Graham Turner

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FACING THE ELEMENTS: Earth, Air, Fire, and Water in Wargames

WARGAMES ILLUSTRATED ISSUE WI412 APRIL 2022

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FROM THE EDITOR

It felt slightly indulgent sitting in a pub on a Wednesday afternoon drinking, eating, and talking wargames, but ultimately I hope you find the fruits of my 'labours' interesting. In the name of research for this month's magazine theme, I bravely volunteered to head over to gaming luminary Rick Priestley's local and talk through the implications of weather and the elements with him, John Stallard of Warlord Games, and Nick Eyre of North Star. Our enlightened observations form the basis of 'Facing the Elements' - the lead article from our theme on page 28.

Look out for more element themed articles where you see this symbol ☯, as we examine the effects of earth, air, fire, and water on miniature modelling and wargames. Once you have explored the elements you can hear from the designers of four new and intriguingly different wargames. *Thalassa* (pictured below) by Ricard Fortun fits our elements theme with its ancient naval battling, Graham Davy shows off *02 Hundred Hours* - Grey for Now's new game of night-time WWII covert operations, Gav Thorpe and Andy Chambers whisk us to Tír Na Nóg and the *Sláine: Miniatures Game* from Warlord, and we scale down to 2mm with Mark Backhouse's *Glory & Honour* from TooFatLardies. 2022 is already shaping up to be a good year for gaming as Lockdown projects emerge from isolation for us to enjoy!

Happy reading and rolling.

Dan Faulconbridge
Owner and Editor

This month's cover artwork is by Graham Turner and shows British troops landing on the Normandy Beaches. From CMD 9 Bernard Montgomery by Osprey Publishing. © Osprey Publishing www.ospreypublishing.com

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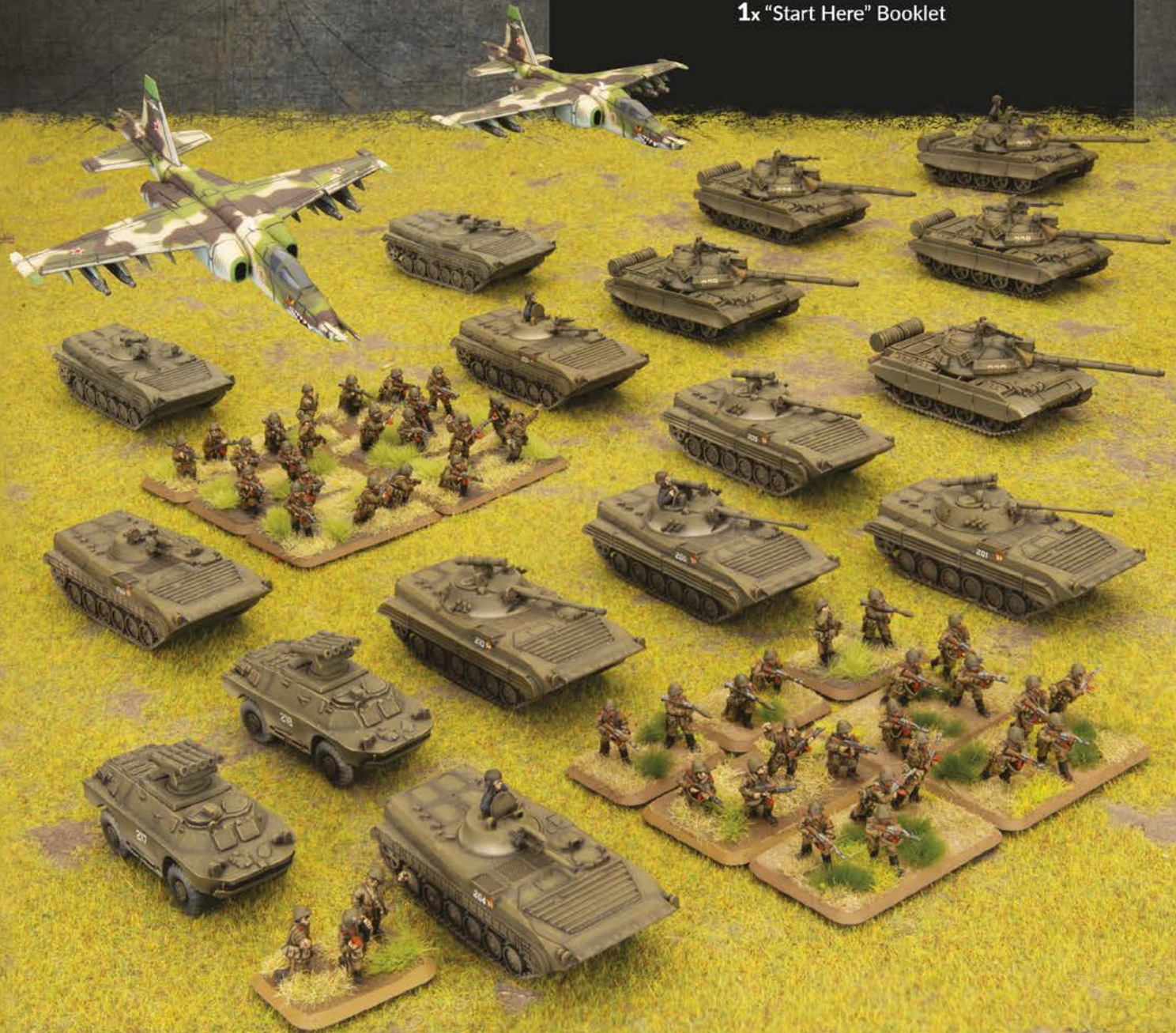
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QUICK FIRE!

ONE MAN'S ARMY - MY TAKE ON THE ROHIRRIM

By Mike Peters

I first read *The Lord of the Rings* when I was about eleven years old and was instantly hooked; I have been a huge fan ever since. I have always wanted to create the forces from the books in the way they appeared in my imagination. Back in the day this involved Airfix figures converted with drawing pin shields and sewing needle spears, then painted with Humbrol enamel paints. Recently, with the advent of new multipart plastics, it has become easier to achieve my ambitions.

Like every other Tolkien fan, I was excited at the prospect of seeing my dreams realised when Peter Jackson made his films; but his vision was not mine, and much as I enjoy the films, I still felt the need to create my own version of the inhabitants of Middle Earth.

Forth Eorlingas!

For the Rohirrim, I used bits from Gripping Beast Dark Age Cavalry, Gripping Beast Saxon Thegns, Victrix Vikings, Victrix Gallic Cavalry, and Perry Miniatures Wars of the Roses. I had the idea of creating a 'horse head helm' from greenstuff, and I think it has worked well.

My vision for the figures comes mostly from Tolkien's *Letters* and the few meagre descriptions in the books. I created Outriders (lightly equipped scouts), the Royal Guard (more heavily armoured with cloaks), and the Eorlingas (the more usual Rider of Rohan such as might be in Eomer's Eored).

I created Theoden (shown above) based on the descriptions of him in the books. I used two 'hairpieces' from the Victrix Vikings to create his plaited beard and braids, and the crown from the Perry's 15th Century Foot Knights to create his helmet.

Painting the Rohirrim

My colour palette is based on the colours in the Bayeux tapestry, but I wanted the models to be distinctive and individual, so each of them has a different trim around the cuffs. The shield patterns are based on random Google searches for images of horses.

Two years ago, I added three new elements to my process that have really lifted my painting: using a wet palette, applying glaze mediums, and painting with expensive brushes, all of which I would recommend.

I have completed my version of the Haradrim and the Fiefs of Gondor using similar techniques. Next, I am going to start the on forces of Mordor using Oathmark, Wargames Atlantic, and Warlord Orcs and Goblins as well as Gripping Beast Saxons and Vikings, Fireforge Byzantines and Foot Sergeants, Perry Miniatures 15th Century Infantry, and anything else that looks like it might fit in!

BUILDING THE WILD WEST IN 15MM

By GP Aroldi

For many years I only collected armies, but as I have gotten older my collecting style has 'matured'; I find that I now work more by project rather than just an army, and I am guided by a desire to create something new and complete.

Covid-19 led to work on many projects, the latest of which is my 15mm Wild West skirmish collection inspired by *Deadwood*, *Westworld*, and *Unforgiven*.

Pushing the boundaries

With each new project, I look for a new technique, be it basing, painting, or terrain related. This time, there were two things I wanted to try: better grass and realistic water.

For the first, I tried out a static grass applicator as I wanted standing grass to give a feel of the prairies of the West. With a flocking gun in place of the more traditional six-shooter, and after a little trial-and-error, I got what I was looking for by mixing greens and browns together on the board.

New Boardtown - population zero

With the construction complete, I had to fill the board with life! I opted for 15mm because you can play in a much smaller space. Old Glory has some wonderful 15mm options, but I collected the figures with the caveat that the cowboys must be in matched pairs of dismounted and mounted for full options during gaming. I also painted civilians; a town must feel alive with a gawking crowd gathered around the duel at sun up!

Buildings weren't tough to find. Blotz a nd TRE Games sell affordable 15mm MDF structures, and a few homemade pieces were added in to supplement the purchased product.

To finish the build, I created lots of extras: fencing, gardens, and animal pens made the board feel more lived in. A cemetery made it feel more died in! 3D printed scatter terrain gives any battling posse cover if they need it. I also painted some animals - cows, pigs, chickens - and these can be used as atmosphere elements, 'cover terrain', and objectives for wannabe rustlers!

The Last Step: A Game!

With the 'crafting' aspect of my cowboy project done, I wanted to create the game to go with it. This is one of my favorite parts of any project, and I settled on a simple system that allows a game to be completed in 15 minutes but still requires a fair amount of strategic thinking every turn. I've layered in skills, equipment, and career advancement that enhances, yet doesn't slow down, the underlying game system.

We've now begun playing and my son's posse has sent me packing several times already!

RULES, SUPPLEMENTS, FIGURES, TERRAIN, HOBBY GEAR, AND MORE

VALIANT MINIATURES LTD - RAPID FIRE: BLITZKRIEG BATTLEGAMES

Blitzkrieg Battlegames, Scenarios for Gaming the Battles of May 1940 is the latest supplement for *Rapid Fire* and covers the Battle for France in May 1940. Written by Richard Marsh and Colin Rumford, it is the companion to *Blitzkrieg Battlegroups'* army lists; it follows the campaign from the early battles to the outskirts of Dunkirk.

This supplement sets out special rules for the Blitzkrieg period as well as rules specific to each scenario. The introduction defines the amendments that are required, depending on which version of *Rapid Fire* you use; this is a refreshing change from books that simply state you need the most recent version. The writers have endeavoured to adapt all scenarios to fit on a 6 x 4 table so that home gamers can fit most of the action onto a standard sized tabletop. Some games are simply too large for that, but we are happy most are quite playable without the need of excessive space and large gaming boards. The scenarios flow chronologically but are not playable as a series. They cover the whole campaign and all three armies, so you'll be skipping around.

Each scenario begins with a page or two detailing what happened historically, then moves to the game set up, giving each side's orders and victory conditions. Terrain and deployments are described with a breakdown where needed of which units are subordinate or attached, though given the chaotic nature, sometimes there is no connection between them. Across the book's colourful pages are 54 colour photos as well as diagrams of table set ups for all 14 scenarios.

