in History: Waterloo, Charles Grant, Argus Books, 1990

Waterloo, John Naylor, Pan Books, 1968 ■

ABOVE
More hex based, small scale Napoleonic, this time from the Wellington at Bay (Battle of Villamuriel 1812) by Caseshot Publishing.





CONTINUOUS WARFARE

The second year at their new venue: Warfare 2023

Words and photos by **The Editor**

A couple of months back I attended *Warfare*: the wargaming weekend at the Farnborough International Exhibition & Conference Centre (which moved there last year). Organised by the *Wargames Association of Reading* it's one of the few remaining shoes that runs for a two day weekend, hosts demon and party games plus a sizable competition section and an extensive trade show (plus a Bring and Buy). Leaving aside an intervening attempt at Ascot race track a couple of years ago, this is a big step up from the venue they previously occupied in Reading: there's lots of free parking and a large and spacious double hall (well: big shed, really) which reminds me (in terms of the style of venue at any rate) of the venues for *Hammerhead*, *Partizan* and *Salute*. So it's a large, very modern, exhibition space, with high quality catering on site.

TRADE

There was quite a selection with 24 in the Discovery hall with the large Bring and Buy and almost 30 in the main hall mixing it with the games. There was a good selection with lots of big names and smaller bespoke outlets. If you wanted a gaming product you could probably get it at the show.

ABOVE & RIGHT
The Isandlwana game by the Combined Oppo's.

OPPOSITE RIGHT
Qng Vs Burmese and Tudor Rules by Tiger Miniatures.



GAMES

There was a Gamer's Lounge with the opportunity to play board games (which I'll confess I didn't investigate in any detail) but the meat of the gaming was half of the main hall which was full of furiously dice throwing competitive games. There were over twenty different rules sets catered for and they covered a lot of tastes: *Armati*; *Swordpoint*; *Infinity*, *Age of Sigmar*; *DBM* (in 15mm and 28mm); *MeG*; *40K*; *Bolt Action*; *FoG*; *Flames*



ABOVE
Domstadt:
beautiful paper
soldiers.

RIGHT
Thai versus
Cambodia
by Scattered
Gamers.

FAR RIGHT
Battle of Ligny
1815 by WAR.



of War... and many more. Visually they were fairly... let's say 'basic' with some nice cloths and bits of reasonable scenery. Standard, club night stuff, really. But then I'm not their audience: as I said, *Warfare* is now one of the few shows with this mix and well done to the organisers for sticking to their guns.

The Competition games aside, what about the Demo and Party games? The show had a theme which was



TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT

Confederate advance from the First Bull Run ACW using Sharp Practice Huntingdon and District Wargames Society.

28mm Vietnam by Parkfield Miniatures.

A World Turned Upside Down: English Civil War Witch racing in 28mm. Prince Rupert's Regiment of Sealed Knot.

RIGHT
Cloudships of Mars by the Werelords.



BOTTOM RIGHT
15mm Battle for India 1803 by the Crawley Wargames Club.

marking the 110th anniversary of the publication of Wells' *Little Wars* and several games tried to mark this in some fashion, including a Zulu war game by the *Combined Oppo's Wargames Group*; the *Battle of Ulundi* by *Jeremy R Fowler*; and the *Werelords/ Warlords* with a *Space 1889* game.

There were a few others that really caught my eye but a few were – to use the phrase I touched upon earlier – perhaps a bit ‘club night’. High-lights were *Hex Wing: A World Turned Upside Down* which was an ECW witch racing game set around an estuary by the *Prince Rupert's Regiment of Sealed Knot* which was pretty and looked a lot of fun; *Operation Barbarossa* by the *Anschluss* team in 12mm looked great; the *Isandlwana* game (by the *Combined Oppo's*) looked good with a tent city and masses of figures on the table; *Dornier Down* was a *Chain of Command* game with lots of nice





scenery by *Shepway Wargames Club*; *Palestine 1938* (on topic as the weekend played out) by the always reliable *Deal* club; an excellent 'what if' Operation Sea Lion game called *A Ridge Too Far* with the German forces trying to make their way over a succession of (perfectly realistic) ridges in the local countryside by the *Guilford Wargames Club* (using *Rapid Fire* and showing some great modelling); and *Battle of Domstadt* from the Seven Years war using masses of 30mm flats by the *Ardhammer* group. All of those were well worth a long look if you see them mat another show.

ABOVE
Harald Hardrada using *Lion Rampant* by the Farnborough Wargames Society.

LEFT
The sweeping scenery of *Guilford 1940* by the Guildford Wargames Club.

BELOW LEFT
Palestine 1938 by the Deal club.

CONCLUSION

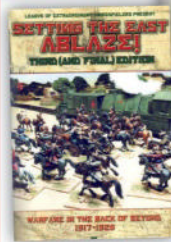
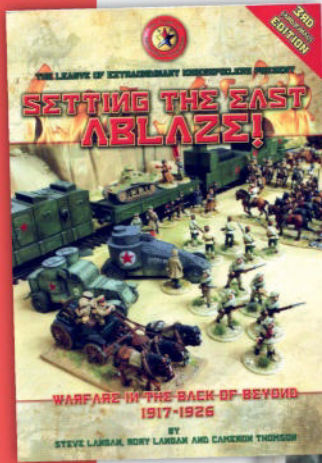
The show is a fun weekend, whether you play in competitions or not. The show supports two charities – **Sue Ryder** and **Models for Heroes** – who were beneficiaries from the day and, since the show was held over the second weekend of November 2023, we all collectively had the chance to pay our respects on both Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday, which was good. I am thoroughly looking forward to next year. ■



DEFEND

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BLAZING EAST III

- ▷ caliverbooks.com
- ▷ £21.50

Setting the East Ablaze III is subtitled 'The 3rd and Final Edition'. Aimed at Warfare in 'The Back of Beyond' in a period from the end of WWI to the mid twenties, this is the latest Caliver Books release. So – in the two decades since the rules were first rolled out by the gaming group know as the *League of Extraordinary Kriegspielers*, what's changed?

They've added new air rules (including spotting from the air); more detail on armoured trains; more rules on fighting in built up areas; new naval rules; and more. There's revised army guidelines for Poles, French, US, Italians, Germans, Freikorps, Ukrainians, Finnish and the Baltic States along with a fair few more forces.

There's also new rules for wild animals; a bibliography to give you further reading suggestions; plus three new scenarios: *Ten days in Tibet*; *The Storming of Urga*; and *Once upon a time in Siberia*.

Production values are excellent with 120 pages in A4, perfect bound softback and full colour. The three scenarios all have nice big maps which are clear and will copy well for distribution to other players, and pretty much every double page spread has some inspirational photography or splendid toys on the table. A good price for a good product: *highly recommended*.



SHIELD-WALL

- ▷ wargamesatlantic.com
- ▷ £10

When I first started wargaming, I used to trawl the shows until I found someone selling the old **Lamming** range of extras for my models. I would probably drive the traders barmy by slowly buying a selection of shields, weapons and helmets to customise my wargaming and role-playing models but it made a big impact on my desire to create special miniatures. What I would have given four decades ago for some cheap plastic shields...

Like *these*: **Wargames Atlantic** have released a boxed set of extra *Norse-style shields*. You can form a shield wall of customised individual figures and there's nothing better for regularising a unit of disparate figures, gleaned from a variety of manufacturers (maybe), than them all having similar shields. Each of these shields measures 14mm round and features a flat surface around the central boss. The backs have a wood grain design, and have a central support grip, plus a hole for the model's hand. They are also perfect (as **Wargames Atlantic** suggests) to line the sides of a Norse ship!

Each box has three sprues, each of 21 shields giving a total for 63 shields in the box. Go find some decals!

Recommended.





CALL TO ARMS

► modiphius.net

► £28 – £43

We said at the end of last month's *Fallout* review that **Modiphius Entertainment** have released a new trio of *Elder Scrolls* models that we just didn't have space to cover in the previous issue. So, here we are then: three new boxed figure sets, all with an inhuman theme. As (almost) always, the models are cast as kits in high quality grey resin with individual sculpted bases. They are superbly detailed and very proportionate whilst being roughly 32mm tall. Well, except for *one* of them...

Let's start off with the *Draugr*. There are already a lot of *Draugr* in the *Elder Scrolls* range but these are new: a boxed, five-figure set are called the *Call to Arms: Draugr Masters* they are £39. They are – broadly – undead: these *Draugr Wights* are the elite troops of the *Draugr* and are powerful adversaries who attack with their ice-magic or close with their opponents to engage them with their Nordic style swords and shields. They are led by their *Wight Lord* who uses a large two-handed axe but the set also includes a *Solstheim Dragon Priest*. All of the regular guys are dressed in helmets and almost Roman,

segmented-style armour over their withered bodies, but the Priest has (I'm guessing) dragon-scale style armour (I assume he's not *actually* a dragon...) and wields a magic staff. These are good figures and would do double duty as wights for any game background if you're not an *Elder Scrolls* player.

Next we have the *Call to Arms: Ghosts of Yngvild*. This box has six figures for £43 and are split into two types although that's mostly based on the painting choices made. They represent the 'summoned unquiet dead'. Leader of the group is the Exiled Necromancer *Arondil* and under him he has two acolytes: *Breton* and *Dummer* who are also both Necromancers (one male, one female – *probably*). They are all very interesting figures in robes and the two acolytes are holding staffs whereas the main chap appears to have a crystal. On top of these three figures are three female *Yngvild Ghosts*. These are all female and wearing long flowing robes and the Modiphius website does a nice job of showing an ethereal paint job on them but – if you wanted to paint them more 'regularly' – they would pass as run of the mill, dagger armed, grinning women in long skirts (with a plethora of uses!). The scenic bases on the acolytes in this boxed set are particularly good.

Lastly we have the *Call to Arms: Frost Atronach*. This is a rather bigger figure on a larger base. I'd normally say it's "40mm to the top of the head" but that's kind of torpedoed by the model not having a head, as *such*... The body effectively ends at the shoulders.

At £28 the kit comes with separate arms. The creature is a sort of Ice Giant, I guess, and seems to be comprised of just that: *ice*. It has an icy spike and clubbed frozen fist which will both be nasty in a punch up and – apparently – even after death they explode into a sphere of deadly ice shards. So 'kill them' at your own risk... Now I know that clear resin is a pain to cast but I can't help feeling that this is a missed opportunity: it would have been a great model to cast in clear rather than grey plastic but... it's still a nice model and will paint up well with dry brush or edge highlight. At least you won't have to paint eyes on it!

All of these new models are for use with *The Elder Scrolls: A Call to Arms Miniatures Core Rules* and *Chapter 4 Card Pack*. They are all *recommended*.



REVIEWS



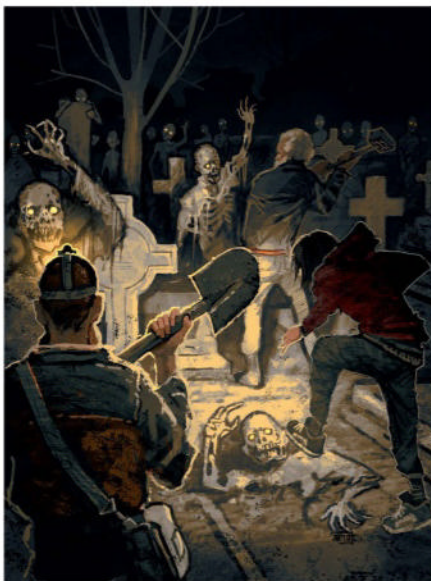
FRANCE'S FINEST

► wargamesatlantic.com
► £30

Alternative history is front and centre when it comes to wargaming: after all everything that *isn't* a direct reproduction of an actual historical battle with the same result strays into this 'non-historical' minefield. It just depends how far you stray! *Les Grogards Cavalry* are the mounted version of the same alternative, *Napoleonics-meets-steampunk* figures that **Wargames Atlantic** have already dipped their toes into (with *Infantry*, plus *Command and Support* in hard styrene and *Ogres* in their digital releases).

This box set of Ney's finest cavalry comes with two frame types in each box: three are the regular **Wargames Atlantic Horses** (six swappable body halves, four heads plus tails etc); along with three of a new rider sprue: this has chaps in Napoleonic style outfits but with optional head gear (shakos, bearskins, Adrian helmets and gasmasks) and equipped with lances, pistols, or swords. There's also some optional horse parts with armoured heads (complete with tusks), chests, and caparisons.