Where necessary, there are specific rules for the game such as time limits, morale, and ammunition amendments for units. Every scenario is illustrated with photos of refights, and the models and figures used for these are excellent, evoking a lot of atmosphere and excitement for the gaming ahead.
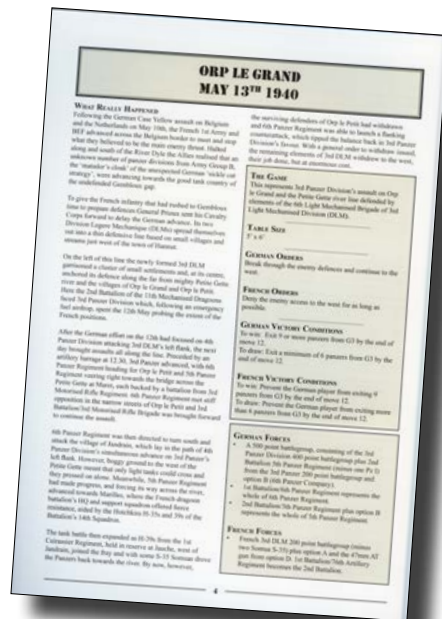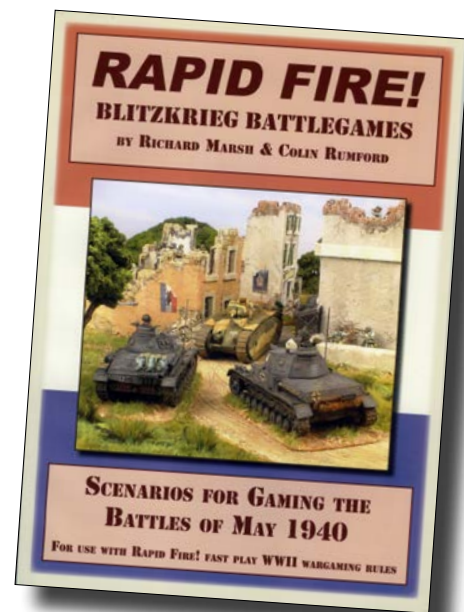
Several of the scenarios have options where they can be combined and fought as a single action for those with larger tables, and a couple can be trimmed for the opposite reason. Obviously, it is a straightforward matter to adapt these measurements to other scales. Similarly, for those who don't play *Rapid Fire*, with a minimum of effort the scenarios can be adapted to any set of rules as they are clear and comprehensive in their information. The introduction does state that if you are going to use *Rapid Fire* then you will need *Blitzkrieg Battlegroups* as most of the forces are set out in that book, but we suspect most passionate *Rapid Fire* players will have no problem with that.

The introduction also explains that some scenarios have been tinkered with to make them more playable - they make this clear in the scenarios themselves, and we'd much rather fight a slightly unhistorical but interesting game than get so focused on the granular accuracy we forget about having fun! The scenarios have been chosen to represent an interesting cross section of the actions in the campaign with different tactical decisions to be made by the players on both sides. This is no romp for the Germans, they must think about what they are doing just as much and the British and French do.

As well as the expected troops, there is a smattering of exotica: all three armies have motorcycles and sidecars at one time or another, the BEF has a searchlight unit for one scenario, and all three armies use what is available rather than what might have been their first choice. In all scenarios, the orders of battle are linked to *Blitzkrieg Battlegroups* and any changes noted. There are stats for all the vehicles and guns at the end of the book as a handy reference.

There is a bibliography too and while not extensive it certainly gives enough information and the flavour of the period for those wishing to expand their knowledge.

All in all, this is a well-produced book, chock full of information and everything needed to refight the campaign. While clearly designed for use with *Rapid Fire* and *Blitzkrieg Battlegroups,* there is no reason this scenario book wouldn't be of interest to any early World War Two gamer. It would be an excellent addition to the library of anyone with an interest in the period.
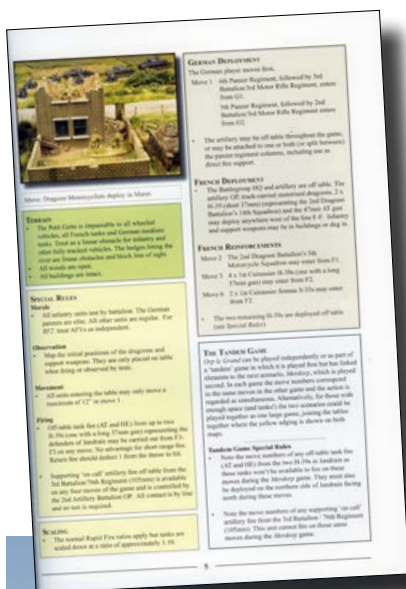
Details

- **Scale:** 20mm but transferable to others
- **Figures per side:** Variable
- **Period:** World War Two
- **Price:** £20
- **Format:** 64-page softback book
- **Available from:** rapid-fire-uk.com

DUNGEONS & LASERS - DRACULUS THE CUNNING AND DRAGON OF SCHMARGONROG

While many fantasy creatures are emblematic of the genre, it's hard to think of one more iconic than the dragon. These serpents of the skies have been a staple of many a classic fantasy novel series, and in the world of wargaming there have been some legendary dragon kits. Pewter beauties have thankfully now evolved into lighter resin and plastic offerings that don't require days of pinning; they rarely shed their wings while being transported too.

Dungeons & Lasers have eight new, lightweight dragons on offer, and each has a look and personality of their own. We suspect that Archon Studio - the company producing the kits and creators of various gaming Kickstarters - are hoping to fill gaps in other armies and ranges with their winged beasts. There's no specific game for them but they do tie into the dungeon tile packs made by Dungeons & Lasers; each dragon could act as the overlord of a subterranean lair. We're excited to get our hands on some cool new plastic dragons that don't hurt the bank balance too much; we'll work out a use for them later, but for now they can look great in the *Wargames Illustrated* figure cabinet!

The kits were part of a September 2020 Kickstarter but can all be purchased in shops now for a very reasonable £25 each. In the UK the models are distributed by and available from North Star Military Figures. They come in compact boxes, and the two we built - Draculus the Cunning and the Dragon of Schmargonrog - were each on two frames that included a unique scenic base. Parts are clearly numbered, and an instruction sheet shows the build process in logical steps. These were far easier to follow than many other multipart kit instructions out there, including those made by fantasy bigwigs such as Games Workshop. We had both dragons built in no time and only found one piece (in Draculus) had a number missing from the frame.

Above: The attachment of parts such as the tail cleverly hides many of the connection points along the lines of scales and other textures.

Above: The Dragon of Schmargonrog bedecked with the bones of its enemies.

These are smartly tooled plastic kits that go together with minimal visible joins or gaps and look suitably imposing on the tabletop. We can see some areas of compromise - there are similarities in the core design of areas, such as the head on both the kits we built, for example - but we can also see lots of great and characterful flourishes, powerful poses, and good anatomy too.

Each box has a brief description of the creature that lurks within: "Imagine that a dragon could learn from all of your actions and use them against you", says the text for Draculus, "That would be a harsh boss fight, wouldn't it? Meet Draculus the Cunning - a mythical creature born in the Valley of Wisdom. His knowledge is not crystallized, it is open to change. And that is his deadly weapon." It is certainly not going to win a Hugo award, but it gives an impression of the creature and brings a little extra background to the model.

The Dragon of Schmargonrog is more intriguing; it wears the bones of the dragons it has hunted as armour. This is a striking look on the model with a breastplate and helm made from the skulls of its victims. More bones run the length of its back and tail. Quite how it fixed these in place with such lengthy talons getting in the way we're not sure, but it makes for a mean looking monster! The Dragon of Schmargonrog is set off by its scenic base that has flowing lava running down it.

Not only do the models go together well, but they also paint up nicely (see Hobby Corner) with their defined scales and sinewy wings providing a fine canvas for a quick and effective job or a more considered display level painting approach.

If you have need for a pet dragon (and if not, why not?) then this is the range for you!

DETAILS

- **SCALE:** 28mm to 32mm (but could fit broader as bigger/smaller dragons)
- **PERIOD:** Fantasy
- **PRICE:** £25
- **MATERIAL:** Hard plastic
- **WEBSITE:** archon-studio.com

Hobby Corner

Project Manager James snagged Draculus and made the dragon his first hobby project of 2022; he tells us how he painted it.

James: Before I put a plastic kit together, I examine ways that I can change the build to make the painting process easier. With Draculus that meant a careful assessment of what parts could be made in sub-assemblies.

I knew I'd paint the rocky outcrop on the base differently to the rest of the dragon, eventually blending different brown Army Painter Speedpaints over it before using Orc Skin in places to look like moss. It made sense to keep it as a separate part to avoid paint contamination across elements. That meant I glued the main parts of Draculus with polystyrene cement but didn't fix him to the rock until painting was done. To ensure the joins would still be secure, I covered the connection areas with small amounts of sticky tack to keep paint off them.

I started the paint job with a zenithal basecoat by airbrushing grey primer over black. I then used a large brush to apply a white drybrush on top to accentuate the edges. Once I started to apply Speedpaints, the drybrushing would show through the translucent Speedpaints and act as highlight points. The zenithal spray provided tonal graduation over surfaces in the same way.

I wanted my Draculus to really catch the eye, so I checked a colour wheel to find the right complimentary scheme. I opted for a blue/purple on the wings matched with a complementary red/orange for the rest of the model. The wings got Hive Dweller Purple, Magic Blue, and Holy White applied to them, mixed with Speedpaint Medium to gradually add glazed depth. I applied my paints through the airbrush and found that three drops of paint to two drops of medium gave a great consistency and the right translucent coverage.

The body uses Slaughter Red, Blood Red, and Fire Giant Orange, again through the airbrush thinned 3:2. To create the high points of light on spines and extremities, I went back in with a drybrush of white paint after applying the colours, then, once again, glazed a coat of Fire Giant Orange over. This makes top highlights that take no time at all to apply, give great pop, and look smooth.

The complimentary blue areas on the horns and the tips of some of the spines and talons were detailed with a brush, and the tongue was given a very thin coat of Blood Red over white to create the pink colour.

In all, thanks to the use of Speedpaints and the airbrush, my dragon was completed in two hours!

Under the Microscope

A HATCHERY OF DRAGONS

All manner of winged beasties lurk in the full Dungeons & Lasers dragon collective; many of these have designs inspired by 'real' dragons, and even some sci-fi elements are present. Origon The Denouncer is one of our favourites and it looks like a loong from Chinese mythology, though it has wings to fit with the rest of the range. The Xenodragon, on the other hand, makes no attempt to hide its *Alien* inspiration, resembling the Alien Queen with added leathery wings.

Thall The Defiler is an undead dragon and puts us in mind of GW Vampire Count mounts as well as *Game of Throne*'s undead dragon from the Army of the Dead. Freyr The Stormbreaker is a more 'traditional' dragon but notable for the addition of transparent lightning bolt parts to add weather effects.

There's something for everyone!

Freyr The Stormbreaker

Origon The Denouncer

Thall The Defiler

The Xenodragon

NORTH STAR MILITARY FIGURES – SHAKOS AND BAYONETS: RETREAT FROM MOSCOW 1812 FRENCH

North Star produce the official miniatures range for Studio Tomahawk's *Musket and Tomahawks* (*M&T*) series of rules, and these recently released French soldiers are in support of the *M&T* supplement; *Shakos and Bayonets (S&B)*.

Wave One for *S&B* saw Spanish Irregulars and French Voltigeurs, focusing on action in The Peninsular War, 1807 - 1814. This second wave sees North Star turning their attention to the Retreat from Moscow, 1812. The intention behind these sharply focused Napoleonic releases is to avoid taking in the grand sweep of the period, but rather find a niche or two that works well with the skirmish nature of the *M&T* rules.

These four packs of French: Infantry (x8), Grenadiers (x6), Voltigeurs (x6), and a Commander (x1) are all suitably attired in wintery apparel, with beards aplenty and a rag-tag collection of headgear and face-coverings.

Sculpted by Mike Owen, these minis are typical of his signature skirmishing style with poses that work very well in small groups. Although his figures tend to grip their muskets in slightly uncomfortable ways (a refresher course in handling a musket wouldn't go amiss), their overall appearance is really nice, and they will make for great looking *S&B* Units.

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

Rather than actually aiming and looking down the barrel of their muskets, many of the figures in the *M&T* range have their weapons raised with the men looking like they are about to take aim - establishing 'line of sight'. It's an interesting pose and one that on consideration works very well for 28mm figures. It avoids figures marching across the table with a gun to their eye, whilst still making them look action-packed.