Designed for the **WA Deathfields** background, strange Napoleonics – be it *Flintloque* or *Silver Bayonet* – seems to be the order of the day and these models can be mixed up with the infantry sprues for even more customisation. **Recommended.**



WHEN NIGHTMARES COME

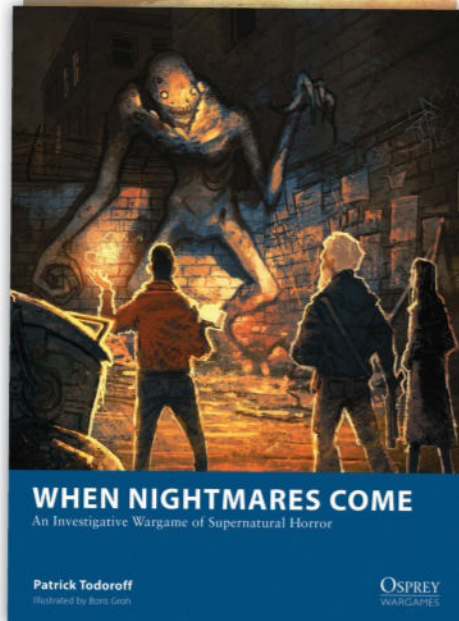
► ospreypublishing.com
► £14.99

When Nightmares Come is Osprey's latest 'blue book' game system. It's a miniatures wargame based around modern era supernatural horror and occult investigation. It's set in a world of nightmarish monsters which your team of paranormal vigilantes proceed to hunt down. It's a solo/cooperative system for up to five players who form a 'Nightwatch' team who then investigate mysterious disappearances, thefts, and murders. So more *Buffy* than *Ghostbusters*, perhaps...

Using 28mm minis (though you could go smaller with 15mm I guess) and a 2' x 2' play area you'll need figures, terrain and scatter pieces, a ruler or measuring tape, at least one full set of polyhedral dice and a set of wargame blast and teardrop templates (3" and 5" diameter, plus a 8.25" teardrop) would all be useful as well as some tokens to mark a model's status.

Your player's figures – called *Hunters* – are split into three types: *Wardens* (the fighters of the groups), *Weavers* (the magic users), and *Wrights* (the folks who research and build stuff). There's a character generation section for these three.

There's a *Supply Closet* where you can equip players with occult and mundane items – everything from magic items to bandages – and a *Dark Spawn* bestiary



section that lists the creatures, demons, 'Staypuff' giants or whatever it is you'd want to meet in the game.

Finally there's a set of guidance for how to play out a 'case' as the scenarios are called, although an *actual* scenario/case might have been rather more useful: I look forward to seeing one on line, perhaps. There is a map of a small town to investigate (Deacon Falls), but that's about it, really.

When Nightmares Come is a mix of roleplaying and skirmish with an IGOUGO system using an Action Dice Pool and emphasizes quick resolutions. It's a good price and takes the horror/Cthulhu-esque gaming style into a modern era. On a personal taste front, I'm not a big fan of the artwork used but I do like the dice system.

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GET OFF THE BEACH!

Pacific Islands 1943-45

Words and pictures by **Jon Sutherland**

ISLAND HOPPING

Game mechanisms for handling amphibious landings are tough to find. In many ways, the logistical headache of putting on an amphibious landing game, which after all is pretty much like storming a very well-defended fortification, puts a lot of gamers off from considering the Pacific theatre at all.

RIGHT
In 54mm, a range of landing craft and US Marines.

Compared to the popularity of North-West Europe (1944-45), the Eastern Front (1941-45), the Desert War (1940-43) and the fall of the West (1940), the Pacific War is badly catered for in many ways. Perhaps that is why the war in the Pacific is often referred to as “*the other world war two*”.

THEATRE OF OPERATIONS

We all know about some of the larger amphibious landings on Iwo Jima and Okinawa, but let’s focus on the so-called “South West Pacific Area” (SWPA) which consisted of Australia, Papua New Guinea, the Dutch



ABOVE RIGHT
Down By The Jetty - the first wave of US Marines hit the beach.

RIGHT
Marines scamper forward as engineers deal with the beach defences.

East Indies (Indonesia) and the Philippines.

From 22 June 1943 and 12 July 1945, Douglas MacArthur and his United States-led Allied command undertook over sixty amphibious (or more correctly “combined operations”) in the SWPA. MacArthur’s landings were aimed at outmanoeuvring the Japanese rather than launching direct assaults against their strongpoints (which was largely how the US Navy and US Marine Corps handled their operations).

Until mid-1942, the initiative was with the Japanese. Their own amphibious operations against Port Moresby in Papua New Guinea (just 350 miles from Australia) were called off after the defeat in the Coral Sea (4 to 8 May). Similarly, a landing on Midway was



abandoned after catastrophic Japanese losses in the Battle of Midway (4-7 June). Their last real play was a landing at Milne Bay (25 August – 7 September) in south-eastern Papua New Guinea. It was the first decisive amphibious landing loss for them in the war (mainly at the hands of Australian troops).

ALLIED AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS

The Allied invasion fleets needed Landing Ship Tanks (LSTs), Landing Craft Infantry (LCIs), and Landing Craft Tanks (LCTs). A common thread was to try and find lightly defended beaches and to land men and vehicles quickly so the ships could bring in reinforcements. Most fire support came from destroyers. At Balikpapan on the southern coast of Dutch Borneo in July 1945, 7,000 rockets and 38,000 shells were fired at the target beach over the course of 20 days before the landing was made.

Creating a suitable set of rules to reflect all of these factors means:

1. Carrying out a preparatory bombardment of the beach and likely enemy positions
2. Having sufficient ships to make the first landing
3. Moving these ships off table to retrieve reinforcements
4. Having a “covering bombardment” once troops have landed

For the Allies, points 2 and 3 means that the ships and their cargo are continually under fire (if applicable). Other necessary considerations are beach-masters, beach parties, repair and recovery and a naval signals unit. The beach parties would be primarily engineers to deal with defence works, mines and demolitions.

AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS ON THE TABLE-TOP

Let’s take each of these factors in turn and create some guidelines: we’ll place these into a timeline to run the game:

- **Force sizes and deployment:** Don’t get too fixated about comparative force sizes. Give the attacking force a 2:1 superiority in landing units and a 4-5:1 advantage in off table bombardment or aircraft attacks. Japanese units should be classed as fairly static in defensive positions. The Japanese should be given strongpoints (earth and timber) for all of their artillery pieces and for their machine guns. No more than 30% of the Japanese force can be deployed on or within a move of the beach. Around 20% of the Japanese force can be held back as a counter-attacking force.



COMMAND DECISION

► **Preparatory bombardment:** The easiest way to handle this is to think about the classic Battleships game. Grid up the table on a piece of paper with any major geographical features - each player will need a copy. Have a third copy for the Allied player to mark their covering bombardment. Have the Japanese player mark the location of all of their units on this grid. Determine how many bombardment strikes the Allies will be allowed. Now have the Allied player mark where these strikes will hit. If, for example, the Allied player has four strikes per turn over three preparatory turns, then mark these in a different colour. A bombardment strike can “creep” 1-2 grids each turn, or if a totally different target is chosen, then only a half effect strike is allowed as the guns range in on the new target. Use your chosen rules to determine any Japanese casualties or strongpoint damage.



► **Transport:** The Allies should be given sufficient transport to land around 25% of their infantry, tanks and immediate support units. Your rules should give you movement for these ships. Any hits on the landing craft will reduce the reinforcement rate. The ships should land their cargo (one turn) and then reverse out and turn towards the water table edge. When they reach the table edge they will take a turn to load up and head back to the beach.

► **Bombardment:** Before the game starts, the Allied player must also mark on the grid where the covering bombardment will be laid during the game. Agree one or two strikes every turn. The Allied player marks the grid with numbers showing which turn the shells will fall on the marked squares on the grid. At any time the Allied player can cancel the bombardment completely or choose to delay the bombardment on a particular square by one or two turns.

With all of that in mind, how about a *Sample Game*?

PORTON PLANTATION

North Bougainville June 8 1945

North Bougainville has no roads, just some narrow tracks. The only way to supply and reinforce is by sea. The Australian 26th Battalion and the 42nd Landing Craft Company launched a series of attacks to cut off the Japanese. The Japanese were forced to abandon several positions after being bypassed and outflanked.

Elements of the 31st/51st Infantry Battalion had begun patrols around the Buoi Plantation on June 4. The Japanese were very active and aggressive and over the next three days there were a number of fire-fights. It was clear that the Japanese were going to resist any Allied moves to take the Bonis Peninsular from them. The decision was made to land troops close to the jetties at Porton Plantation around three miles to the north of Ratusa. It would mean that the Japanese at Buoi would be surrounded.

There were immediate concerns that the landing force was not big enough and that the force moving north from Ratusa would face too great a task to reach them. The concerns were ignored and on the evening of June 5 the outline plans were presented followed by a landing rehearsal the next day.

TOP
A Sherman is hit as it enters the jungle.

ABOVE
A Japanese anti-tank gun crew prepares to fire.

RIGHT
A Japanese aircraft is caught on the ground.





OPPOSING FORCES

AUSTRALIAN	JAPANESE
Australians Captain Clyde Downs (approx 190 infantry)	Japanese Captain Eikichi Kato (initially 100 men rising to 300)
'A' Company 26th Battalion	Imperial Japanese Navy's 87th Naval Garrison Force
'C' Company, 31st/51st Infantry Battalion	The Japanese may have 3 pill boxes for machine guns anywhere on the table
42nd Landing Craft Company (6 landing craft)	
11th and 12th Batteries of the 4th Field Regiment and the 2nd Mountain Battery	

SET UP

Set up a coast line about a quarter of the way into the table (width-wise). Position a small bay in the centre with a couple of jetties. Assign the centre third of the coast to be navigable, the rest of the coast line has reef just under the water (each move on this part of the water runs the risk of going aground – roll 1d6, if a 1,2,3 is thrown then the craft is aground). Japanese pillboxes should cover the exit from the jetties as their priority.

ABOVE LEFT

An overrun Japanese gun position.

ABOVE RIGHT

A Japanese counter attack develops.

VICTORY & DEFEAT

The **Australians** will win a *strategic victory* if they manage to destroy or capture all three Japanese pill boxes (if the latter they must still have control over them at the end of turn 14). The Australians will win a *tactical victory* if they hold a perimeter on the ground at the end of turn 18. In this case, the Japanese will consider the battle lost and will withdraw inland.

The **Japanese** win a *strategic victory* if they have

OBJECTIVES & TIMELINE

AUSTRALIAN	JAPANESE
Turn 1 – 0357 – Three landing craft of infantry land on beach	Turn 1 – no activity
Turn 2 – advance inland, landing craft leave.	Turn 2 – no activity
Turn 3 – second wave arrives in three landing craft with heavy weapons and artillery. They run aground.	Turn 3 – Kato may move his 100 men to engage the Australian perimeter.
Turn 4 – roll d6 for each stuck landing craft, they float free on a 5 or 6. (Continue each turn until free)	Turn 4 Japanese may engage the stuck landing craft.
Turn 5 – Lieutenant David Spark the FOO contacts the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). An overhead aircraft can now see all Japanese movement, any hidden movement is now revealed.	
Turn 7 – Another three landing craft arrive with remainder of Australia infantry, machine guns and mortars	Turn 7 – Japanese may now deploy mortars to engage the enemy.
Turn 8 – one air strike on any Japanese unit or position	
Turn 10 – Three landing craft can bring in additional company from the 31st/51st Infantry Battalion	Turn 10 – Japanese reinforcements arrive, two more depleted companies.
Turn 12 – nightfall, no activity, perimeter can be reduced.	Turn 12 – no activity
Turn 13 – early morning – Australians can call on off-table artillery fire from a battery of 25-pounders.	Turn 13 – Two more depleted companies arrive. Kato must launch a counterattack against the perimeter using 3 companies within three turns.
Turn 15 – Air support can be called in, with 16 RAAF Boomerangs and Royal New Zealand Air Force Corsairs	Turn 16 – An anti-tank gun can be deployed to engage enemy landing craft.
Turn 18 – Two waves of three landing craft arrive to evacuate the Australians	



COMMAND DECISION



ABOVE
A US Marine tears down the Japanese flag atop their command bunker.

BELOW
A US Navy aircraft flies overhead.

killed, captured or forced to withdraw, all Australian land forces by the end of turn 17. They will win a *tactical victory* if this is achieved after turn 17.

RULES & SUGGESTIONS

This encounter would lend itself to rule sets that focus on skirmish gaming rather than larger unit actions. *Bolt Action* or *Chain of Command* immediately comes to mind, but *Rapid Fire*, *Battlegroup Pacific War* or the snappily titled *Frontline The Miniature Game - Pacific & South East Asia Core Rulebook* would work just as well.

PORTON PLANTATION: FACT CHECK

So what really happened? By late morning on June 9, the fighting had become vicious around the perimeter

and the Australians were calling in artillery strikes barely 25 metres from their positions. At around 1630, three landing craft arrived to evacuate the Australian force. Grabbing their wounded, the Australians abandoned the perimeter and were on the craft in a matter of minutes.

Two of the craft went aground as they were severely overloaded. Several men jumped overboard to lighten the loads. One craft floated free but the other one was stuck. Some Japanese waded out so they could throw grenades at the stricken craft and its passengers. Around this time Downs was killed.