Above: Retreat from Moscow Commander.

Above: Retreat from Moscow Grenadiers.

Above: Infantry.

Below: Voltigeurs.

DETAILS

- **SCALE:** 28mm
- **PERIOD:** Napoleonic
- **PRICE:** £2.50 - £12.00
- **MATERIAL:** Metal
- **AVAILABLE FROM:** northstarfigures.com

RELEASE RADAR

Let's take our monthly look at what Dom Sore saw on his Release Radar!

SHORT IN STATURE BUT BIG IN CHARACTER – DWARFS, JESTERS, AND HALFLINGS

We'll start the month with some fantasy offerings as they often throw up some of the quirkiest options – and the Editor's told me to 'show the quirkier side of wargaming' where I can. Not many things are quirkier than *Flintloque* by Alternative Armies; it reimagines the Napoleonic Wars as Fantasy races. The newest release is a 28mm metal Command Set (**alternative-armies. blogspot.com**) for the Dwarven faction, who are very Germanic in demeanour. There are four foot officers wielding vicious looking weapons and two mounted senior officers who come on pigs or boars. Tongues are very much in cheeks with these figures and the game... perhaps that statement's redundant after I showed you Dwarf Command on pigs!

The year is advancing, unlike my armies which seem to be stalled outside of Moscow again. Rough weather and a busy schedule do not make painting or gaming easy, but that doesn't stop me looking at the new shiny things I want to get a hold of: fortunate for readers of this column, unfortunate for my shelves, which are already bowed under the weight of a thousand and one projects!

Above: Dwarven faction. Four foot officers (right) and two mounted senior officers (left).

Not related but very much in the same vein are some new offerings from Midlam Miniatures. Their set of Jesters (**midlamminiatures.co.uk**) contains three 28mm white metal figures, of which two are very jolly fellows indeed, while the last looks very sorry for himself, definitely showing the tears of the clown. This is a pack that made me smile, despite the sad fool, which is always a good sign. The other set, 'To the Mummy's Tomb', takes a little more explaining. It is a set of halfling figures: five adventurers, two mummies, and two religious types. You may notice one of the halflings is larger than the rest; I have it on good authority they are adopted. This is a set I desire greatly even if I have no use them for. Perhaps a diorama could be built?

Above: Set of Jesters.

Right: 'To the Mummy's Tomb' set.

TINY SCALE ESOTERICA, SEWAGE WORKS, AND FLORA

From small to reeeeally small, I'm casting my magnifying glass over 2mm offerings from Antonine Miniatures, available via Warbases (**warbases.co.uk**). Adding to their growing range of tiny troops are some esoterica for your tabletop in the form of a Wagon Laager, Village, Baggage train, and Camp. This is a scale that, by it's nature, tends to lack much in the way of detail; mass hordes are little more than featureless shapes, so some interesting and slightly bigger detail pieces are a welcome addition.

At a slightly more reasonable scale to paint, at least for my fading eyes, is the Water Treatment works from Iliada Games Studio (**iliadagamestudio.com**). This 6mm MDF kit is an interesting addition to any modern tabletop, and one that I had never thought about adding until I saw this. It comes in five parts, so you will be able to have several arrangements to match your local sewage works. Now who doesn't want to recreate that? [Excitement over urinal terrain kits last month, sewage plants this time around; we're starting to worry about you Dom! – Ed].

Above: Baggage train.

Below: Camp.

Right: Gamers Grass plants.
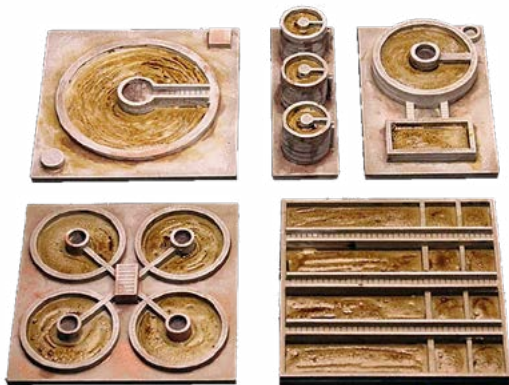
Above: Water Treatment Works.

Staying small, but at a larger scale than the previous two offerings, are some new basing options from Gamers Grass (**gamersgrass.com**). There are currently ten different plants in the range with more to come, and they look excellent, especially the Bracken and Dry Bracken that will be perfect for any hilly moorland terrain to match my home turf. Maybe my Border Reiver project will get off the ground one day. They come supplied in flat sheets, which you then carefully manipulate into the style you want on your base. I am interested in seeing what some of the experts do with them, but in the meantime, I hear that the *Wi* team are already playing about with some sets for a future article. [Watch it toilet boy! – Ed].

DEEP SEA CAMEL CULTISTS

Things are very *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* with these new Victorian Deep Sea Divers from Steve Barber Models (**stevebarbermodels.com**). Although of limited use on the tabletop they look wonderful and are ripe for conversion to fit into your favourite Victorian pulp or steampunk game system. From a similar timeline and odd in their own special way are new Sikh Wars Camel Gunners in 20mm white metal from Newline Designs (**newlinedesigns. co.uk**). There are mounted or dismounted versions, though I am not sure I would want to be the one training the camel to ignore the gun.

Above: Victorian Deep Sea Divers from Steve Barber Models.

Left: Sikh Wars Camel Gunner in 20mm.

1st Corps (**1stcorps.co.uk**) are producing a phenomenal number of new figures and vehicles these days, and some of their C20th Follies cultists have caught my eye. There are four with pistols, four with rifles, three kidnapping a victim wrapped in a carpet, and a single figure on a monocycle. These are wild, wacky, and exactly what I want. All the figures have the same kind of turban headgear and old time schoolmaster robe to give them a uniformity without it being a uniform.

Left: Single figure on a monocycle.

Above: Three kidnapping figures and a victim wrapped in a carpet.

BACCUS, BEOBACHTUNGSPANZERS, AND A BEVY OF ITALIANS

As usual World War Two is well represented in recent miniature releases. I will begin my coverage with something small from Baccus (**baccus6mm.com**) and some additions to their British and German ranges. A MKIII Valentine starts the ball rolling, followed by a group of CMP11 lorries, probably carrying ammo and likely chasing the German Pz38t munitions carrier that will be carrying ammo for sure. It won't be too long until Baccus host their Joy of Six wargames show (**joysofsix.co.uk**) that celebrates the smaller side of the hobby and deserves support. Get yourself to Sheffield in July to look at tiny figures on big tables and maybe bring a new game into your life.

Upping the scale to 1/56, Mad Bob Miniatures have released a Beobachtungspanzer Renault UE (**madbobminiatures.co.uk**). Mad Bob has form in producing the lesser-known vehicles of World War Two at very high standards (seen left). He really is a friend to those of us that like the more niche forces of the conflict, and this tongue-twister of a vehicle comes as a multi-part resin kit with options to have the hatches up or down.

We end World War Two with a huge release from Mardav Miniatures for Italy in 28mm and 20mm (**mdminis.co.uk**), and when I say huge, I mean huge. There are now 29 options in the range, the most recent being the Skoda 100/17 howitzer, Brdea 35 20mm AA gun, Lancia 1z/1ZM armoured car, P26/40, Semovente 75/34, Semovente 75/18, 3 ro 100/17 gun truck, and M14/41. Mardav are part of the new breed of companies using UV cured 3D printed resin for their models. The figures are approaching plastic and metal standards of detail, without that chunkiness you often see with 3D sculpts. Maybe my Italian Army isn't quite finished after all?

Left: P26/40 Heavy Tank.

Below: Skoda 100/17 Medium Howitzer.

Above: Lancia 1Z/1ZM Armoured Car.

MINIATURISED DESTRUCTION

And now for something completely different; a Lithobolos from Artemis Warfare (**artemiswarfare.co.uk**). This kit is designed to be used across scales as the size of the figures alongside it will determine what size it was in real life. It is an odd concept but works for siege engines like this. What makes it really stand out is that it actually works and will shoot the accompanying ball bearings if you want it to. I am very tempted to get one, and having seen the chaps at *Wi* playing with their Lithobolos kit [see *Wi*'s YouTube channel – Ed] I'm getting serious FOMO!

Below: 1:35 scale = 25 mina lithobolos.

KICKING A STARTER!

I think I have that right. These 'not quite yet available' projects aren't often covered in the pages of *Wargames Illustrated*; new releases that can be fully purchased are preferred, but I've been given special dispensation to occasionally mention crowdfunding projects. This month's duo will either be in full-flow or finished by the time you read this (but you should be able to late pledge).

First up is Luna City from Crooked Dice; this adds to their *7TV Pulp* game and takes its seed from the pulp sci-fi TV shows of the mid 20th Century. That means there's all kinds of Buck Rogers campy goodness, and it will provide some very interesting gaming possibilities.

A very different project is the latest Kickstarter from Footsore Miniatures & Games – *Coven: The Dark Fantasy Game*. Set in an Eastern European inspired landscape, this game picks on our fear of dark forests, with supernatural creatures seeking to dominate each other and their human prey. Early peeks at teaser information shared on the Facebook group shows a dark atmosphere, so you should expect some disturbing sights ahead in Kickstarterland and, eventually, on your gaming tables.
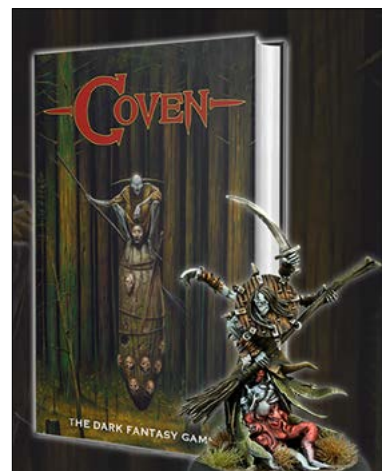
On that ominous note, until next time, fare thee well, and happy gaming!

FULL PAPER JACKET

NEW BOOKS FOR THE DISCERNING WARGAMER

BY NEIL SMITH

We have another eclectic mix of books for you this month. What we try to do with this column is to select books that will inspire wargames; some of them are obvious, some not so much but still do-able. We also try to cater for wargamers across the historical board in an effort to keep everyone happy. Thus, we have a sprinkling of books from Ancient Greece to the recent war in Iraq. And with that in mind here is April's shower.

ANCIENT

We start with a bold claim from Stephen Kershaw with his *Three Epic Battles that Saved Democracy: Marathon, Thermopylae and Salamis* (Robinson). If you haven't heard of these iconic battles, you are now 2,500 years late to the show. But to recap, all three were battles - two on land, one at sea - in the 5th Century BCE that the Greeks fought against the invading Persian hordes of King Xerxes, sending him packing and allowing democracy to flourish. If you can get past the obvious modern political overtones, this will be worth reading as wargamers because these are three battles we can easily fight on our tables and perhaps connect into a campaign. Salamis is the cherry on top for me because I can now justify getting lots of wee ships to play with!

DARK AGES

If your only image of Vikings is a crew of hairy warriors pillaging an isolated monastery in the windswept north of England, you're probably still living in the Dark Ages. There was so much more to the Vikings than that as our next book shows. Noah Tetzner's *Viking Warrior vs Frankish Warrior: Francia 799 - 911* (Osprey) takes us onto the European mainland where the Vikings proved more than menacing to the Frankish kingdom - in the 9th Century, they besieged Paris twice! At first, the Franks responded like for like, assembling hordes of infantry to fight toe-to-toe with the Vikings, but that proved cumbersome when they didn't know where the Vikings would strike next. The Franks switched to cavalry based forces, which proved to be a more viable option. Warfare in transition is not something we normally associate with the so-called Dark Ages, but here it is, and we can try this out for ourselves on our tables.

MEDIEVAL

I will go out on a limb here and guess that many of us have a coffee-table book on the Samurai and a notion to wargame them at some stage. I know I do. But the Samurai are still an 'alien' force and sometimes difficult to 'get into'. Sound familiar? Thomas Conlon's *Samurai and the Warrior Culture of Japan, 471-1877: A Sourcebook* (Hackett) should help with that. Conlon presents a slew of material from a wide range of sources so that we can lift the curtain on this fascinating class of warriors to see who they were and what drove them. There are wargamers who create backstories for their lovingly painted soldiers (guilty!), particularly for skirmish games, and being able to do that should help overcome the 'foreign' obstacle with the Samurai. That makes for a different feel to the game, where suddenly your expendable warrior has his own history, and you might not be so keen for him to rush the enemy archers even if he is a hero.

JACOBITE REBELLIONS

I feel that the Jacobites deserve their own niche in our wargaming periods, but I might be biased. The rebellions are a favourite of wargamers, though they usually opt for the more 'romantic' '45 Rebellion over the Jacobites' earlier efforts. That is a pity because those campaigns have much to offer beyond wild charges by men in kilts. Jonathan Oates' *The Second Battle of Preston, 1715: The Last Battle on English Soil* (Helion) takes a detailed look at the demise of a rebellion that showed promise but over-reached. He not only describes the battle, but also the forces involved and how they fought. You could argue this was a siege rather than a battle, but whatever the case, it offers a wargaming opportunity to put the clans on the defensive in a town, which is a wee bit different from seemingly doomed Jacobite frontal assaults out in the open.
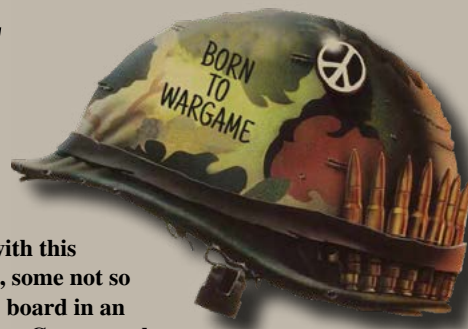
AMERICAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

Speaking of 18th Century revolutions, only two could be said to have truly changed the course of history. One of them took place in the British colonies in America, and we have two books worth noting this month on that seminal event. Mark Lender's *Fort Ticonderoga, the Last Campaigns: The War in the North, 1777-1783* (Westholme) examines the lesser known actions in the north at a time when most of the focus was on the southern campaigns. There was still a lot of fighting to be done up there even after the British disaster at Saratoga, most of which centred on the crucial 'Gibraltar of America' Fort Ticonderoga. Shifting not too far south, we come to the 'cockpit of the Revolution' as described by Robert Dunkerly in *Unhappy Catastrophes: The American Revolution in Central New Jersey, 1776-1782* (Savas Beatie). There was more fighting in this region than anywhere else during the Revolution, from small skirmishes to major battles, and you might argue that victory and defeat stemmed from here. Dunkerly certainly seems to think so. If you combine these two books, you have a recipe for many hours of wargaming happiness and enough material for a significant campaign.
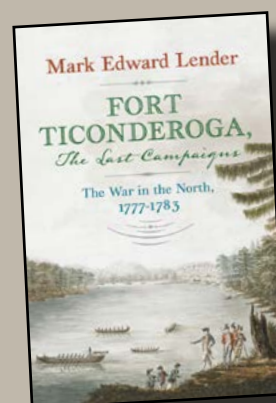
NAPOLEONIC WARS

We also have two books from the Napoleonic Wars, though not as connected as the AWI books. The first is a memoir, edited by Alexander Mikaberidze and Paul Strietelmeier, from one of Napoleon's ventures in the east. *Confronting Napoleon: Levin Von*
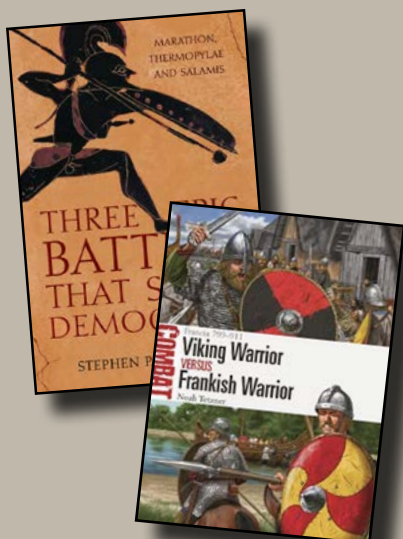
Bennigsen's Memoir of the Campaign in Poland, 1806-1807. Volume I - Pultusk to Eylau (Helion) tells the inside story of Russia's efforts to confront Napoleon by the man commanding the Tsar's army. Too often we think of the Russians as lumbering around strategically before crashing into the French with wasteful frontal assaults and inevitably losing. The Russians did lose, this was Napoleon at the height of his powers after all, but they had their chances, and they conducted a much more subtle campaign than they are often given credit for. Napoleonic wargamers will glean much from this book, and maybe some will reconsider the war in the east as having greater wargaming potential. I know that I am now digging out my unpainted 15mm Russian army from the lead pile in anticipation of reading this.
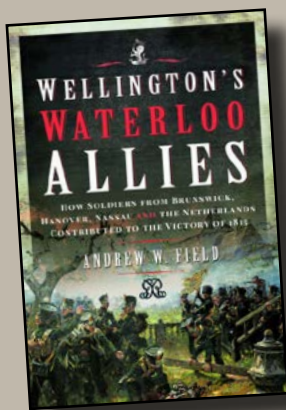
Another popular misinterpretation, though one that is surely in full retreat, is the 'British' victory at Waterloo in June 1815. The British army obviously played a major role in Napoleon's final defeat, but Wellington, lest we forget, commanded an allied army. If you didn't know that, then Andrew Field's *Wellington's Waterloo Allies: How Soldiers from Brunswick, Hanover, Nassau and the Netherlands Contributed to the Victory of 1815* (Pen & Sword) will put you right. Field analyses these contingents in detail and examines their performance in this epoch-making campaign. For wargamers feeling a bit jaded with Waterloo, this is a boon because we can now fight those parts of the battle where the Allies seized their opportunity to turn back the French. That sounds like an interesting challenge.

AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

It's been a long time since the movie *Glory* resurrected the role of Black Americans in the United States' victory over the Confederacy, but some seem to have forgotten the lesson lately. That movie was about the 54th Massachusetts Infantry, but John Warner's *Riders in the Storm: The Triumphs and Tragedies of a Black Cavalry Regiment in the Civil War* (Stackpole) reminds us that Black soldiers were

more than just cannon-fodder; they also fought in the artillery and Navy. The 5th Massachusetts was the only Black cavalry unit that fought in the war. And it is a unit worth painting and gaming, especially for the fighting around Petersburg and its entry into devastated Richmond, but also intriguingly for their service down on the Rio Grande. The American Civil War is well-covered by some excellent regimental histories, and this detailed account, driven by primary sources, looks like it will join that top shelf.

WORLD WAR ONE

It's not that often we get out to sea in Great War gaming, with the Battle of Jutland being the notable exception, but the prolific Angus Konstam brings us the story of the *Warships in the Baltic Campaign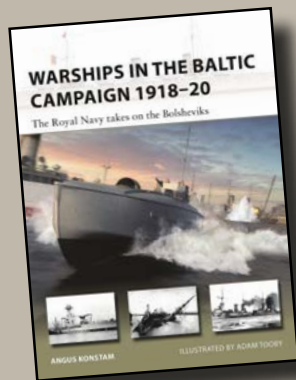 1918-20: The Royal Navy takes on the Bolsheviks* (Osprey) - okay, if you want to argue the war ended in 1918, go ahead. Here we have a British fleet assisting local Baltic States' forces to fight for their independence against the powerful Bolshevik Navy. They did pretty well too, bottling up the Reds in Kronstadt through an audacious torpedo boat attack. There is so much variety in this campaign for naval gamers, from small scale attacks to fleet actions with, perhaps, a wee bit of help from the 'what if' school of wargaming. The Baltic location might also inspire a campaign with ports to be defended and land-based strategic considerations that might play well into the random outcomes factor that makes campaigns all the more fun.

WORLD WAR TWO

Of course there are a bunch of new books covering World War Two this month, but I've picked out a couple that might inspire some out-of-the-box gaming ideas. My first is H.E. Bates' *Night Fighter: The Battle Against Hitler's Night Raiders 1940 - 1941* (Air World). Bates' job in the war was to write stories for the public about 'our boys' overcoming great odds to win great victories, i.e. propaganda. That means in this case that you are down for a great read if nothing else, but also there are some excellent wargaming opportunities here for the discerning

wargamer. Worn down by attrition in the Battle of Britain, the Luftwaffe switched to more night-time raids. This proved successful initially, at least until the RAF worked out new ideas to counter the German tactic. Is it me, or would this make for a nice twist to our WWII air wargaming? My first thought is off-table plotting for Luftwaffe movement and the RAF trying to intercept, but I'm sure the more sophisticated out there will come up with something better. The solo wargaming aspects are obvious.

Do you remember playing Battleships on grids of squared paper back in the day? I do. That sprung to mind when pondering Brian Herder's *East China Sea 1945: Climax of the Kamikaze* (Osprey). Herder focuses on the campaigns for Iwo Jima and Okinawa where the might of the US Navy came under consistent but wasteful attacks by the Japanese kamikaze pilots from the air and even the massive battleship Yamato at sea. When the Japanese tactic worked, it could be very successful, but overall, it could never change the tide of the war. The wargaming potential here is obvious, especially for co-op or solo; set up your ships, try to bring down the kamikazes as they come in, or try to sink the Yamato before she crosses the table and gets in amongst your invasion fleet.

MODERN

I just have space to squeeze in David Kelly's *Hell in the Streets of Husaybah: The April 2004 Fights of 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines in Husaybah, Iraq* (Casemate). Most of us have heard of the fighting in Fallujah, but the combat in Husaybah was equally intense. This book is full of first-hand reports of the street fighting, including remarkable stories of courage and sacrifice that will inspire but also give us pause for thought about the potential horrors that wait behind every door of the modern battlefield. I still prefer *Force-on-Force* rules for my modern games, but there are many others out there suitable for this style of skirmish gaming.
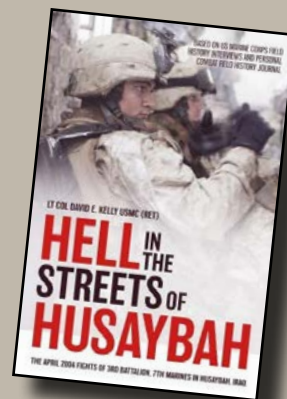
And that's all for this month, but check out my reviews of new military history books on Facebook at Full Paper Jacket. Happy reading (and gaming)!

PERRY MINIATURES

designed by
Alan & Michael Perry

Russian and Prussian Napoleonic Cavalry
1812-15

Box cover artwork by Peter Dennis

28mm hard plastic figures designed by Alan Perry

The set will allow you to build not only Russian and Prussian Dragoons but also Russian Mounted Jager regiments and detachments of Prussian Mounted Volunteer Jager. The Prussian regiments will be able to be represented in either Kollett or Litewka.

This set will have a larger variety of options for poses too, more than any other Napoleonic cavalry set we've done so far.

Each box contains 14 mounted figures, information guide and bases

Keep an eye out on our website, Facebook page and Newsletter for updates and more details.

You can contact us at : perryminiatures@aol.com
Although we read all questions, we can't guarantee a reply to each one as figure making is time consuming!
For updates see our website: www.perry-miniatures.com.

www.perry-miniatures.com

FACING THE ELEMENTS

How can you bring the elements into your wargaming?
Wi sought out the advice of some of our hobby's elite.

It was on a suitably blustery and rain whipped day that *Wi*'s intrepid reporters braved the elements and marched to one of Nottinghamshire's fine public houses. There we met Warlord CEO John Stallard, North Star boss Nick Eyre, and game designer of some repute Rick Brystly (see the pic). They treated us to a generous dousing of anecdotes from their gaming past, and we present them here along with some element adventures from other wargamers.