The craft remained stranded overnight. RAAF aircraft machine gunned the Japanese and bombers tried to drop life rafts close-by. All attempts failed. Another night passed and – at first light – a Japanese machine gunner fired into the craft at close range before he was killed. Overnight, the Japanese had brought up an anti-tank gun and fired into the landing craft tearing off the stern. The quick wits of an Forward Observation Officer, Captain John Whitelaw, who was aboard a landing craft making for the wreck with canvas assault boats, allowed the Australian artillery to pin the enemy gun.

The new attempt to get the survivors off was a success. Some of the Australian survivors (including those who voluntarily jumped over the side on June 9 managed to swim over three miles in shark-infested waters either to Torokori Island or down the coast to be picked up. ■



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DEFENCE OF DUFFER'S DRIFT

The Anglo-Boer War Words and photos by **John Kersey**

PREMISE

In 1905 an entertaining book was published as a primer for junior army officers: who could foresee the widespread impact it would have! Its author – Captain E. D. Swinton, D.S.O., R.E. – would later be a forefather of the armoured tank used in the First World War. The format he would employ as a training device: the learner experiences a series of “dreams” in which they apply the learnings until

ABOVE

The British force form up in sections for deployment orders under the shadow of Waschout Hill. British infantry by Strelets. Wagons – IMEX ACW set.

they achieve ultimate success. This would be used in other derivative books, even those applied to modern war. It would be used in computer games and also animations on **YouTube**. Amazingly, a very similar format was also an inspiration for the Tom Cruise movie *Edge of Tomorrow* (2014). The script was from a novel by Hiroshi Sakurazaka but the format – with its “time-loops” substituting for the “dreams” – was very similar in design!



All in all, a good excuse to put together a fun Old School style game! So...

DUFFER'S DRIFT: THE GAME

The start for me is to draw inspiration from the source material, be it book, movie, painting, video game, whatever....

This leads to developing the game. In this case the edition I have is contained within John Curry's *Army Wargames Two Centuries of Staff College Exercises* complete with illustrations of our humble battlefield. It is rather constrained – which is good for tabletop gaming – and the challenge was to visualise this on a 6x4 foot board without too many compromises! So besides the veldt setting (which could be a mat or board in some form) you will need:

- ▶ The Silliaasvogel River (loosely translated as *Silly Ass Bird* from the Afrikaans!)
- ▶ The drift or ford incorporated into the river
- ▶ Regrettable Mountain (a high mesa style outcrop dominating the area)
- ▶ Waschout Hill; a gently sloping hill
- ▶ Incidentamba; another hill
- ▶ The Brink Farm sheltering in front of this
- ▶ A zulu style kraal (camp) with surrounding fence and huts on top of Waschout Hill
- ▶ A road running North-South down the middle of the table.

This forms the major part of the environment but to this needs to be added the minor touches such as scrub (lichen) and anthills (scratchbuilt) to bring the veldt to life. They also form part of the game. The **Brink family** need to be replicated: in the book they are a father, mother, two sons and several daughters but for the game I used a counter with four suitable settler figures on. The **natives** are variable and again abstracted into eight warriors individually based and a group counter representing the leader and civilians. To this you could add crops, livestock, etc to add to the narrative.

The **British force** consists of 50 combatants including a HQ group (on a suitable mini-diorama base). These consist of 5 sections:

- ▶ HQ section: an HQ base plus 8 NCOs and other ranks (including a Colour Sergeant Major) broken up into 4 squads.
- ▶ 4 x infantry sections each consisting of a NCO and other ranks (totalling 10 each). The British are armed with the Lee-Metford Rifle.

The **Boer forces** can be variable to add some 'ginger' to the game: for my version I conceived of 6 forces (one for each dream in the book) which can conveniently be rolled for on a D6.

INTRODUCTION

The basic story concerns a junior officer in the Anglo-Boer War who with 50 men under command is charged with the defence of a river crossing: a drift in the area of Dreamdorp known as Duffer's Drift. The book shows the topography of the area and the environment and adds some further elements to complicate the mission (some native inhabitants and a farming family: the Brinks). The adversaries are the wily Boers who use various strategies and tactics to outwit and defeat the "khakis" – as the British army was known as to the Boers. The junior officer, named as Backsight Forethought, learns a little more each time in setting his defence through six dreams until finally in the Sixth Dream he manages to defeat his foe.

DEFENCE OF DUFFER'S DRIFT

EARLY BOERS, 1899/1990
1: Urban Boer, 1899
2: German volunteer doctor, 1899

3: Volunteer, 'Chicago Irish-American Corps', Blake's Irish Brigade
4: Gunner, Transvaal Staatsartillerie
5: African agyteryer



ABOVE
Image by Gerry Embleton from Boer Wars (2) by Ian Knight © 1996 Osprey Publishing.

RIGHT
The native kraal. Resin 15mm zulu huts by Debris of War. Plastic natives by Airfix/HaT.

Besides mounted and dismounted figures, you'll need a 1" QF Nordenfeldt (Pom-Pom) gun, a field gun and a couple of wagons forming the supply convoy.

THE GAME MECHANICS

The Duffer's Drift story works well as a large skirmish game (1:1) scale so you can use your existing skirmish platoon/company rules downscaling your ranges to fit the board scale as necessary. If possible, keep the rules fairly simple, not only to fit with the 'Old School' feel but also to focus on the core of the game. From a personal viewpoint the game is a resource management exercise or what is sometimes called a "worker management" game. I remembered reading an adaption of the book to game a long time ago in a wargames magazine but couldn't track the article down in my magazine collection! This looked at the British army unit being given a series of tasks so the leadership challenge is to make *best* use of the assets given the battlefield, mission and potential threat in the time available. That is why it has an enduring appeal and has been translated into so many different media.

GAME TURN

The Game Turn is loosely:

- ▶ Initial Game Setup (first turn only).
- ▶ Spotting phase.
- ▶ Movement phase.
- ▶ Shooting phase.
- ▶ Close combat phase.
- ▶ Morale phase.

As mentioned earlier, the rifles used are Lee-Netford for the British but Mausers for the Boers. The Brinks will be armed with shotguns or single-shot hunting rifles. The Boers have the possibility of having a Pom-Pom (Nordenfeldt 1" quick firing gun) as well as a field gun or siege howitzer.

The organiser can use local old school style rules to taste or adapt something more modern, for example **Bolt Action**. Given the compressed nature of the table it will be best to keep the ranges fairly modest, say 12" range for the Lee Metford.

SETTING UP THE GAME

The British player(s) take the initial game turn to set up the defence. This is done by:

A Game tracker: this consists of 24 hour boxes - the boxes from 7PM to 5AM count as night. The British arrive at 3PM on the first day but we assume they take an hour unloading stores, parading in sections, awaiting orders. Turning orders into action thus starts at 4PM and the junior officer has **three hours** to make preparations for defence.

A random card (from a regular pack of cards) is drawn for the Brink family allegiance (red = British, black = Boer). The British player then allocates his forces to various Tasks in line with this table:

TASK TABLE			
UNIT	LOCATION	TASK	CONSEQUENCE





The Tasks available are shown on the table below. Note each takes a certain number of men and time to carry out. Be warned for each Task there is a Consequence that can occur during the game!

TASK ALLOCATION LIST		
TASK	PEOPLE REQUIRED	TIME (HRS)
Dig fighting trenches (squad)	10	2
Dig dummy trench (squad)	10	2
Overhead cover for trenches (protection against shrapnel)	10	1
Erect tents (for squad)	2	1
Post sentries (location)	2	2
Brink family – question at farm and return to drift area	2	2
Brink family – bring family in and question at camp	2	3
Brink family – remove from farm to shelter (rear area)	2	3
Natives – remove from kraal or location to shelter	2	1
Natives – question natives at kraal	2	3
Post lookout (location)	2	2
Post lookout (veldt)	2	3
Provide dugout for lookout	2	2
Clear scrubs from river section (note river is three sections)	10	1

And the consequences are...

CONSEQUENCE TABLE	
Trench	If HQ within 12" roll Leadership Test (2D6). If under test roll for Ld it is concealed for spotting. If Ld roll failed then not concealed as the officer didn't spot the spoil was marking the trench!
Overhead cover	Roll D6. 5 or 6 the workers were spotted by the farmers and can reveal the trench is occupied.
Erect tents	+1 to Boer sighting roll
Post sentries	During night turns can spot Boers within 12". Boers can spot sentries, roll 5 or 6 – sentries are using lanterns and Boers can spot if it is a real or dummy unit. If real, deploy the figures.
Brink family	At the farm, check allegiance when tested. Red card = Anglo allegiance. Boer force lose one dummy counter; any scouts on the board are revealed. Black card = Boer allegiance. If the British unit is a large unit (counter) they receive no information and return to camp. If the unit is a small unit (counter), Boer player rolls 2D6 as a Leadership Test (Ld9). If they roll 9 or below they fire on the counter with 4 rifles. If fail the roll the British unit follows orders but the family give out no information.
Natives	British unit follows orders. Natives will give out no information.
Post Lookout on hill	Day turns – extends spotting distance to 48" (for Regret Table Mountain extends to 72")
Clear scrubs	Removes soft cover and concealment for attacking force. During day turns attackers take Leadership Test (2D6) – if they roll 9 or below allows check if a real unit or dummy unit.

GAME COUNTERS

At its heart the "worker management" game is very much one of resource allocation. Where the game is played solo or with an opponent then hidden game counters are used to represent the forces or are dummy counters!



For the counters I used two types; small counters which were MDF figure bases (although you could use card or plastic ones) and for large bases coloured wooden craft bases available in craft shops which are then cut in half. These last ones I called "dibbers" and have the advantage of being long and rectangular so can indicate a unit in line of march column with the rounded end showing the direction of travel, if needed. As an example for the British force the counter mix was:

British Forces

HQ section consisting of:

- ▶ HQ counter: small counter
- ▶ 1st squad: 2 men – small counter
- ▶ 2nd squad: 2 men – small counter
- ▶ 3rd squad: 2 men – small counter
- ▶ 4th squad: 2 men – small counter
- ▶ Dummy #1 – small counter
- ▶ Dummy #2 – small counter
- ▶ Dummy #3 – small counter
- ▶ 1st Section: 10 men – large counter
- ▶ 2nd Section: 10 men – large counter
- ▶ 3rd Section: 10 men – large counter
- ▶ 4th Section: 10 men – large counter
- ▶ Dummy #4 – large counter
- ▶ Dummy #5 – large counter.

ABOVE
The battle of Spioenkop 1900. Image by Gerry Embleton from Colenso 1899 by Ian Knight © 1995 Osprey Publishing.

DEFENCE OF DUFFER'S DRIFT



For their opponents:

Boer Forces (a choice from these)

- ▶ Field Cornet (mounted) as leader - common to all forces - small counter.
- ▶ **Force 1** – Carolina Commando
Mission: exit force from South edge of board to reinforce main force besieging a major settlement.
- ▶ **Scout force**
 1 Small scout unit (2 mounted men) on the road + 1 dummy counter = 2 small counters
 1 Small scout unit (2 mounted men) at the farm + 1 dummy counter = 2 small counters
- ▶ **Main force**
 2 Commandos (10 mounted men each) on the road + 1 dummy counter = 3 large counters
 1 Convoy with 2 wagons of supplies on the road + 1 dummy counter = 2 large counters

The Boer force are cautious but are not expecting the British force so will move along the road until they spot a British unit.

ABOVE
 Image by Gerry Embleton from Boer Wars (2) by Ian Knight © 1996 Osprey Publishing.

RIGHT
 Boer Commando storm along the South road past the prepared British position in the kraal.

- ▶ **Force 2** – Ermelo Commando
Mission: exit force from South edge of board to reinforce main force besieging a major settlement.
- ▶ **Scout force**
 1 Small scout unit (2 mounted men) on the road + 3 dummy counters = 4 small counters
- ▶ **Main force**
 3 Commandos (10 mounted men each) on the road = 3 large counters
 1 Convoy with 2 wagons of supplies on the road + 1 dummy counter = 2 large counters

The Boer force have been told the way is clear and have a large force so will move confidently along the road until they spot trouble. They may send a scout unit to the Farm to gather intelligence.



- ▶ **Force 3** – Heidelberg Commando
Mission: seize crossing (drift) and use the gun to bombard in support of the main force.
- ▶ **Scout force**
 3 Small scout units (2 mounted men each) + 1 dummy counter deployed on the North edge = 4 small counters
- ▶ **Main force**
 2 Commandos (10 mounted men each) on the road + 1 dummy counter = 3 large counters
 1 Convoy with 1 supply wagon plus 1 wagon with field gun + 1 dummy counter = 2 large counters

The Boer force will move cautiously as they suspect the British khakis might hold the drift so may use the gun in support if they spot activity in the area.



► **Force 4 – Utrecht Commando**

Mission: seize crossing (drift) and use the field gun and pom-pom to support the commandos.