GAMING WHATEVER THE WEATHER
(AS LONG AS IT'S A FAIR DAY!)

Wargames Illustrated: Let's take weather as a starting point - it's often joked that when wargamers get to the weather section of a rulebook, if it includes one at all, they quickly skip past it. That's part of the reason we wanted to look at the elements for our theme; we're curious why that is. Do you consider weather when you're writing rules and designing a game, or do you tend to ignore it?

Rick Priestley: Yeah, it usually gets ignored, because it's boring.

Nick Eyre: Boring and tedious!

John Stallard: And yet it's important, there are times when a weather squall comes in so you can't fire your muskets and those charging cavalry lances will easily outreach bayonets no matter how well you've formed your square.

RP: Yes, there are plenty of historical occasions to identify, but people tend not to wargame them. An example is the Battle of Towton, famously fought in a snowstorm with the wind rolling in. You've got the Battle of Barnet too where the dispositions were impacted by a heavy fog in the morning, so that when the fog lifted, the armies were slightly out of position and they weren't facing each other. I'm not sure anyone wargames those things.

Above: Nick, John, and Rick.

Above: Artwork by Graham Turner from CAM 120 Towton 1461 © Osprey Publishing www.ospreypublishing.com

Wi: Some do! In our previous issue we featured an article (*Wi*411's 'Shed Battles') where gamers worked through the Wars of the Roses, including refighting those very battles [Check out 'Shed rules' later in the article- Ed]. But we must agree, it's rare that people give weather a lot of love in their wargaming!

JS: *Cruel Seas* has charts for choppy waters because you can't be firing a torpedo, or even go at any speed in a motor torpedo boat, if the weather's terrible. If you are unlucky there will be no torpedoes and you're at minus one to your guns because you're bouncing up and down on the sea. So, there it's important… though the chart's in the optional rules. Always optional!

It tends to be a crucial part of naval rules from the age of sail onward, but if weather rules were truly historically accurate, we'd not be doing much gaming. In bad weather, they'd all go home; nobody wanted to be a part of it, and that's true on land and sea.

RP: I think weather impacts warfare at the campaigning and logistics level more than it does in the battles themselves. That's true of a campaign I'm playing in at the moment umpired by Jervis Johnson. The weather determines how many orders you can give each turn, so it's integral to the action.

JS: Having said that, everyone will quote Waterloo kicking off late because the weather delayed getting the artillery into position… but I don't know if that's real! It's possible that it's just the French were moving theirs late as they were out of position. But a delay of a couple of hours there was quite a long time with the Prussians coming in. Another famous battle is Agincourt and its rain.

RP: It's easier to create a specific scenario for something like Agincourt; you could just state that the knights will have a reduced speed in their advance or get disordered. You've done it then with a simple modifier, that seems reasonable. But if you start to bring random elements into head-to-head pitched battles, people don't want it.

NE: This is the thing, weather's important in history and it factors in nearly every set of rules you can get, but people tend to skip them. I understand it - wargames often take quite a while to play, so you don't want the added complication of rain randomly soaking your powder and adding another hour of gaming. It's better to have a couple of specific hindrances rather than a broad effect that hits the whole table. Didn't you play a *SAGA* game once for *Wi*, Rick, and the whole board was boggy difficult ground? All that did was make the game slower, it didn't add to the tactical considerations much at all.

Wi: Sorry about that Rick, a bit of an overdose of elements (and minus modifiers) in that one.

WATER WOES

NE: Thinking about water, I've played ancient battles against 'gamey' opponents using rules like *DBM* where you choose the terrain and faced some challenges. They've put a water feature down to use it to their advantage. In one medieval game, I was against Venetians and they were using their boats to deploy troops from the river to harry my flanks. Just as I'd get turned to face them, they'd hop back on their boats and trundle down the river to fight elsewhere. I got soundly beaten because once he was on those boats, I couldn't touch him. The same thing can happen in *Colonial* rules; whatever part of the board your opponent places a river and paddle steamer on gets essentially closed off because they can shoot away and you can't touch them if you don't have anything on the water to respond with.

RP: That rather undermines the important part of wargaming - to have fun! A scenario can bring in victory conditions to balance that of course.
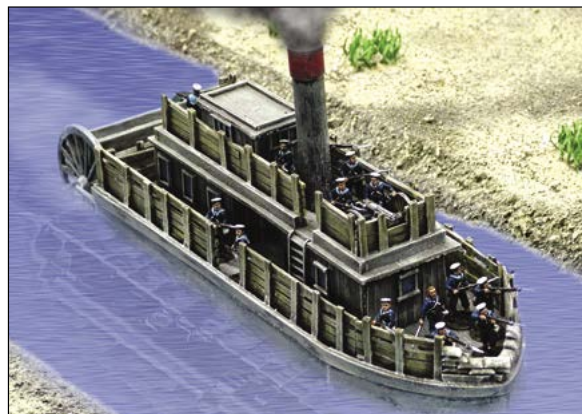
Above: A Sudan riverboat using the water to its advantage.

NE: The *Colonial* gunboat was rough, but the Venetians created an interesting tactical challenge. His land army was smaller due to the troops on the boats, so the game still had a lot of interesting considerations… although I still lost!

REAL ELEMENTS ON THE TABLETOP

Wi: Have you ever played games that involve the actual elements?

JS: I did used to play games in water - the pond in my back garden. I had two Airfix pontoon bridges connected across the full length of it, used as many of the polythene landing craft as I could get, the US Marine Corps had little dinghies, and there were kayaks too.

NE: So the bridge actually floated? Wow!

JS: It did. You could remove the pontoon bits and cram men into them as well, using them as assault craft; try to get as many troops as you could over to the other side while under fire. Great fun!

RP: Something you don't see any more are sand tables. These encompass earth and water because you damp them down. I never played on a sand table - they're a mythical thing as far as I'm concerned - but very much a part of the early days of wargaming. You'd fill a box six or so inches deep with sand, mould it, damp it down, colour it with powders to represent the terrain, then game over it.

NE: Oh, I've never seen one and imagined they'd get covered by a cloth.

Above: Rick (right) playing SAGA on a board full of Difficult Terrain.

Above: Featherstone and Young stand over their sandbox.

Above: Fire starts to take over in Gaslands.

RP: No, the coloured powders would represent grass, rivers, rocks and so on. The boards would get incredibly heavy because of the water, and they could also get mouldy. But assuming they didn't, you'd recycle them to dry out and use all over again.

JS: My dad ordered sand when I was a young lad, to build a wall, and it arrived when he was away on business. Something had gone wrong with the amount ordered and a big truck dumped something like 13 tonnes of builders' sand on the pavement outside of the house. That became the sandpit of my dreams, and I played with my figures in it - mainly foreign legion, but anything Mexican, cowboys and Indians, cavalry, Africa Corps - it very much themed my gaming and informed the conflicts I played. Little did I know I was following in the footsteps of sand table gamers like Donald Featherstone!

WHERE THERE'S FIRE THERE'S SMOKE!

Wi: A recent elemental development seems to be the use of vapes to make mist or smoke effects, especially for the creation of fancy photos. Popcorn lung risks aside, have you considered anything like that?

NE: Cotton wool is fine for me!

JS: The effect of smoke on the battlefield is quite incredible though. When I went to the 200th anniversary re-enactment of Waterloo, in no time at all you couldn't see a bloody thing! That has made me reconsider the way I play Napoleonic games. Gone are the days of artillery firing at their pick of the battlefield whenever they choose, they need to wait for smoke to clear. That can be a good modification because having to deal with artillery batteries firing each turn (usually with minimal results) can take an age. Another element - wind - can feature here too. Will it blow that smoke away?

Wi: Are there any rules that specifically take smoke and wind into account?

JS: There used to be, but I suppose escalating smoke became too fiddly. People like Rick came along and decided it wasn't important [all chuckle].

A FIERY INFERNO ON THE TABLETOP

NE: I played a game of *Gaslands* last night and my car got hit by Molotov cocktails. Those add hazards to your car and if you don't remove them you take damage every turn. Your car only has about four to six damage in total, so things can escalate quickly. That's easier to manage in smaller games.

JS: What about flamethrowers being generally terrifying? Don Featherstone used to leave them out of his rules because he didn't like them, he thought they were inhumane. And the origin of the first flamethrower units is fascinating - the Berlin fire brigade started them during the First World War!

Wi: Flamethrowers were a bit controversial in *Bolt Action*, weren't they? They were too good.

Above: Smoke starts to build at the 200th anniversary re-enactment of Waterloo.

JS: A bit, yes, but to some extent that's players getting a little… overenthusiastic. I remember one American chap telling me: "I love your game John, I put two guys with flamethrowers on the back of BMW motorbikes, I drive them forward, and they assault from there." That's one of those situations where yes, they could, but it doesn't mean you should! You can also mount flamethrowers on horses because it doesn't specifically say you can't. But again, try and be a little historically accurate and your opponents will like you more.
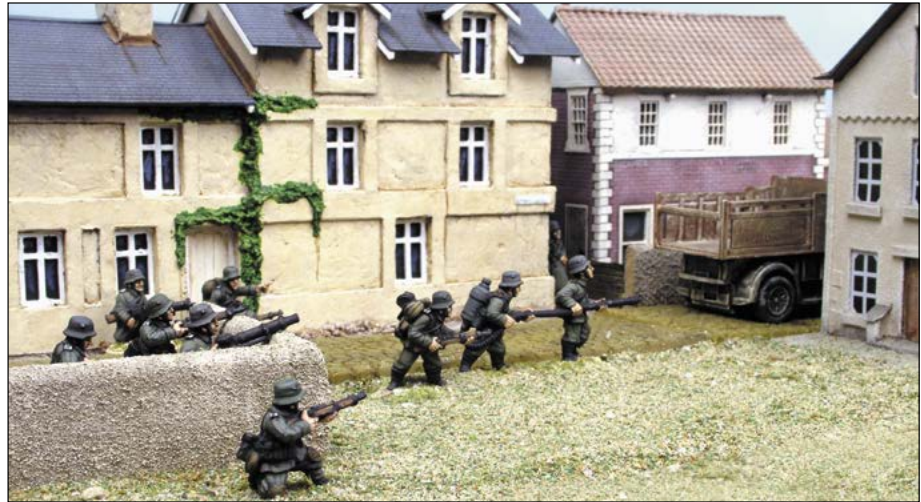
Above: A primitive flamethrower team moves up in the German Revolution (1918- 1819).

BRAVING THE ELEMENTS (… TEMPORARILY)

By *Wi* Editor Dan Faulconbridge

It was only when I came to brush the stuff off the models that I realised my mistake …

In a quest for 'temporary snow', I had (of course) turned to the internet and purchased some very reasonably priced 'model railway snow' from somewhere in China. I was looking to temporarily winter up some Gale Force Nine terrain for a *Frostgrave* Campaign Day we were hosting at *Wi*HQ (seen below left).

You will have noticed my liberal use of the word 'temporary' above; that's because when you borrow somebody else's terrain/buildings and casually mention "I am going to be temporarily covering everything in snow", temporarily is very much the key word in the arrangement.

The terrain looked great on the tabletop, but the model railway snow developed the unwelcome quality of a sort of dusty stain that wouldn't shift off the models, whilst simultaneously getting all over hands and clothes. Needless to say, the remaining Chinese Snow was hurled in the bin, profuse apologies were made to the owner of the terrain (again - sorry about that Matt) and my quest for 'temporary snow' for future projects continued.

When taking scenic photos for the magazine, my 'temporary snow' of choice is now sugar (seen below right). Many a *Wargames Illustrated* wintery scene is liberally covered in grains of sugar, poured directly from the packet. Sugar can even be used for small and quick snowy games. After a couple of hours and/or a change in the room's moisture levels, your figures could be trudging across a sticky syrupy mess if you're not careful, so do keep that in mind and never leave it for too long, lest your armies get overrun by hordes of giant ants!