► **Scout force**

2 Small scout units (2 mounted men each) on the road + 2 dummy counters = 4 small counters.

► **Main force**

2 Commandos (10 mounted men each) + 1 1" Nordenfeldt pom-pom gun on the road = 3 large counters
1 Convoy with 1 supply wagon plus 1 wagon with field gun + 1 dummy counter = 2 large counters

The Boer force believe the British khakis may be in the general area around the drift and have 2 guns to support. They will seize the drift and if possible pass the convoy along the road to exit the South edge.

► **Force 5 - Vryheid Commando**

Mission: seize the drift, exit the convoy with siege artillery from the road on the South edge if possible.

BELOW

Boer forces set up a 1" pom-pom quick firer on Incidentamba. Boer figures and gun by Jacklex Miniatures painted by Nick O'Grady.

► **Scout force**

2 Small scout units (2 mounted men each) + 2 dummy counters on the North edge = 4 small counters.

► **Main force**

2 Commandos (10 mounted men each) on the road + 1 dummy counter = 3 large counters
1 Convoy with 1 supply wagon plus 1 wagon towing siege gun + 1 dummy counter on the road = 2 large counters

The main force will look to seize the drift to cross and press ahead to exit the convoy and siege gun from the South edge if possible. The gun will not be fired as it is short of ammo but is valuable so the Boers will not risk its loss or capture.

► **Force 6 – Waterberg Commando**

Mission: exit convoy with siege artillery from road on South edge.



DEFENCE OF DUFFER'S DRIFT



▶ Scout force

1 Small scout unit (2 mounted men each) + 3 dummy counters on the road = 4 small counters

▶ Main force

3 Commandos (10 mounted men each) on the road = 3 large counters

1 Convoy with 1 supply wagon plus 1 wagon towing siege gun + 1 dummy counter = 2 large counters

The main force will advance aggressively along the road, seize the drift and move as fast as possible to exit from the South edge. The gun will not be fired as it is short of ammo and is desperately needed at the southern battlefield.

THOUGHTS ON RULES

The intention is to provide a scenario, true to the book, that can be adapted to the rule set generally used by the players. To that end some thoughts are offered on how they can be incorporated in the game.

SPOTTING

Allow for higher locations such as the hills and mountains to have a greater range of sight (some suggestions are included here). Generally allow each unit one spotting attempt using a die roll. The counter then has to be revealed as to its type. If dummy it is discarded, if a real unit then the figures are deployed on the board. The spotting attempt should distinguish between large and small units, say a -1 for attempting to spot a small unit. Night conditions should also make spotting more difficult. Boer units off the road may be harder to spot.

MOVING

Allow mounted forces to have double the move of infantry, say 12" to 6". Wagons and towed guns can be 8". Roads double the movement rate. Allow for Boers to dismount if required at the end of the move.

ABOVE

British scout party on Regret Table Mountain.

RIGHT

Boer supply column forces the Duffer's Drift crossing.

SHOOTING

Allow the Boers to have *superior range and accuracy* with die roll modifications. The book distinguishes between killed and wounded so if your rules don't incorporate this divide the Hits accordingly. This could be done through a saving roll for each hit with an adjustment for the Boers presumably having better concealment and cover skills. For each hit on D6:

- ▶ **British; Killed = 6,5 Wounded = 4,3 Saved = 2,1.**
- ▶ **Boer; Killed = 6 Wounded = 5,4 Saved = 3,2,1.**

If Boers are mounted add 1 to the score. Wounded figures are laid on their side but can continue to shoot.

CLOSE COMBAT

The British were noted as being superior in this area and Boers tended to avoid close combat. A Boer unit charged should have to take a morale test first if not





already in the rules being used. The British should have a +1 D6 die roll advantage.

MORALE

Allow each unit to test morale as required by the rules, say if it reaches the 50% casualty mark. The Boers may be more risk adverse so may test at a higher level say 25% casualties. If a unit fails its morale then the whole force must take a morale or leadership test. Allow the British a higher rating, say Ld9 as compared to the Boers Ld8 as an example reflecting the Boer's more flexible strategy. If the Boers fail they will retreat back towards the North edge. If the British fail they will surrender as often happens in the book!

WATER AS A WEAPON

If a British unit is isolated from a water source when it tests for morale add a +1 factor to the die roll to reflect their dependence on a water source. The players can

decide which locations have a water source – obviously the river and farm but can include a well for the kraal. A trench dug out on the veldt would be assumed to have no ready water source.

MODELLING & FIGURES

The figures used were a mixture of 1/72 soft plastic from the **Strelets** range for the majority of the Boers and British forces combined with some 20mm metal **Jacklex Miniatures** figures from their Colonial range for the Boer scouts. The natives were from the **Airfix/Hat 1/72 Tarzan/Jungle Adventure** set. The **Hat Natal Native** contingent set would probably be a more authentic alternative.

To round out the Boer convoy some **IMEX ACW** wagons were featured together with some **Strelets** Boer field guns and a howitzer (as siege artillery). Both **HaT** and **Jacklex** also have suitable colonial wagons in their ranges.



DEFENCE OF DUFFER'S DRIFT



ABOVE
A British detachment approach the Brink farm with a grudging welcome from Anreas Brink and his wife.

Finally for buildings I resorted to a 15mm **Sarissa Precision** ACW homestead for the Brink Farm and some cast resin 15mm Zulu huts for the kraal. The smaller size is not readily noticeable and it helps having a smaller footprint on the board.

The various hills were a mixture of cast resin, hand formed **Mod-Roc** and a repurposed sculpted polystyrene one as a base for the kraal. The river was a cast resin set that had seen better days but revitalised with a new paint job and Terrain water effect.

BACKGROUND RESOURCES

Some excellent and inspiring resources consulted were:

Army Wargames Two Centuries of Staff College Exercises. Edited by John Curry 2009 194 pages through **Lulu.com**). This contains an edited version with period maps of Duffer's Drift as well as some other training exercises including later derivations such as *The Defence of Bowler Bridge* (1929).

Colenso 1899, Ian Knight, **Osprey Publishing** (CAM 38 1995 98 pages). Not only a detailed look at Colenso and the subsequent Spionkop battles but also a useful overview of the South African campaign with information on the armies involved. Excellent and inspirational illustrations, some of which seem to have provided inspiration for the **Strelets Boer** range! There is also a section devoted to wargaming the Boer War.

Wargaming in History: The Second Anglo-Boer War, Edwin Herbert, **Argus Books** (1990 95 pages). Out of print but can be found at second-hand sources. Handy small book with lots of information on the war and forces involved; organisation, tactics, uniforms, weapons as well as three scenarios to try out. The four appendices



include an indispensable glossary of Boer terms such as a kripvreter, a stall-fed horse or staff officer!

The Boer War in Colour: Vol 1 Conventional War, 1899 – 1900, Tinus Le Roux **Jonathan Ball Publishers** (2022 264 pages). A superb labour of love by Tinus Le Roux who not only crowdsourced a large variety of period photographs and postcards of the period but also brought them to life with a sensitive colourisation process. Essential for those seeking an authentic approach as well as an all round look at events including the behind the lines action. Tinus has carefully researched not only the personalities within the images but also the locations, equipment etc. There are also interesting sections on the photographic and colourisation processes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to Olaf Meys for helping to obtain a copy of *The Boer War in Colour* as well some ideas on gaming Duffer's Drift, Mark Lodge of **Jacklex Miniatures** for samples of their Boer range and Nick O'Grady for painting them. Also to the **SELWG** show team for allowing me a spot to demo the game. ■

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DEATH FROM ABOVE

WWII Air Combat in Lacquered Coffins

Words and photos by **Dave Tuck**

INTRODUCTION

The question we asked ourselves was: “*Why don’t Wargamers play more Second World War air combat games?*”...

I can safely state that air combat games rank lowest of any category of historical miniature wargames that I have experienced. I have played a land based miniature game almost every week for the past fifty odd years and am still not bored with it! However, Naval and Air combat games feature very rarely in my gaming mix. I still have yet to play *Cruel Seas*

ABOVE
Patrolling the skies. This is a 1/72 diecast but you could play in any sensible scale with enough room...

despite having all the models and the rule book. We recently blew the dust off some very nicely painted 1/144th scale aircraft that Malc Johnson had painted and that gave us the fillip we needed to explore this area more thoroughly.

CHECK LIST

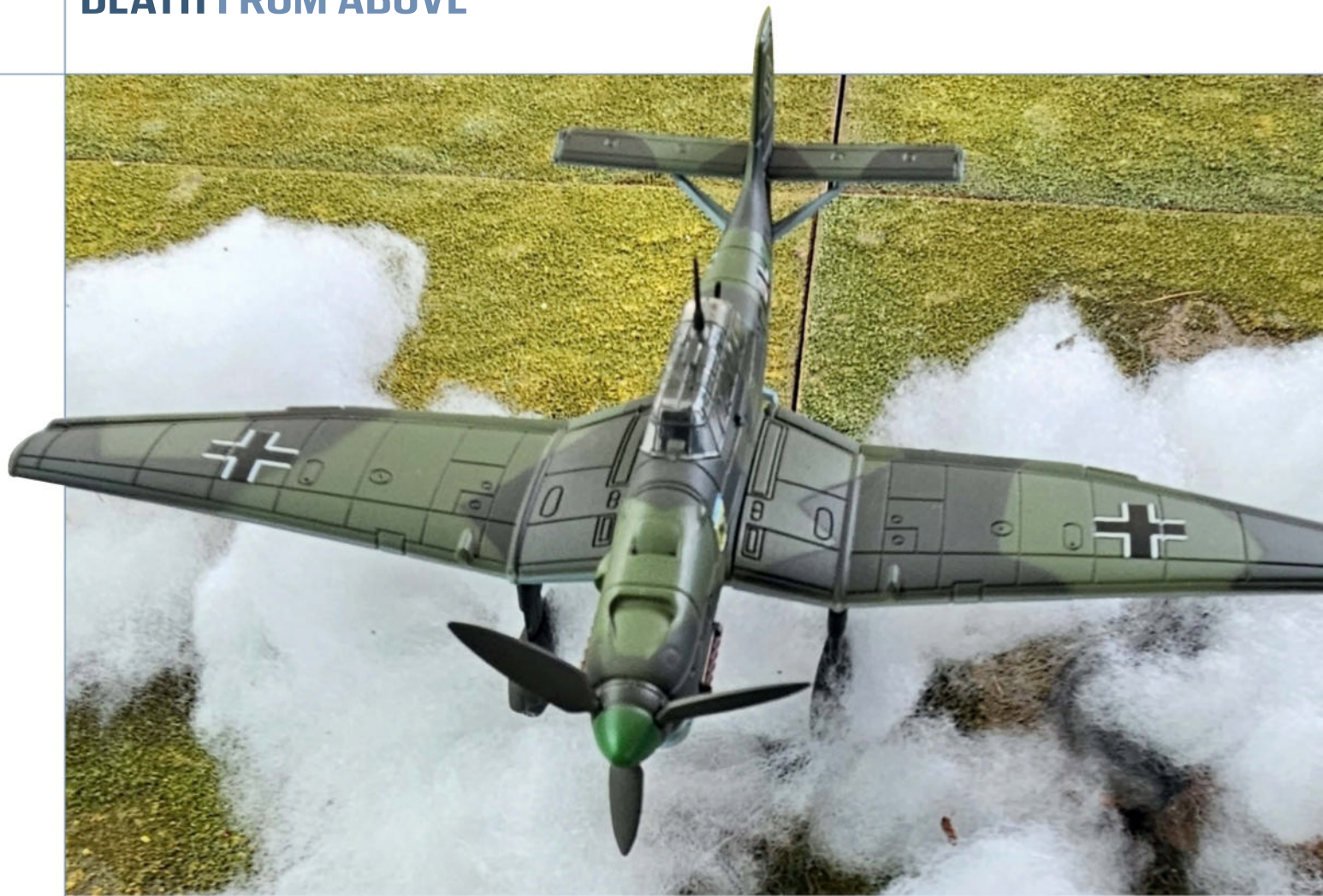
We had several criteria any rules we used needed to fulfil:

- ▶ No Flight stands.
- ▶ No hex sheets.
- ▶ No exotic dice.
- ▶ No cards or extensive book-keeping.
- ▶ A simple, fun, and easy to use set of rules.

Those readers of a certain age will remember the craze, back in the 1990’s (or was it earlier?) for multi-ringed, dowel rods to which were attached First World War **Airfix** 1/72nd aircraft, by a heath Robinson crocodile clip concoction! The idea being that each ring represented a height-band, and the plane was moved accordingly. We soon realised that it was easier and safer to sit the stand on the floor and abandon the gaming table. If one stand tipped over it was like a clip from a Canadian lumberjack training video, as they all crashed to the ground.

The way around this was to add weights to the base, which over a period developed one arm muscle, more than the other, and we started to look like English Longbowmen!

DEATH FROM ABOVE



ABOVE
A 1/72 Stuka comes in low for a strafing run.

CHOCKS AWAY

Hex mats are a more practical means of moving aircraft, some manage to do a good job of hiding the actual outlines of the hexes, but they still take away the magic for me and are a bit jarring.

I have a whole collection of dice from D4's to D20's, but if you use too many types in a game it slows it down, and who hasn't rolled a D10 instead of a D8 in the heat of battle?

I do not like many card-based systems: they are designed to get you to part with more money, or waste time, effort and resources printing them out before you start gaming. They are also a major source of gaming clutter, which again detracts from the look of the thing.

SIX O'CLOCK HIGH

One of the issues which are not dealt with well in some air rules is the concept that a diving aircraft gains momentum and a climbing one loses it. Most deal well with the advantage of height and some with the benefit of having a wingman. Some air rules don't seem to know *what* level they are aimed at. Are you an individual pilot, a squadron leader or even a wing commander? We all want the excitement and challenge of firing those cannon into that enemy bomber, but we also want some of the higher-level tactical challenges.

Where there is a lot of record keeping (and one Supermarine Spitfire looks much like another in these tiny scales) it is very easy for a game to break

down. Simplicity is king in a fast-moving game, like aerial combat should be. Later on I will explore the possibility of synching a board game set at a strategic level with combat using gaming pieces.

RULES

Having set out what I wanted from a game of air combat, I eliminated *Bag a Hun* by *Too Fat Lardies*, it is quite an old game, involves consulting a lot of charts and is hex based, although they did set out a work around for this in a Lard newsletter. *Check your 6* is hex based and I believe uses multiple dice types. The *Wings* series is great for a quick pick-up game of aerial duelling but gets expensive and slows considerably when introduced as a multi-player game.

Our exploration of rulesets led us towards an obscure set (at least in our circle) going by the wonderful title of *Lacquered Coffins*, named after the Soviet *nom de guerre* for the LaGG fighters, mainly the LaGG-3. This really stood for the designers of the aircraft, Messrs Lavochkin, Gorbunov and Gudkov, but Soviet pilots with a macabre sense of humour said it stood for Lakirovany garantirovany grob, which translates to 'guaranteed lacquered coffin'!

The rulebook can be downloaded as a PDF and printed off on a print friendly version, with a nicer version available for reading on a device. It cost me \$10, arrived instantly and is no real barrier to entry.

The first plus for me was its comprehensive index,

sadly lacking in many publications. There are 18 pages of rules and the same number of pages of aircraft lists that are divided into early, mid, and late war for the main protagonists, the RAF and FAA, the Luftwaffe, the Soviet air force, the US air force, the Imperial Japanese air services and the Italian Regia Aeronautica.

The lists are comprehensive and give the aircraft name, its role (fighter, ground attack or bomber) its game speed, its damage limit, its armaments with location, forward rear upper, rear lower or side and its payload and special characteristics such as 'armoured', 'slow', or 'slow climb'. Pilots are rated into four categories: *poor*, *average*, *good* and *ace* and there are points values for pilot and plane.

One page I always like to see are the notes from the Designer, who I understand also wrote the World War One game called *Dogfight!* The author freely admits to simplifying the variants of the various aircraft and leaving out High altitude performance aircraft and aircraft with high service ceilings. If you know your stuff, it would be quite easy to add a couple of extra levels to accommodate these.



BACKGROUND & REASONING

A useful addition not seen in many rulesets, is the author setting out his reasoning behind each of the stats. He gives details of the speeds the real aircraft required to be classed as fast, climb rates to qualify as fast or slow, weight to quantify damage points and he then sets out how these are totalled to arrive at a points value for each aircraft. This allows any aircraft *not* covered, to be converted into game stats and points. I am sure there are not that many aircraft that cannot be covered by this useful information page.

AIRBORNE!

Game play requires model aircraft, a protractor to allow turns, a ruler in inches and some D6. A base for each aircraft is required on which two D6 can fit or a control panel if you prefer (we don't) is all

the extra equipment required. We made up some damage markers by attaching Kapok to a hair grip and spraying it in shades of black and red. These can be easily fixed to any of the aircraft to simulate damage.

Any scale aircraft can be used, the smaller the scale and bigger the table allows you more room to manoeuvre and deploy more aircraft, but the rules allow you to enjoy anything from a single dogfight to a mission covering a bombing mission over Germany.



LEFT

An in game Spitfire with dice on the base showing height and speed.

Let us have a look at the mechanics. Each aircraft is mounted on a stand with two differently coloured dice on the base. Small dice holders can be attached to prevent accidentally knocking the dice. One colour represents the aircraft's height and the other its speed. It is therefore very easy to find out the stats of any aircraft flying at any time during the game.

LEFT

An in game FW 190, again with dice on the base.

MAKE YOUR MOVE

There is a system for setting up the original locations of the aircraft on the table, but we prefer to have the units enter at the start of the game. It is a straight IGO-UGO system, but it is possible in an optional rule to prioritise movement by pilot quality so that aces move first and freshmen last, which is the system we prefer, as the first shot in a dogfight is often of critical importance.

Movement is split into mandatory moves and then manoeuvres. Mandatory moves are always twice its speed, so – if the speed dice is showing 2 – then the aircraft must move 4" before any other actions. After that aircraft can climb or dive with the former adding one level to the height indicator die, while deducting one from the speed die. To dive you simply do the opposite. These are shallow climbs and dives that any pilot can do. The fun starts when tougher tasks are required!

These manoeuvres include steep climbs and dives where the adjustment is 2 on each die and combining a turn with an attack. There are also special rules for offensive actions such as barrel roll attacks and

DEATH FROM ABOVE



ABOVE
A Spit providing support for a Halifax Mk III. These are all in 1/144.

RIGHT
The Hun scores a hit as the Halifax's engine bums!

low and high yo-yo attacks, as well as defensive actions such as Immelmann's, split S and wingover manoeuvres, pivoting and gain separations. All of these have an effect on altitude and speed and are clearly described in the rules.

The hazard from these special manoeuvres is failing a pilot check: a simple roll of 2 D6 needing a total of 6 or more to pass. Adjustments are made for damage to the aircraft or pilot, his skill rating, and a few other factors. Failure means the manoeuvre is not carried out and speed and height are both reduced by one level. If height goes below 1 the aircraft crashes and if speed does the same the aircraft stalls and the aircraft must be recovered.

PROTRACTED MOVEMENT

Turning is carried out using a humble school protractor with a loss of speed for sharp turns. Very simple and easy to control. Depending upon the size of the protractor it is possible that a turning move allows aircraft a longer move distance than when in straight line flight but it doesn't seem to effect the game and is the same for all the players.

Aerial combat involves pointing the aircraft at a target *unless* it has a rear, turret or side gunner and uses a single D6 for each weapon firing with some adjustments set out on a simple chart with the resultant scores of between 1 and 8 determining the levels of damage, from no effect to target shot down, with the chance of structural damage or wounds to the pilot.

MISSION FOR TONIGHT...

Missions include photo reconnaissance, bombing and bomber escort duty, torpedo attacks on shipping and

fighter sweeps. Anti-aircraft fire from land and sea are dealt with in a simple but effective manner. This leads me on to another strength of the rules, which is the ease with which they can be adapted to solo play. This can range from an attack on merchant shipping defended by the ships own and supporting ships AA defences, to a squadron sweep where enemy fighter planes are met and engaged in combat.

BOARD GAME INTEGRATION

I have a copy of the old *Battle of Britain* board game and am working on a way to play this game as usual but with the combats moved onto the wargames table. The rules of both games are straight-forward, and I just need to muster up some of our group to put this plan into action.



I recently played a solo game involving a staffel of Stuka Dive bombers and their escort fighters, tasked with bombing a British town with three Spitfires sent up to defend the skies above Kent. It worked very well, the rating of the pilots sorted out the order of play with a simple dice-off for any pilots on the same level, and the game was resolved in under a couple of hours. It occurred to me that we could build this into a future all day *Rapid Fire Reloaded* game set in France 1940, using the outcome of the air battle to establish how many, if any, of the Stukas made it onto the table to attack the ground troops. This seemed to have far more interest than simply rolling dice to find the arrival turn of the bombers.

CONCLUSION

In summary, if you are looking for a set of aerial combat rules that can be played solo or with an opponent, are flexible and scale agnostic and do not require much in the way of special equipment and have a cheap cost of entry, then give these rules a try. I don't think you will be disappointed; I certainly wasn't. *Lacquered Coffins* is available from Wargames Vault.com. ■



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VENOMOUS POWER

Exploring the Final Frontier

Words and photos by **Chris Abbey**

Last month Chris showed us how to assemble a handful of human and alien crews to adventure in the ongoing mission at the final frontier. As a follow-on Mr Abbey gives us a classic *Trek* scenario for a crew aboard the **USS Cousteau**: archaeology in space with Alien confrontation thrown in for good measure! *Ed.*

ABOVE
Away team ready! Quite a mixed crew there!

INTRODUCTION

The following scenario has been designed to be played solo or with multiple players using *Pulp Alley*. If you have not come across *Pulp Alley*, it is a great set of skirmish rules, full of choices and trade offs that is perfect for gaming *any* genre from Cavemen through



to the Final Frontier and beyond (it is also great for the Pulp era!). A free PDF copy of the rules can be downloaded from **Sally 4th** or **Pulp Alley** website.

There is also an active online community and facebook group where you will find examples of play and great player support.

When we have played the scenario we used a Federation and Ferengi team. There is no reason why the Klingons, Romulans, Orion's or any other *Star Trek* faction could not get involved in the action (*see last month for alien race options! Ed.*).

VENOMOUS POWER

This is a scenario for *Pulp Alley*

Captains log, stardate 42157.4

The USS Cousteau while on a routine survey mission within the Relian Sector has responded to an emergency hail from a Federation Xeno-Archeology team engaged in the exploration of the remnants of an ancient and long dead civilization on the uninhabited and inhospitable planet, Gorlan III.

It would appear that an ancient power source has been discovered deep beneath the surface and shortly afterwards survey team members started going missing without trace. An Away Team mission has been prepared and deployed, commanded by my very capable First Officer, Commander Kate Basset. Following detection of the warp signature of a Ferengi ship entering the system.

Communications with the Away Team have been lost...

- ▶ **Players:** 1 to 4
- ▶ **Type:** Versus, Co-op, or Solo
- ▶ **Plot Points:** 5 Plot Points
- ▶ **Deployment Zones:** Clustered deployment zones.
- ▶ **Turn Limit:** 6
- ▶ **Rewards:** 5 Standard Reward Cards
- ▶ **Special Rules:** For this scenario:
 - Low Visibility
 - Difficult Area
 - The Yith (NPCs)

SET-UP

Resources

Roll for your Associates, then gather and use your resources to select Assets for this scenario.

Terrain

This scenario takes place around an excavation site. Terrain can include items such as ancient artefacts, a camp site, shuttlecraft, rocks & vegetation. As normal, the table size is 3'x3'.

Plot Points

The four minor plot points are members of the Xeno-Archeology Team. The major plot point is an ancient power device or crystal. This is *not* deployed at the start of the scenario. When a member of the Xeno-Archeology Team has been debriefed/Interrogated, (minor plot point solved) they will reveal the location of the power source.

Place the power source on the table 2D6" away from minor plot point in a random direction.

BELOW

Xeno-Archaeologists gathered round a prefab table and at work: they've probably found a ritual artefact. Or are about to have a picnic...



VENOMOUS POWER



ABOVE
Yith: emerging from the dig site they are armed and looking for trouble.

RIGHT
Federation team aim a phaser rifle at Yith in the dig site but miss!

The members of the Xeno-Archeology team are the minor plot points in the scenario. Overcoming the peril and challenge associated with them will lead to placing the power source (major plot point) on the table. Players take it in turn placing the minor plot point (team members) on the table. They must be placed *at least 6" in from the table edge and at least 6" away from any other plot point.*

The Yith, NPC's – Exploring beneath the surface of the seemingly uninhabited planet has disturbed The Yith, a serpent like race whose civilization prospered on Gorlan II for millennia before an asteroid collision shifted the planets orbit creating an environment unsuitable for prolonged exposure. A Yith is placed at each corner of the table. The Yith are non-player characters.





MOVEMENT

Unless they are engaged, the Yith will move 6" towards the closest player character and then attack (brawl or shoot) if able.

REINFORCEMENTS

Whenever a Yith fails a recovery check and is knocked out a new Yith is placed at a randomly determined table edge. When the power source is removed (major plot point is solved) a Yith will emerge 8" away in a random direction at the end of the turn, and all subsequent turns.

Director

High-die (d6) to determine starting Director.

Deploy

Beginning with the Director, teams may be deployed by Transporter within a 6" diameter cluster anywhere on table at least 6" away from a plot point or enemy characters.

Deck

Shuffle the Fortune (or Solo) deck and place it near the table.

BELOW

Federation team open fire to protect the dig site.



Low Visibility

Line-of-sight is limited to 12" due to dust and sand in the atmosphere

Difficult Area

A character must draw a random peril when they move over 6" during their activation.

PLAYING THE GAME

Each player rolls a D6. The highest scoring player is the Director. They deploy their league first followed by the other players.