TUNNEL HORRORS

JS: There is fighting that happens under the earth. James Morris did that lovely Fort Vaux board from the Battle of Verdun, and that was memorable not just because it looked wonderful, but it was like a *Dungeons and Dragons* game. Sewer fighting is quite common too. Medieval and ancient battles could even have tunnelling in them. Imagine how dreadful that would be, fighting in the dark underground. Your enemies might even throw in a beehive, or bucket of scorpions to make it even more awful. [See *Wi*401 for Paul Leach's article on such horrors - Ed].

Part of the tunnel fighting in James Morris' striking Fort Vaux game. See more in Wi401.

Above: In a scene from our Chain of Command game in Wi387, a German squad moves through the sewers towards the pump house at Stalingrad.

RP: They'd dig the sewage pit into it and flood things too. Hard to work all that into wargames though, other than as scenarios.

JS: You could have a skirmish game going on alongside a bigger battle to see if something like a petard goes off. You could do that while you're having a beer, then have it impact the main battle at a certain time when you play it later.

NE: Duncan ran an article about fighting in the tunnels of Cu Chi (*Wi*151) and that played rather like *D&D*. You'd roll for traps and encounters and then the 'treasure' would be information to further the war efforts. I read Tom Mangold and John Penycate's book, *The Tunnels of Cu Chi*, right around the same time as I saw that article, and it's all fascinating. During the war, when they first found the tunnels, it was random bad luck that would decide who would go down, but over time a team of US Tunnel Rats was developed - short guys, often Hispanic, would be choppered in to specifically deal with the situation.

JS: I'd play a game of that - *Dungeons and Dragons* with a Vietnam twist!

NE: There's even a water element. The Americans would pump gas into the tunnels, so to counter that the VC would build water U-bends. Imagine being a Tunnel Rat, reaching the water, and realising you must swim on with no idea how far or if there will be someone waiting at the other end with a bayonet. There were traps where trip wires would drop highly poisonous snakes too; it's one of those things where truth is stranger than fiction.

Wi: Didn't the first *Warhammer* have some *D&D* type elements?

RP: Yes, it was a question of what sold at the time. If a book had 'roleplay' on it then it sold, and if it didn't, it didn't! So, we had to bring in things like advancing characters between connected games and some subterranean gaming.

Above: Artwork by Brian Delf from WAR 161 Tunnel Rat in Vietnam © Osprey Publishing
www.ospreypublishing.com
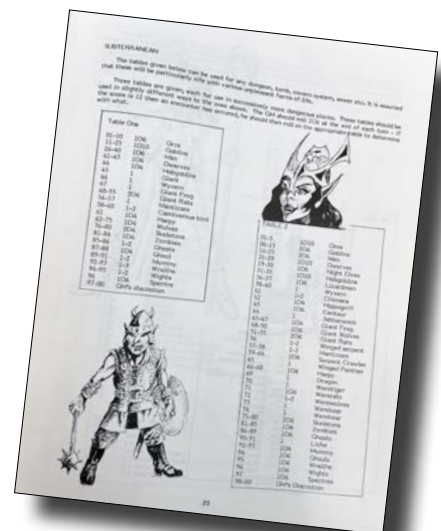
Above: Subterranean rules from Warhammer's first edition.

GAMING WITH WEATHER IN THE WARS OF THE ROSES

By Giles Shapley - AKA Eric the Shed

While playing my way through the Wars of the Roses using the *Never Mind the Billhooks* rules, I had to implement various weather conditions. Here are some of the ideas I incorporated into my 'shed rules'.

Weather had a significant affect at Northampton, with rain on the day of the battle meaning archers and artillery found the conditions extremely tough and the going was slow. I added a weather card to the play deck; the game started with persistent rain, but each time the card was drawn, players rolled on a Weather Track to see if conditions improved or worsened. Eventually the rain could become a downpour, meaning units were unable to shoot.

Right: Confusion at Barnet as the fog (cotton wool) causes chaos.

Above: Eric the Shed's Towton Game.

The Battle of Towton was notable for its atrocious weather conditions - heavy snow and a strong southerly wind to the Yorkist advantage. That meant adding a wind and snow card into the play deck to manipulate those elements. At the beginning of the game, the Yorkists added to their range and the Lancastrians had theirs reduced, but this varied as conditions changed. The changing of the snow depth and wind direction was recorded with pins in a cork chart.

To cater for the fog at Barnet, we added a fog card to the turn deck and the game started with dense fog but it could change whenever the card was drawn. The fog reduced command and missle range and led to units moving randomly. Barnet was a classic example of 'blue on blue' casualties, with friendly forces attacking one another because of the lack of visibility, so we worked in a rule that if any unit deviated and 'bumped' into another, combat could erupt even if they were allies.

THE TROUBLES OF AIR ATTACK

RP: If you're making a game themed around aerial combat, like *Blood Red Skies*, dealing with 'air' is fine, but flying barely factors in land-based battle until you're designing fantasy games. You write a solid set of wargame rules and then you suddenly need to deal with this extra dimension of things flying around; that's a real challenge. Realistically, nothing on the ground really stands a chance and every rule you write must interact with every rule for things on the ground. Having written some quite complicated and 'realistic' rules for things like soaring dragons and fire breath, flying now wisely gets simplified to 'hopping' from place to place.

Above: Tzeentch 'flying circus' armies were notorious in Warhammer as a way to abuse the rules and totally ruin your opponent's fun!

A BLAZE OF GLORY

By Michael 'Pyromaniac' Perry

I once accidentally set Bryan Ansell's carpet alight in the early 80s. We got a friend to hollow out a miniature brass barrel and put it on a Minifigs artillery piece. You could load it, and we would use gunpowder from a spare cartridge we had, then fire it off, shooting either a lead slug or a canister. I originally wanted to see the effect of canister on Airfix French infantry, so I set up three or four blocks in dense column at what I estimated to be at the scaled down distance of 50 yards.

We couldn't do it outside because it was too windy, so we thought the garage would be a safe option. It was very spectacular, a lot of recoil. The problem was we fired it in the direction of the metal garage door and the ricochet sent elements of lead firing over our head. A bit of wadding hit the carpet too and things started sizzling, but we put that out quickly.

We never found the first figure it hit, then everything else spread out in a cone of damage behind. I think that spread was probably from the first figure shattering into the others; perhaps that was like reality but with body parts instead of Airfix parts.

Above: Not the Perry cannon firing, theirs was even less safe!

Back in the day there used to be a nasal spray that had an aerosol in it, which would fit quite nicely into the turret of a Tiger tank. If you got a heat source right in the centre after a couple of minutes, you'd get an almighty explosion! We had some Airfix galleons we shot at with an air rifle too, and that looked brilliant; the dust on them would add a realistic 'poof' of debris when you hit and masts would collapse. It wasn't exactly wargaming though!

I don't tend to use other real elements in our games as the scale is wrong. For the photos I do, we'll create water from hobby products. I think Duncan once did a jungle scene and used actual water on top of a resin lake to create extra reflections. If you had two balloons, you could do the first aerial combat ever, a fatal duel that took place high in the air near Paris. I always liked the idea of doing a game based on the Franco-Prussian balloons, that would look good, and we are doing Franco-Prussian stuff right now. I think a lightweight balloon would be quite popular, but I'm not sure how I'd go about producing it.
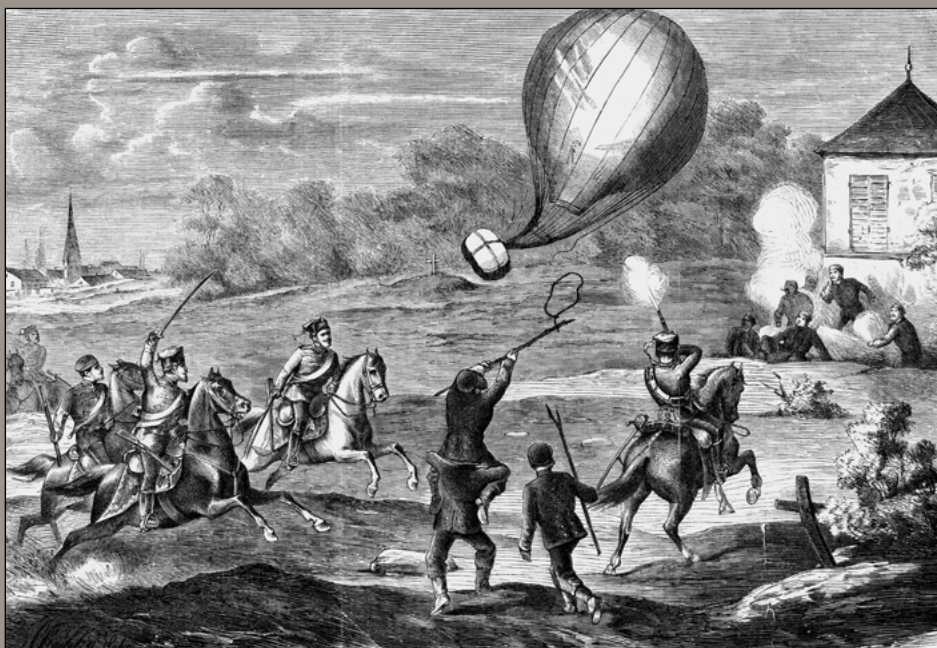
Above: A hot air balloon comes under attack in the Franco-Prussian War, during the Siege of Paris.

JS: That sort of thing got simplified in *Cruel Seas* too. We wanted aircraft but they shouldn't hang around; they just needed to strafe and then get out of there, fast. The designers were wanting to add loads of extra granularity, but it didn't make sense.

NE: Aerial combat can be hard, especially to do it realistically. *Wings of War* (now *Wings of Glory*) was a game I played a lot and it's still big, but it's not particularly accurate WWI combat.

RP: It's funny because I told Andy Jones from Games Workshop about this great idea I had for a WWI aerial combat game where you'd put a card down, then another to move, and so on. He just looked at me a bit bemused and said, "That's *Wings of War*, Rick." I had no idea!

JS: I couldn't even get my head around *Ace of Aces*.

NE: You just literally turn the page!

Wi: Ultimately it seems like there's room for the elements in wargames, and you lot certainly have some happy gaming memories (along with a few less happy ones) that involve them. You just need to think a little less conventionally.

Thanks for chatting to us chaps, we're going to get back to the office, dig out *Wi*151, and play some Vietnam *D&D*!

BLAM! BLAM! AARGH! AMBUSH!

BACKGROUND

The attacker is carrying out a patrol and must move through two checkpoints. The defender has laid an ambush. This scenario is intended to be set in the jungles of Vietnam (*Platoon*), Burma (*Objective Burma*), the New Hebrides (*Too Late the Hero*), or South America (*Predator*), but can of course be adapted to any setting with plenty of cover, such as cities (*Black Hawk Down*) or the darkness of night-time raids (erm ... *Navy SEALs?*).

Ideally the two forces involved will be quite different - perhaps the attacker has a technological advantage to offset the defender's knowledge of the terrain and hidden deployment. This would work well in a jungle exploration setting, or many Sci-Fi settings involving bitey aliens and human marines.

It's also perfectly fine to set two like-for-like forces against one another (in WWII, for example). If you choose this type of setting, give the attackers an advantage in number to offset the advantage the defenders claim for their hidden deployment.

TABLETOP LAYOUT

The defender lays out the terrain.

Almost every area should count as cover and blocking terrain - "Welcome to the jungle, it's gonna bring you down"! - No more than a quarter of the areas should be open, and you may choose to include a small number of difficult areas too. Avoid using impassable terrain as the going will be slow enough without it.

Once the terrain is laid out, the attacker chooses two areas as their checkpoint targets for the scenario. See 'Special Rules' for more details.