The Director decides the sequence that players act. They can either choose to activate one of their characters or for one of the other players to activate one of their characters. The player will decide the exact character in their league to activate. When a character

LEFT

Take that snake head! Ferengi beat off a Yith with hand weapon fire.

VENOMOUS POWER



ABOVE
The dig site with a landing shuttle.

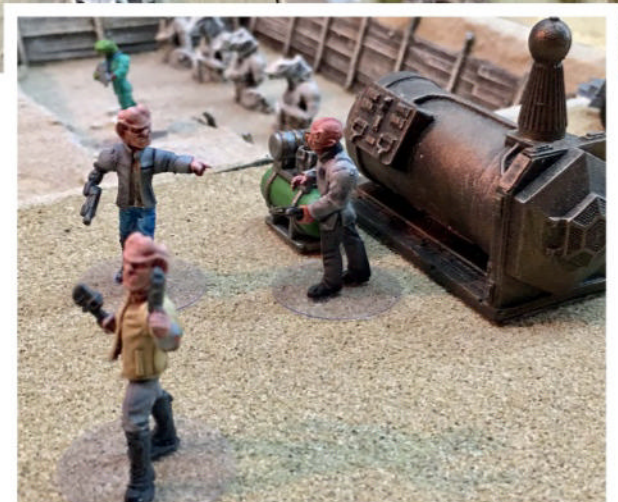
RIGHT
Ferengi at the site.

resolves a plot point by overcoming the peril and the challenge associated with it, or clearly wins a fight by inflicting a wound and not suffering one themselves, the owning player becomes the Director and they decide the sequence of activation.

OBJECTIVES

Characters need to try to attempt to find the alien power source by first interacting with a scientist to determine its location. In the game this is represented by overcoming the peril and challenge on fortune cards that are drawn for the encounter, while hindering the other team's characters from doing the same. Once the first character has succeeded in this, the alien power source (major plot point) is placed on the table.

The process of understanding its working is also represented by a plot point peril and challenge. Once the major plot point has been overcome, the character must keep possession of it to the end of the game. If the character who resolved it is knocked down, they drop the plot point and another character can attempt a peril and challenge to take possession of it. The league who is in possession of it at the end of turn



six wins the game. If no league is in possession of it each minor plot point (scientist) resolved grants one victory point.

And remember: *have fun!*

ON THE WEB

Rules: wargamesbuildings.co.uk/product/pulp-alley-free-getting-started-rules/

Facebook: [facebook.com/groups/2389082191325448](https://www.facebook.com/groups/2389082191325448) ■

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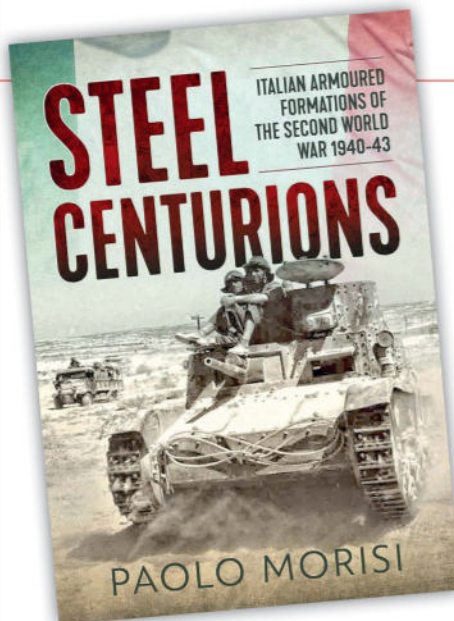
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- ▶ helion.co.uk



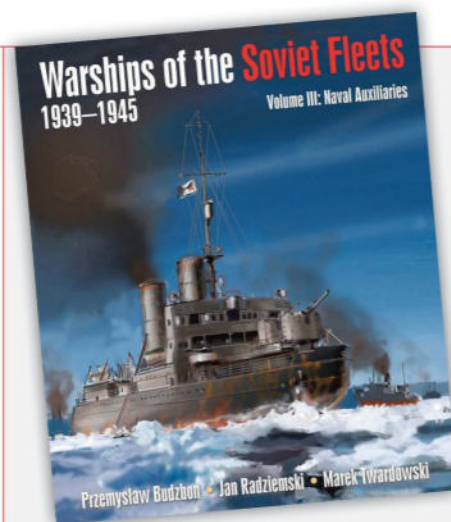
This excellent account of Italian armoured formations in WWII takes you from first clashes in Europe, through the Desert and East Africa campaigns, to the fighting in Sicily and (briefly) against the Germans.

The author profiles the history of the AFVs - equipment, doctrine, tactics and combat – the latter exhibiting much bravery considering how far they lagged behind against British armour. Battle accounts and orders of battle are sufficiently detailed for wargaming, allied to good photographs, albeit the maps are few and basic.

The Italians – and especially the Germans – realised their poor anti-tank capabilities, and there seemed to be tentative plans to re-equip the Italians with captured Soviet material. Fancy T-34s versus Crusaders, Grants and Shermans? Similarly, in mid-1943 the Germans finally provided some decent kit, with the 'M' Division receiving a company each of late Pz IIIs, IVs, and Stugs. There was even a clash between Italian armour (mainly Semovente assault guns) and Panzer Grenadiers, following the Italian change of sides.

A great deal here for the Desert War enthusiast, plus intriguing possibilities for sensible 'what if' wargames.

Chris Jarvis



WARSHIPS OF THE SOVIET FLEETS 1939-1945

- ▶ Przemyslaw Budzbon, Jan Radziemski, Marek Twardowski
- ▶ Seaforth Publishing (2023)
- ▶ £45
- ▶ 320 pages (hardback)
- ▶ ISBN:9781399022811
- ▶ seaforthpublishing.com



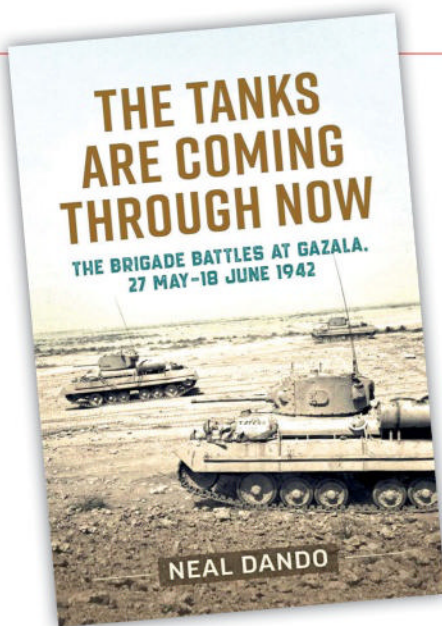
This is the third volume in a three-volume set where Volume I covers the major combatants and Volume II escorts and smaller fighting ships. I was not sent these previous volumes, so this review is purely on Volume III.

The book follows directly on from Volume II so there is no introduction. The large number of auxiliaries are described in detail together with their fate. Towards the end there are useful chapters on naval weaponry and a combined index which covers all three volumes.

The three authors are Polish with one a maritime history museum curator, another a naval constructor who worked closely with Soviet naval officers and the third an enthusiast with an extensive network of contacts. All were forced to learn Russian when Poland was part of the Warsaw Pact. They say they have tried hard to be dispassionate and to avoid claims of Russophobia. However, they noted that the public climate has changed, so went on to make Russophobic comments... ah well.

The book is illustrated with line drawings and photographs and technical details. From a wargaming perspective, it is of limited value, but is thoroughly recommended to the naval enthusiast.

Martin S. Pike



THE TANKS ARE COMING THROUGH NOW

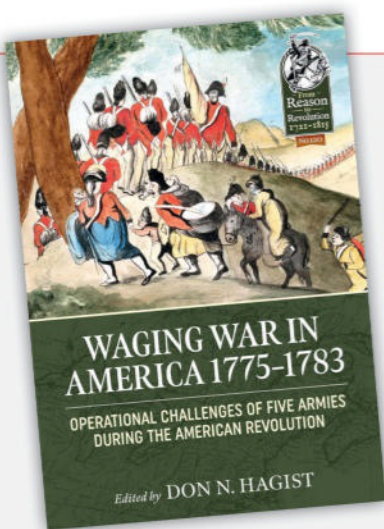
- ▶ Neal Dando
- ▶ Helion (2023)
- ▶ £25
- ▶ 184 pages (softback)
- ▶ ISBN:9781804512326
- ▶ helion.co.uk

This account of the Commonwealth brigade battles in the Western Desert May 1942 Gazala campaign certainly gives a feel for the stalwart fighting abilities but also the lack of British command skills and the defensive mindset, exacerbated by misreading of the overall situation. Individual actions, based on Unit War Diaries, are described in sufficient detail to encourage a wargame reflight.

However.... There is no evidence of the claimed proofreading. The author has an inadequate grasp of full stops, semi-colons and commas; sentence construction is poor. There are no orders of battle, so you lose track of which unit is in which formation. The maps are sometimes highly detailed (one battle-map shows individual weapon placements), but no-one has bothered to check the scales: two places are 8 miles apart on one map, and 16 on another, whilst one scale goes '0-5-2'. Distances on maps don't tie up with those in the text. There is very little from the Axis perspective, and losses appear to be largely Allied claims rather than verified losses.

This is below the expected professional standard of publication.

Chris Jarvis



WAGING WAR IN AMERICA

- ▶ Edited by Don N. Hagist
- ▶ Helion & Company (2023)
- ▶ £25.00
- ▶ 216 pages (softback)
- ▶ ISBN:9781804513460
- ▶ helion.co.uk

Number 120 in Helion's *From Reason to Revolution 1721-1815* series offers nine papers examining some of the challenges faced by the nations involved in the American Revolutionary War. Four of these papers were presented at the Helion 'From Reason to Revolution' conference in 2022. The papers vary in length from sixteen to thirty pages; the majority are about twenty pages. References are given as footnotes and the sources are presented at the end of each paper. A three-page index appears at the end of the book, which is subtitled: *Operational Challenges of Five Armies during the American Revolution*.

There are fifteen black and white illustrations, including reproductions of contemporary maps, drawings of soldiers and photographs of surviving artefacts; two modern maps, one of the Gulf of Mexico and another showing British West Florida and Spanish Louisiana; and ten tables of statistics relating to state regiments and unit strengths.

The first paper, by Paul Knight, examines the *British Army Pre-War Training Objectives and their Suitability for Operations, 1755-1777*.

Then Alexander S. Burns discusses 'Hessian' Tactics in the Context of Military Europe to show that, contrary to popular belief, the Subsidiertroppen had begun to develop skirmishing systems during the Seven Years' War, but that their Flanqueurs were drawn from the

line infantry companies and not from light infantry and grenadier companies as was the case in the British Army.

Krysten Blackstone considers *What Patterns of Mutiny Tell Us About Morale* in the Continental Army. The Loyalist Militia of New York are described in *To Do the Duty of Soldiers in Every Respect* by Todd W. Braisted. Robbie MacNiven discusses *The Tactical and Strategic Impact of Massacres on the Frontier* during the American Revolution.

'The pleasure of their number' by John U. Rees explains how "most state militias divided males, ages 16 to 50, into classes by company, county or district, then called out (drafted) one or several of a county's classes for service ranging from weeks to months... Having served the allotted time, the men returned home, and another class took their place." He then examines state efforts resulting from the first Congressionally authorised United States army draft, the effect on troop strength, and soldiers' recollections of their service.

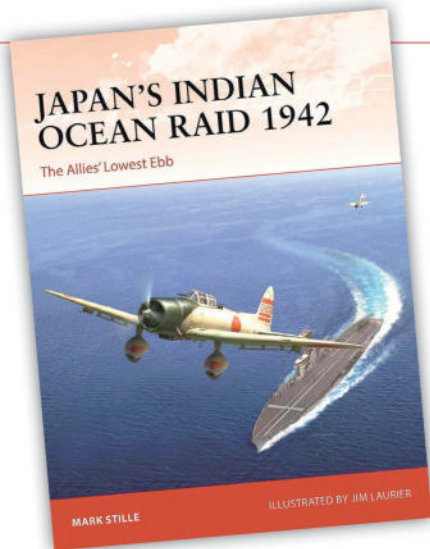
'La Marcha Galvez: Spanish Planning, Logistics and Grit on the Road to Pensacola, 1779-1780', describing the background to the campaign that led to "the longest siege ever recorded on North American soils to that date," is by Joshua Provan, the author of *Every Hazard and Fatigue: The Siege of Pensacola, 1781*, also published by Helion.

Robert A. Selig explains the reasons for French involvement in the American war, primarily "to attain the weakening of English power" rather than any sympathy with the rebels' ideology, as Louis XVI stated he "disliked the precedent of one monarchy giving support to a republican insurrection against a legitimate monarchy." This paper examines the French Army reforms 1763-1776, the troops selected for the expedition to America, military-civilian relations, recruitment and desertion; it gives only a brief outline of French operations in America.

Finally, Don N. Hagist examines the trial proceedings of some courts martial to discover what they reveal about the nature of warfare in the American Revolution.

Wargamers who specialise in studying and recreating the American Revolutionary War will find much to interest them in this book.

Arthur Harman



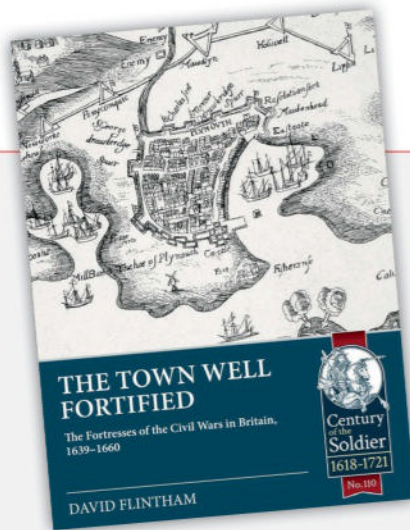
JAPAN'S INDIAN OCEAN RAID 1942

- ▶ Mark Stille
- ▶ Osprey Publishing (2023)
- ▶ £16.99
- ▶ 96 pages (softback)
- ▶ ISBN:9781472854186
- ▶ ospreypublishing.com

In **Osprey's** standard format, this book (*subtitled: The Allies Lowest Ebb: Campaign 396*) covers the strategic background, chronology, commanders, plans, forces and events as expected for this series. It concludes with consideration of what came after. The author is highly critical of both sides in this campaign which saw the Japanese carrier force raid into the Indian Ocean with the intent of destroying the British fleet. Through luck and incompetence, it failed to do that although the British fleet commander also does not come out of the account well. What is interesting is the parallels the author draws between the showing of the Japanese in this campaign and their catastrophic failure in the Midway campaign a few months later. He considers that the seeds of that latter failure could be seen in the conduct of this campaign. It makes for very interesting reading.

The book is supported by great artwork, diagrams and photographs and provides inspiration for some interesting naval and air wargaming scenarios. In summary, this is a good read which captures the difficulties of this little-known campaign, the failures of leadership and the luck which accompanied it. It is strongly recommended for all levels of readers.

Martin S. Pike



THE TOWN WELL FORTIFIED

- ▶ David Flintham
- ▶ Helion & Company (2023)
- ▶ £29.95
- ▶ 244 pages (softback)
- ▶ ISBN:9781804513484
- ▶ helion.co.uk

More than a thousand places, ranging from the rival capitals, Oxford and London, and important ports and cities, such as Portsmouth and Gloucester, to medieval castles and manor houses, were fortified between 1639 and 1660, and over half of them experienced some sort of military action. In England, 189 places were besieged – some more than once – between 1643 and 1648 but there were only 28 battles.

Number 110 in **Helion's Century of the Soldier 1618-1721** series (*subtitled: The Fortresses of the Civil Wars in Britain, 1639-1660*) does not offer narratives of particular sieges as did books such as *Sieges of the English Civil Wars* by John Barratt (Pen & Sword, 2009) or *Sieges of the Great Civil War* by Peter Young and Wilfred Embleton (Harper Collins, 1978).

Instead, it describes to what extent fortress construction in the British Isles had been influenced by European practice before the Civil Wars; provides information on the foreign and British engineers who served the opposing sides; explains the theory and practice of the design and construction of fortifications; and examines how the local topography influenced their siting and design during the conflict.

The author also discusses the strategic and tactical importance of fortifications and their influence on the war efforts of both sides, describing the concept of 'protected corridors' which were important for the logistical support of field armies as they connected key locations and enabled the movement of supply columns.

Separate chapters examine the 'sconce' an earthwork fortification with four bastions, the most well-known being the Queen's Sconce at Newark-on-Trent; the fortification of London and Oxford; and the Protectorate Citadels and Forts built in Scotland, the Scilly Isles and Ireland.

Numerous black and white illustrations include reproductions of prints of fortresses and plates from contemporary military manuals, together with modern diagrams showing the design and construction of fortifications. There are over fifty photographs of ruins and surviving traces of Civil War fortifications.

The first of three appendices contains a four-page Summary of Fortified Sites by County, a table which lists the number of fortified towns, castles, fortified manor houses, artillery forts, and 'other types'. The second offers a table giving a survey of Civil War defensive ditches with their widths and depths; a survey of the measurements of Civil War bastions, accompanied by a useful full-page extract from the 1783 plan of the fortifications at Donnington Castle with labels showing the aspects used to determine the size of a bastion; tables of known four-bastioned forts and comparisons of their sizes; and tables listing known five and six-bastioned forts. The last provides a two-page glossary of fortification terms. A fourteen-page bibliography concludes the book; there is no index.

Readers interested in the history of artillery fortification, who are more familiar with the late-seventeenth and eighteenth century designs and siegecraft techniques of Vauban (described in Christopher Duffy's *Fire and Stone*, recently republished by **Helion**), will appreciate the author's examination of English practice in the earlier period.

Wargamers tend to focus on battles with miniature armies, for obvious reasons. However, this very readable book argues that the control of territory and major communication routes by the garrisons of fortified places was actually more significant than defeating hostile armies in pitched battles during the War of the Three Kingdoms, and therefore this should be reflected when designing wargame campaigns.

Arthur Harman

KHALSA! WARGAMING THE ANGLO-SIKH WARS

- ▶ Andrew Copestake and James Main
- ▶ Helion & Company (2023)
- ▶ £29.95
- ▶ 182 pages (large format softback)
- ▶ ISBN:9781804514900
- ▶ helion.co.uk



Number 12 in **Helion's** *Wargames* series offers information on, and ideas for wargaming, the two short Anglo-Sikh Wars, when British and East India Company troops engaged Sikh forces which were composed of regular cavalry, infantry and artillery, trained by European mercenary officers and uniformed in a style that was a mixture of European and Indian, accompanied by irregular Akali warriors on foot and Ghorcharra cavalry. The Sikh army proved to be a doughty opponent and the battles were hard-fought affairs, ideal for recreation as tabletop wargames with the colourful troops and combination of Napoleonic and Indian tactics.

A short Introduction contains some general remarks about historical wargaming with figures and then extols the Sikh Wars as an interesting alternative to the more commonly wargamed later nineteenth century Colonial campaigns. A three-page Timeline lists significant events from 1699 to the British annexation of the Punjab in March 1849.

Chapter 1, *The Rise of The Khalsa*, explains how the Sikhs became aware of troops drilled and trained in the European manner when they encountered the 'Trained Brigade' of Farzana, the Begum Somru, widow of the mercenary Walter Rheinhardt. He had raised a brigade of four infantry battalions, five hundred cavalry and thirty guns, with which the Begum, assisted by European mercenary officers, defended the western frontier of the Mughal territories against Sikh raiders. Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who became de facto ruler of the Punjab, realised he needed a better army than the existing undisciplined hordes of irregular cavalry and hired European officers to train similar regular forces. Brief biographies of eight of them are provided, followed by a description of the

organisation of the new army.

Chapter 2, *John Company's Army*, describes the organisation of their British opponents.

Collision on the Sutlej gives a narrative of the First Sikh War, accompanied by full page maps for the principal battles, British and Sikh orders of battle, and ideas for wargaming them.

Rebellion covers the operations of Herbert Edwardes and General William Whish against the rebels led by Mulraj, Dewan of the city and province of Multan, and the siege of the city.

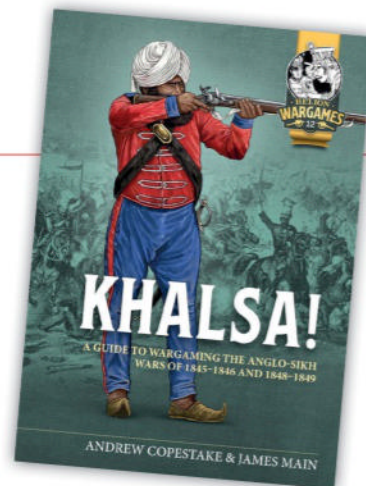
War of Independence covers the battles fought by Sir Hugh Gough in the Second Sikh War, again with maps of the main battles, orders of battle and suggestions for wargaming them.

Chapter 6 gives information on the Uniforms and Colours of the British-Indian Army and the Khalsa, by means of written descriptions, photographs of appropriate wargame figures for some – but not all – troop types, and tables of uniform and facing colours.

Chapter 7 by James Main, explaining how to paint the model soldiers, using photographs of three examples – the reproduction of which, over twice the size of the actual figures, does them no favours – and numbered stages listing the various paints he used, contains advice that will already be familiar to most readers, and is not appropriate for smaller models. It concludes with two paragraphs on creating terrain.

Chapter 8 discusses Tactical Methods on the Wargames Table; offers ideas about wargame rules and some rule amendments that should "add a little more 'Indian flavour' to a generic 'horse and musket' game" and considers ratings of generals. It also provides three fictional scenarios: Akali, an attack by such irregulars on a British camp; Rumble in the Jungle, in which the British risk confusion and disorganisation when they have to advance through scrub jungle which masks the Sikh positions; and the Battle of Miniwal, a fictionalised version of Aliwal with smaller forces.

Three appendices provide three pages of Notes on Sources and Further Reading; one page on Model Availability; and seven Army Lists:



Early Sikh Army c.1750-1820; Mughal Empire c. 1720-1780; Jehazi Sahib and the Begum Somru c.1780-1800; Afghan or Pathan Army 1780-1842; Regular Khalsa Army, 1830s-1849; British-Indian Army 1840-1850; Herbert Edwardes' Improbable Army.

The book is profusely illustrated by sixty-five colour photographs of 25/28 mm figures which include examples of the different kinds of British, Company and Sikh troops; the stages involved in the painting of a British infantryman, a Sikh artilleryman and cuirassier; and scenes of wargames in progress. Other illustrations include colour pictures of a Sikh Akali and the 1st Bengal Light Infantry colours; black and white reproductions of portraits of Sir Henry Hardinge, Sir Hugh Gough, and Sir Joseph Thackwell, prints of a Sikh irregular, the 16th Lancers at Aliwal, Carnage at Sobraon, Light Dragoons at Sobraon, the Siege of Multan, and the Bengal Oakleaf wreath.

Modern maps show the Punjab and surrounding territories, the battles of Mudki, Ferozeshah, Aliwal, and Sobraon, the Sieges of Multan, and the battles of Ramnuggar, Chillianwala, and Gujerat, with a brief Glossary of abbreviations used in the text, wargame terms and words of Indian origin.

There is little consideration of wargames other than face to face tactical battlegames, with two or more players, on six foot by four foot tables, using 25/28mm figures. Personally, I would like to have seen at least some photographs of smaller sized figures and ideas for using conversions or proxy figures in sizes where there are no specific ranges for the Sikh Wars. But, if you prefer that type of wargame, you will find this book's colour photographs inspiring and – whatever size figures you use – its text is a perfect one volume introduction to the armies and engagements of this unfamiliar period, hence an Excellence Award.

Arthur Harman

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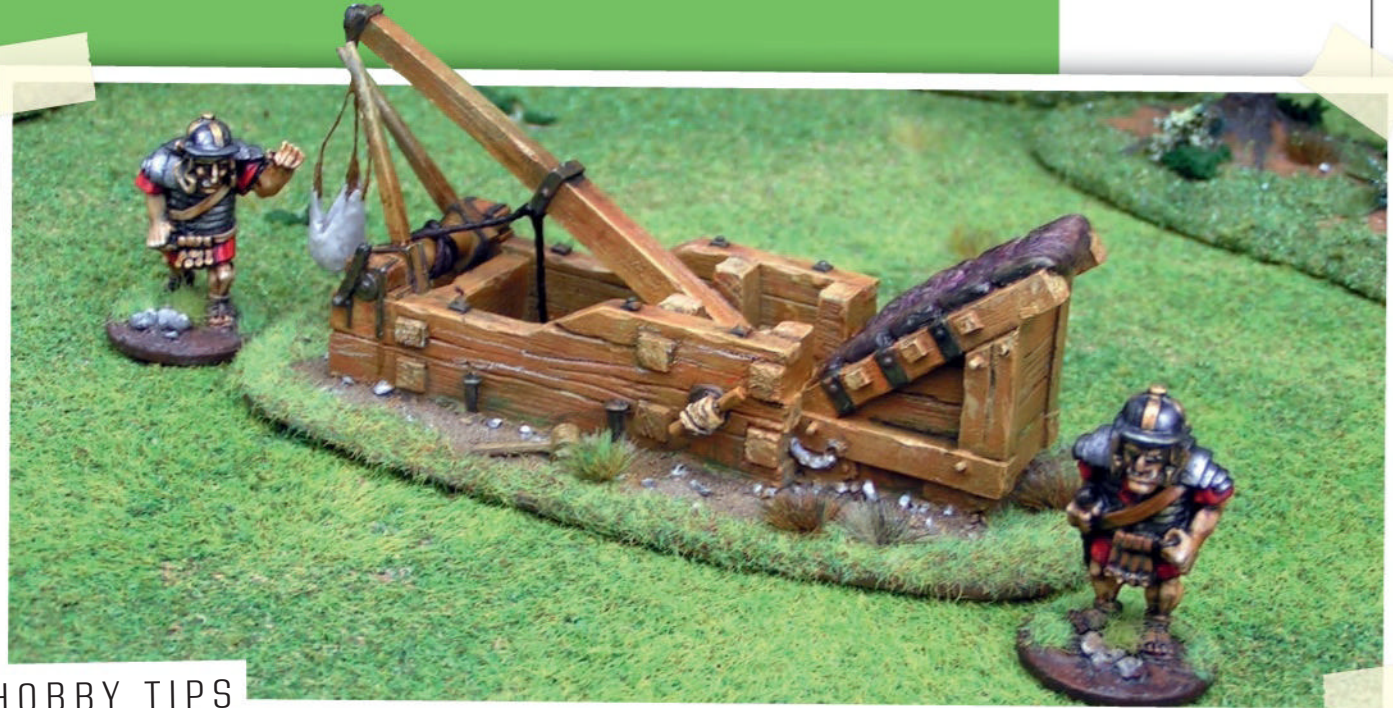


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HOBBY TIPS

A PROPER ASS KICKING

Finishing an Onager for Pax Bochemannica

Words and images by **Tony Harwood**

In part one of this two part series I described how I scratch built this master model for the Fantasy/Historical game *Pax Bochemannica* which pits Orc Noman Legionaries against Boche Halflings. Once built, the master was cast in resin by **Maveryc Games/Hysterical Games** but that was over ten years ago and – having recently rediscovered the model and tidied up the rough casting – I really wanted to give it a very special paint job deserving of its rarity.