The defender then notes down which areas their models are deployed in - these may be in any area not along the table's edges, and they may be placed in the checkpoint areas. Remember that each player can only have a maximum of five models in an area at any one time. These models are kept off the table until revealed as shown in the 'Special Rules' section on the next page.

Finally, the defender tells the attacker two adjacent table edges to deploy the attacking models along - the defender knows the ground, has the advantage, and is inviting the attacker into a kill zone.

GLORIOUS GRIDS

A gridded table, as described in the *BBA!* rules, is a real winner for this type of battlefield and scenario. You can get by with far fewer trees, bushes, and flora than you'd need on a non-gridded table and still make a very playable jungle board. If you have a few bits of terrain in each cover/blocking area, the players will instantly know whether they're in it or not.

The gridded table also helps with hidden deployment as you can use grid references by column and row (A1 to A5, B1 to B4, C1 to C5, etc).

Make a quarter of the board into heavy jungle with a standard setup and nine trees ...
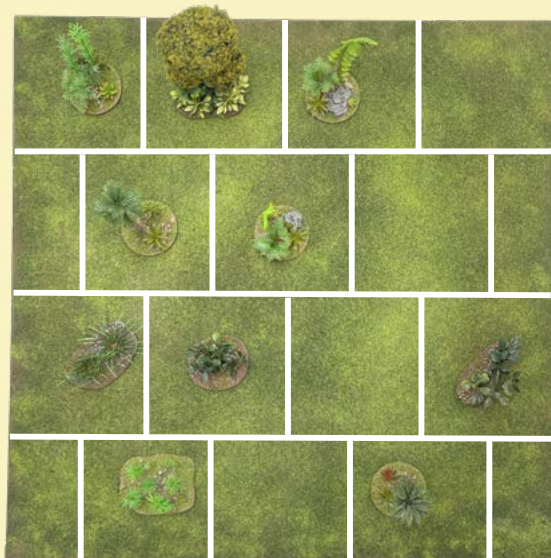
... or use those same nine trees and a grid to cover two thirds of the board in heavy jungle!

SPECIAL RULES

Checkpoints

The attacker has been ordered to recon two checkpoints in this location. The attacker chooses two areas at least four areas apart and not in an area along the table's edge. Place a marker to show which two areas these are.

The attacking Leader miniature must enter both areas and remain in each area, without a Stun Token, during a Move Action (effectively, the Leader makes a Speed 0 move) to successfully complete the checkpoint.

Once completed, remove the checkpoint marker; give it to the attacker to show that checkpoint has been checked.

Friendly Fire and Sniped Shots

This is a scary environment for the attacking player's models. They can't see far, but they can hear, and they may have itchy trigger fingers. Added to that, they don't really know where the enemy are, and are all too aware that random shots from unseen enemies or stray bullets could take them down.

At the end of every turn, before IPs are removed or rout tests taken, the attacker rolls a single dice. On a roll of a 1, bullets fly out of the foliage! The defender chooses any one area that:

1. Contains attacking models.

2. Does not contain defending models.

3. Does not contain the attacking Leader.

The attacker chooses one of their own models to be the target of the attack, and the defender then rolls 3 Shoot Dice and resolves the attack.

If the three requirements above are not fulfilled, no shot occurs.

Ambush

The defender notes down which models are deployed in which areas as outlined in 'Tabletop Layout'. These models remain hidden until:

1. The ambushing model uses an action. Place that model on the tabletop and then carry out the action.

2. The attacker moves a model into the area. Place all defending models deployed in that area on the tabletop when the attacker enters.

The defender may choose the action Lie in Wait to keep their ambush hidden. Models may be deployed in ambush in any terrain area, not just cover.

Once placed on the table, a model may not sneak back into lying in wait - they remain visible on the table.

NEW ACTION: LIE IN WAIT

The defender may choose Lie in Wait as an action, whereby they do nothing regardless of the number of models they nominally activate.

When the defender chooses this action, the attacker may counter any defender Lie in Wait Action with any action he or she chooses (Move, Shoot, Fight, or Recover), randomly activating 1-6 models (roll a dice) rather than following the standard rules.

When the attacker wins the initiative, the defender may choose Lie in Wait instead of the same action as the attacker chooses.

VICTORY

• If one side kills or routs all enemy models, they win automatically.

• If the attacker successfully completes both checkpoints, they win.

• If the attacker fails to complete both checkpoints, the defender wins.

Gringo 40s 28mm Vietnam War figures in action somewhere 'Up Country'.
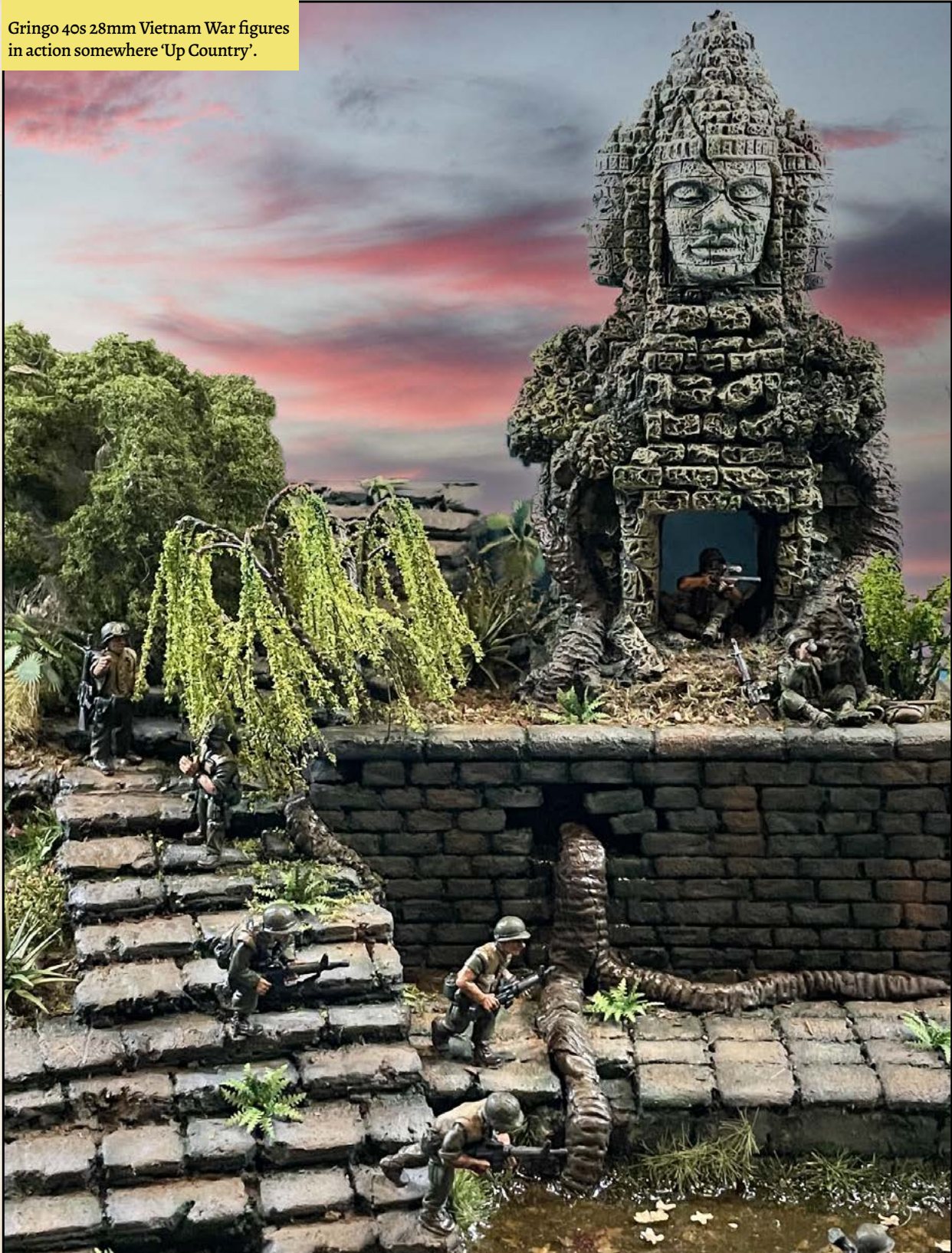
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BRITISH INFANTRY FACE THE WEATHER

***Wi*'s painters bring the elements to this month's free Warlord Games British and Canadian Infantry frame.**

With a stack of Warlord frames to play with, we came up with a 'facing the elements' hobby challenge for this month's cover mount focus. We randomly picked an element for painters Marc and Callum, then provided them with the matching resin bases (leftovers from our Moments in History range) and one of the free Infantry frames. Their mission was to make a mini diorama that reflected the element; they could use basic hobby supplies, but extra figures or miniature parts that didn't come from the free frame would be frowned upon.

CAUGHT IN A SQUALL BY CALLUM FRANCE

Callum: Wind felt like an obvious way to represent the element of air, but it would still be a challenge, what with its lack of visual mass and form. After discarding my comedic idea of depicting soldiers with flatulence (maybe another time!), I opted for something less silly; I would show two soldiers trying to hold down a tent caught in a squall. It seemed quite apt given the recent storms here in the UK.

MAKING THE TENT

1) I built the frame with cocktail sticks that I drilled into the base.

2) The cloth was made from toilet paper that I soaked in watered down PVA glue.

3) I gently draped the soaked sheets across the frame.

4) Once I was happy with how they lay, I applied dry pieces of tissue on top to thicken the layers and included smaller shapes to make the seams and flaps.

5).When the entire tent had dried a little, I used a hair-dryer on a low-blow setting to try and give the impression of wind caught in the back of the tent.

The final touch was to add guy ropes made of thin white thread I got from a fabric repair kit. These were superglued to the tent and left to dry before being glued into a hand or the ground and stained with ink. One is pulled taut while two whip around. The tent pegs are the tips of cocktail sticks.

CONVERTING AND PAINTING THE INFANTRY

I converted the two Infantrymen to hold shovels, imagining they were using them to hammer down the tent pegs. I shaved the original items they were holding away from their hands then drilled holes into their grips. This meant I could slot cut down spade parts into the holes, and polystyrene cement not only gave a great bond but also slightly melted the plastic to hide any rough connection points.

PAINTING THE BASE AND TENT

All paints are from Citadel.

Basecoats

- Earth: Gorthor Brown.

- Rocks: 1:1 mix of Skavenblight Dinge and Baneblade Brown.

- Tent: Steel Legion Drab straight from the pot. Too much water in the paint can reactivate the tissue even when sealed and primed so be cautious.

- Wood: 1:1 mix of Rhinox Hide and Steel Legion Drab.

Wash

A 1:1 mix of Agrax Earthshade and Contrast Medium was applied, focusing on the floor, with only a light coat on the tent to avoid tearing the paper.

Drybrush

- Earth: Steel Legion Drab, then more selectively with Baneblade Brown.

- Rocks: Basecoat mix, then progressively add Administratum Grey, pure Administratum Grey, then Administratum Grey with a dot of pure white.

- Tent: 1:1 mix of Steel Legion Drab and Baneblade Brown. Just bring out a hint of texture.

- Wood: Steel Legion Drab, then Baneblade Brown.

Texturing

I painted PVA glue where I wanted Woodland Scenics Blended Turf: Earth Blend to sit, then sprinkled that over the base. Woodland Scenics Course Turf:: Burnt Grass added depth on top, sealed down with Geek Gaming's Matt Scenic Sealant.

Gamers Grass tufts were applied with a dot of PVA and flattened in the direction I wanted the wind facing, though they seem to have a 'memory' and keep standing up straight!

PAINTING THE INFANTRYMEN

All paints are from Citadel l, unless otherwise stated.

Basecoats

- Uniforms: 1:1 mix of Vallejo English Uniform and Steel Legion Drab.

- Straps, helmets, and backpacks: 1:1 mix of Castellan Green and Steel Legion Drab.

- Skin: The Army Painter Dorado Skin.