I'll start by saying that the resin model was badly miscast with a base that was 10mm thick on one side and then super thin on the other. I used a belt sander (which I employed while wearing a facemask and goggles) to level up the base and then ensured a flat even surface by sanding on a piece of medium grade wet and dry paper pinned in place over an old kitchen worktop. Once finished, I placed the model in some warm water and pressed it flat on to the same worktop.

Painting followed a good clean in warm water and washing up-liquid, before it was spray painted with grey undercoat. I then used a white spray paint to give it a 'zenithal' highlight before adding some 'contrast style' paints over the wood areas.

I have recently been watching **YouTube** videos showing various oil wash techniques and tried this over the *Contrast* paint areas. I used cheap oil paints bought in **The Works** to

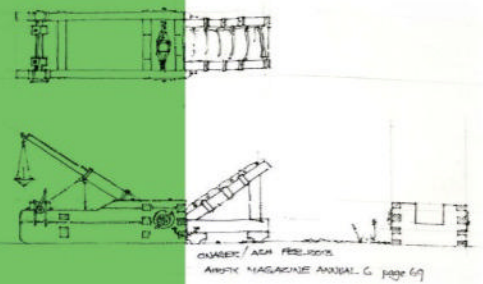
add light tints of different colours which were 'feathered in' with white spirits and a large brush. This was not the only time I have used this painting trick but it was the first time on a piece of wargame terrain and I like the effect.

Next it was back to more traditional acrylic washes (**Citadel** and **Army Painter** washes) which added even more warmth to the wooden areas. Detail painting was done with acrylics, a basecoat, drybrushing and then washes. The base and groundwork was painted in a slightly darker colour than normal – in keeping with my *Pax Bochemannica* miniature collection.

With the model now varnished in a mix of both matt and semi-matt (for the leather areas), I went back over the model with some watercolour pencils to highlight the wood grain and then a 3B pencil over the metal areas to add some graphite and a more realistic metallic sheen.

The base was then decorated with static grass and static grass tufts applied over PVA or superglue and the model was ready for my gaming table. The Onager is 120mm long x 45mm wide x 60mm tall to the top of the wooden arm.

Rather than just list the products, I have detailed a wide variety of different paints and painting styles while finishing this model hence the expanded list on the right...



MATERIALS USED

- ▶ Zenthall undercoat or basecoat
- ▶ **Contrast** paints
- ▶ Oil washes
- ▶ Acrylic washes
- ▶ Two thin coats, drybrushing and more washes
- ▶ Detailed painting with acrylics
- ▶ Matt and satin varnish
- ▶ Watercolour pencils

1. RESIN PREP

The slightly miscast and 'wonky' resin casting had some of the excess resin base removed with a belt sanded which ensured a flat and smooth base before being cleaned with warm water and washing-up liquid.

I then attached the main arm, capstan and levers with superglue.

The model did need a little filler particularly around the base of the wooden arm which was done with 'watered-down' acrylic filler.



2. ZENITHAL INSPIRATION

I then sprayed painted the model with a grey undercoat and later a zenithal highlight of white spray paint directed from above and while the grey was still 'wet' which I think helps to blend the grey and white together.

There has been much written about this zenithal basecoat technique and I can see some merit in building this up - I chose to use a grey base rather than the more usual black colour which I think is more subtle. On wargame figures I have sometimes used a dark brown/light brown mix.



3. CONTRASTING OPINIONS

In a major change to my usual painting technique, I used some custom 'Contrast Paints' or homemade contrast colours by mixing plain acrylic paints with acrylic medium and applying light watered-down coats over the wooden areas.

I quite liked the effect and think that the zenithal highlight helped to better define the model when painted in this way.



4. OILED UP

Another major change to my usual painting technique was to apply oil washes. I used cheap oil paints bought in a set of 12 from The Works and squeezed out a small quantity of each colour on to a piece of cardboard. Once the excess linseed oil had been absorbed into the cardboard I mixed up some light oil washes with white spirits and applied these colours to the wooden areas. The beauty of oil washes is that you can easily darken them by applying more paint or remove them with white spirits if they don't work. The oil paints and white spirits mix flows so much easier than acrylic washes and in my opinion is more subtle.

5. WASH & BRUSH-UP

Although I thought the initial contrast paint, oil washes worked well, I still went back over all of the wooden areas with a variety of bought and homemade washes. I started with an old tub of blue-topped *Citadel Flesh Wash* which I thought gave the wooden areas a warmer tint then applied all sorts of washes, red, blue, green, strong tone and even some black in different areas and in different intensities.

These washes helped to pick out the sculpted detail and highlight the wood grain.

6. LEATHER & DETAIL

The detail painting was done with a fine tipped *Rosemary & Co Sable* mix brush and the groundwork painted in a slightly darker brown than usual, in keeping with the rest of my *Pax Bochemannica* miniatures. I picked out various details and added even more subtle washes.

I watched a number of **YouTube** videos showing how to paint leather before embarking on painting the leather area on the buffer. In the end, it was painted with acrylics, detailed with a pieces of sponge before adding cracks in the leather with a very fine brush. Once again I used washes to unify the effect.



7. SPIT & SHINE

The whole model was then given an all over matt varnish and then the leather area on the buffer was varnished with a 50/50 mix of matt and gloss varnish to add a satin sheen and differentiate it from the rest of the model.

The limited amount of metal areas were given a gloss varnish.



8. PENCIL THAT IN!

With all the painting complete I went to town with some watercolour pencils and added green mould to the base of the Onager, wood grain effects to the wooden areas and some rust effects around the metal areas. I'd like to say that I was subtle with these effects but found it quite therapeutic and might have gone a little too far!

You can buy specialist 'chipping' pencils for model making, but good quality watercolour pencils can be picked up quite cheaply - my set was bought for just 50p from a charity shop.



9. AIRFIX INSPIRATION

The finished model with a couple of Noman Orcs alongside to show context. As I said in the previous article, the Onager is a 1/56th scale model copied from an article in the *Airfix Magazine Annual 6*, pages 68 to 75 as such I could also be used in any historical Roman army. The base was decorated with some static grass and ground foam, glued in place with either PVA glue or superglue.

After ten years I finally got around to finishing and painting my model and am very pleased with the experimental painting techniques which I think do justice to this rare resin model.



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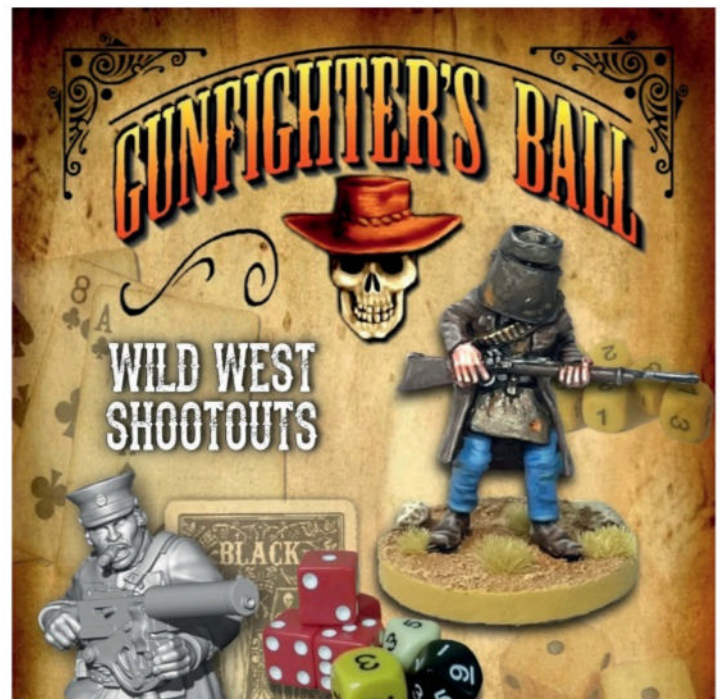
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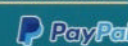
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DICING WITH DEATH

The Editor is in a polyhedral relationship...



Dice. Despite the number of card based (or card accessorised) wargaming systems, if there's one thing that says 'toy soldier games' it's dice. But what *sort?*

Leaving aside the strange Roman dodecahedrons that archaeologists still can't identify a purpose for, along with those platonic shapes contemplated at length by the Greeks (though I don't think Plato played many RPGs), for millennia most people played games with six sided dice. I have an ongoing debate with those that tend to call D6 'normal' dice (after all – in this day and age – what qualifies as 'normal?') but even six sided dice have been... adapted. For example, **GW** invented (or at least I think they take the *credit* for) 'scatter dice': six sideds with arrows marked on them so that throwing them determines a random direction.

When I first played **WRG** games I was introduced to 'Average Dice' (that I've heard the innumerate mistakenly call D5's). These have a 2,3,3,4,4,5 sequence. To counter those, many years ago I invented 'Extreme Dice' which we gave away at **Salute**. These had a 1,1,2,5,6,6 sequence and both of them helped fiddle with the 'standard' D6 results 'bell

curve'. Having said that – and frustrated by the number of games that required a 'D3' (which then ask a player to do maths on the fly with a regular D6) – we also produced 'Demon D3's': D6 cubes with a 1,1,2,2,3,3 sequence. But... never mind the six sided shenanigans: what about that *polyhedral* bit?

I started playing **D&D** in the late '70s and so had access to the truly *awful* set of poly-dice that came with the game. I loved the concept but hated the actuality. I played **Reaper** fantasy rules and other games that needed a percentile role using two D20's marked up as D10s (and then replaced them with some non-platonic D10's). I then fell in love with **ICE's Silent Death** which made a cunning use of the Polyhedral set. "This is the future!", I remember thinking, and then... **Warhammer** appeared with its buckets of D6's and charts... *Oh well.*

A couple of months ago I spent the day at the gaming retreat of an old chum, Jon Tuffley (owner of **Ground Zero Games**). We spent the afternoon in his garden gaming shed shooting the breeze and playing wargames, as people of our age often do. Many of the large legacy of games Jon has created (perhaps *all* of them) centre around the use of five polyhedral coloured dice.

"I then fell in love with ICE's Silent Death which made a cunning use of the Polyhedral set. "This is the future!", I remember thinking, and then... Warhammer appeared with its buckets of D6's and charts... Oh well..."

These are always in the same colours: Yellow D4, Green D6, Blue D8, Red D10 and Orange D12, and we played a simple 28mm skirmish game using a system based around those dice. He had some measuring sticks, also demarked in those colours (using dowels and coloured tape) and – by employing those dice and sticks – we played a game with *no charts* whatsoever and rules that fitted on a *post card*.

I want to emphasize the simplicity that this brought. There's been a recent upsurge of interest in 'one page rules' (and capitalised, as more than just a mantra but as an alternative to the tomes of rules required to play – for example – **Warhammer** and **40K**). Many of the recent systems from **Osprey** – especially the excellent work from Joe McCullough – use D10s or D20s as a short way to achieve percentile results delineated, effectively, in ten or five percent increments. I wholeheartedly applaud that. But Mr Tuffley's system (used in a more intense form in the likes of his **Stargrunt** and **Dirtside** rules) really needs to come to the market.

Think of that: not just *one page rules* but (in the simple skirmish we played, at least) a game with no charts *at all* that was both challenging and fun! I encourage you all to experiment with your latent polyhedral urges... ■

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