Wash

A 1:1 mix of Agrax Earthshade and Contrast Medium on all but the skin. For the skin apply The Army Painter Soft Skin Wash.

Layer back up

Reapply your basecoats to the various areas, leaving the wash in the recesses.

Highlights

The figures' uniforms were highlighted with Baneblade Brown and sharper highlights in a 1:1 mix of Baneblade Brown and Rakarth Flesh. A final dot highlight was applied to points that would catch the most light in pure Rakarth Flesh. The Army Painter Amber Skin was used to create similar pop highlights on the skin.

NORMANDY 6 JUNE 1944 BY MARC SHUCKSMITH-WESLEY

Marc: I had no trouble deciding how to represent water; my eyes went straight to this issue's cover art. I replicated last issue's cover art too (see that article on page 90 of *Wi*411), but this month's project was a world away from a vibrantly decorated elephant in a jungle setting. There's a grim atmosphere to this WWII scene, with the British rushing from a landing craft and through shallow water during the D-Day Landings, their fate in the hands of the German gunners on the shore defences. I would try to recreate that drama with some simple conversions, a muted paint scheme, and poured resin.

The changes I made to these figures were quite subtle, but by altering the poses and adding the life jacket strips with Greenstuff so they better matched the artwork (seen below).

PICKING THE RIGHT PALETTE

Instead of using my favourite AK Interactive Pastel Yellow in my highlight mixes, I used a colder paint - Vallejo Model Color Pastel Green. Considering the warmth of paints is a great way to set a mood in what you paint, and you'll be shocked how different the same figure can look just by varying between warm and cool tones. To better match the desaturated look of the artwork, I also mixed some Scalecolor Caspian Blue into some of my stippled highlights.

The main basecoat colour on the figures is Tamiya Olive Drab. Although this is rather different to the actual British uniform colour, it matched the art well. A final glaze of Vallejo Model Color English Uniform made it look a little more historically accurate.

ALWAYS TEST A NEW HOBBY PRODUCT

Making water effects with poured resin can be a bit of a gamble, so I did a test first, wrapping acrylic around a lid that would otherwise have gone into the recycling. My tester ended up with a great looking clear effect but got a slight lip around the edge. I suspect that by pouring multiple thin layers and waiting 24 hours for each to dry, that lip height would be reduced … but with time a factor on every *Wargames Illustrated* project, I had to ignore this and do a deeper pour on the final model!

POURING THE RESIN

1) I painted the base with a mix of Scalecolor Heavy Brown and Liquitex Burnt Umber ink.

2) Once the paint was dry, I fixed my acrylic sheet around the edge. This was glued in place with superglue and a hot glue gun to ensure a completely secure seal all the way around. A good tip here is to watch the spread of the glue through the clear sheet and make sure it is covering every bit of the area. It's essential that nothing can leak through when you pour the resin so you should test the seal by filling the area with water first. If, after an hour, you've not lost any of the water through gaps, you're good to go. Let things dry out then pour your resin!

I recommend putting the point where the acrylic joins at the rear of the base as it's likely to distort a little in this spot and you'll need to sand the resin down. Square shaped bases, wood plinths, or even plastic bases would all be easier to work with than the resin round I used but that was all part of the fun!

3) I used Deluxe Materials Solid Water but there are various options out there. Mix the resin and hardener and you'll usually have a good while to work with it, so stir until it runs clear and try and avoid making air bubbles. If you do get air pockets, a hair dryer on a low setting from a good distance away will help you pop air bubbles to the surface.

4) Pour it avoiding the figures then leave for at least 24 hours. Though not shown, I also covered it to make sure no dust settled on it.

(a)

(b)

5) When dry, peel off the acrylic and fix any problem areas. For me, this was a lip that rose up (a) and needed to be trimmed off with a sharp hobby knife before being sanded further with my rotary tool then finished off with fine grade wet and dry paper, resulting in a smooth finish (b).

MAKING WAVES

Deluxe Materials have another product called Making Waves, a thicker and quicker drying material that I used to make the choppy waves. I mixed Army Painter Ice Storm and Liquitex Titanium White ink into it and applied it with a brush to add cresting waves to the base. As it dries, you can pull peaks up with a needle or sculpting tool too. This was a great way to cover up some of the raised edges the resin pour created.
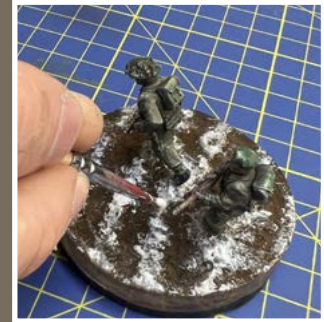
Below: The finished base with its realistic waves.
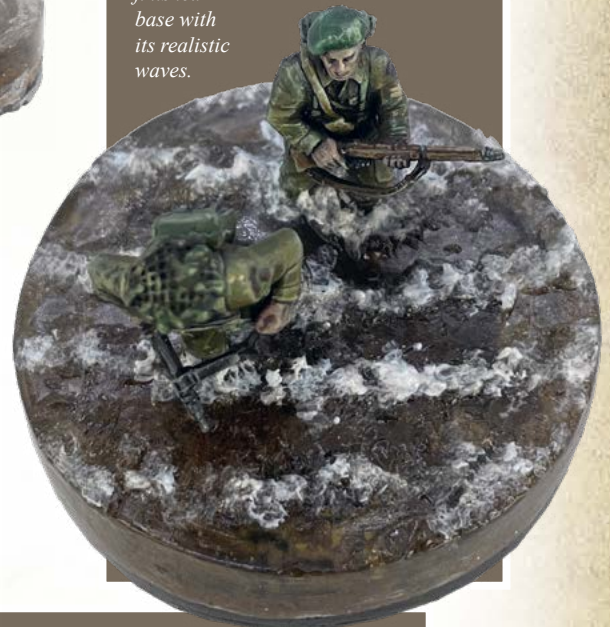
WHERE ARE EARTH AND FIRE?

We didn't forget about the other two elements; we just couldn't fit everything into this article, so we focused on the work of our painting pros. Project Manager James also added his name to the lucky dip and got earth as his element, and our three office hobbyists combined forces on a final fire scene.

The making of those earth and fire scenes are featured in a bonus article that our *Wi*Prime Members can find on the *Wargames Illustrated* website.

67102
Champlain's
French
Soldiers

67101
Champlain &
French Personalities

67103
French
Adventurers

67104
French
Matchlock
Men

67151
English
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English
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DESIGNER'S NOTES:

02 Hundred HOURS

Graham Davey, of Grey for Now Games, brings night raids to World War Two with his new game of stealth skirmishing.

I have always liked games that generate an exciting story, a narrative of events that takes you beyond a test of manoeuvre and dice-rolling. When I play a wargame, I want to feel like I'm living out the finale of a classic action movie, with distinct characters, heroes and villains, moments of heroism and sacrifice, high tension, and bad fortune all playing their part.

For *02 Hundred Hours*, my focus was night-time commando raids in World War Two. There is a rich pool of inspiration, both historical and fictional - films like *Where Eagles Dare* and *The Guns of Navarone*, as well as the many incredible real-world operations that took place.

After the German Blitzkrieg and the retreat to Dunkirk, Churchill ordered the creation of a new type of fighting force, based on the 'butcher and bolt' tactics of the irregular soldiers he had encountered during the Boer War forty years earlier. Such ungentlemanly behaviour was actively opposed by the military establishment, but their success led to the aggressive 'commandos' being replicated in various forms by every nation in the war.

HIDDEN IN THE DARK

Small groups of the SAS infiltrated the enemy lines, assisted by spies from the Special Operations Executive as well as local resistance fighters. Under cover of darkness, they launched attacks on radar stations, airfields, and rail lines, sneaking past sentries, taking them out with silent takedowns, or opening fire in deadly ambushes. They would plant charges, grab intelligence, even kidnap enemy officers, then fight their way clear before reinforcements could arrive.

4 SAS Troopers
Trooper, Regular, Pair, Standard Issue, Combat Knife, Grenades

Pair: Can use the Assist medal effect.

These were the events I wanted to recreate on the tabletop, and that required rules for something that is not often tackled in wargames - stealth.

Of course, in any wargame the players have a god-like view of everything on the table (and generally don't play in the pitch black!). As such, the 'fog of war' - the fact that your toy soldiers wouldn't actually know where enemies are - is either ignored completely or, as in my case, had to be simulated by the game rules.

In *02 Hundred Hours*, the first step to achieve this is that at the start of a game, none of the fighters on either side know where their enemies are. This is referred to as being 'covert'. If a combatant is spotted or gives themselves away somehow, they become 'detected', allowing the enemy to move towards them and potentially attack.

NOISY DICE

My initial idea was for one dice-face to represent alerting the enemy, so the more dice you roll, the more likely you are to be seen or make a noise. This quickly evolved into two types of dice, one white, representing noisy actions with a higher chance of being detected, and the other grey, for quiet, stealthy behaviour with the chance of cancelling out an 'Alert' from the noisy dice. This would let detected soldiers become covert again, slipping away into the shadows.

Many actions use a combination of both dice. A Sneak action might use two of the 'quiet' dice and one of the 'noisy' dice, so you're likely to stay hidden, but there's always a small possibility of things going wrong! On the other hand, firing a Tommy gun uses three of the noisy dice, so it's likely (but not guaranteed) that the enemy will spot your position.

PATROLLING SENTRIES

I've played plenty of games in which darkness is represented by a 'spotting roll' to randomize how far a model can 'see' before shooting. However, you rarely see any restrictions on how models move around, which makes it impossible to do anything particularly secretive. If you try to sneak a unit behind enemy lines, your opponent can simply move troops to counter the threat, even though the men on the ground would have no idea it was coming.

For *02 Hundred Hours* I needed some limitations on the way models move about. Some lowly sentries move along a patrol route that the defending player marks out at the beginning of the game. Other defenders make a Roving Patrol move, which heads in a random direction pointed to by the chevrons on the dice. A good roll allows the player to choose which direction to follow, but if there is a detected enemy close by, the defenders make a faster move directly towards that enemy. This often leads to spotting more foes and raising the alarm but also pulls the sentries out of position and may leave holes for the attackers to exploit.

The attackers have a little more leeway, sneaking slowly in any direction, but can only move fast towards a detected enemy.

Sentries 2
Trooper, Sentry, Pair, Standard Issue, Heer

Pair: Can use the Assist medal effect.

0200-19

UNDERSTANDING THE DICE

Chevrons: indicates success, depending on the ability stat. They are also used to indicate the direction of movement.

Alert: detected by the enemy.

Stealth: cancels out an Alert.

Medal: triggers special abilities, such as a sneaking fighter freezing in place, and weapon traits, such as a double-tap with a silenced pistol or a headshot with a sniper rifle.

RAISE THE ALARM!

For a realistic behind-the-lines raid, the game starts with the defenders unaware that they are under attack, and they won't open fire straight away - no point waking up the whole garrison if that thing rustling in the bushes is just a stray dog, right? Only after a certain number of enemies are detected is the alarm raised; at that point, the defenders are free to shoot and fight. Naturally, things like gunfire, explosions, finding a body, or coming face-to-face with a foe set off the alarm much faster.

Even once the alarm has gone off, defenders who are too distant from a detected enemy must use the semi-random Roving Patrol rule to move around; not always in a useful direction. Players may find it jarring that they don't have full control over where their models go, but keep in mind that the soldiers on guard duty in the rear echelon were not generally front-line veterans. More often they were inferior, older conscripts, and in many cases they were men from occupied countries coerced into the ranks by threats to their families. Such troops could certainly not be relied upon to run towards gunfire or behave exactly how a commander might wish!

The result is that even in the final stages of the game, with the alarm raised and a firefight raging, there is still scope for covert fighters to sneak around and get the drop on an unsuspecting foe or make a final dash for an objective.

TURN TO FACE AND OPEN FIRE!

The final piece of the puzzle was to give each miniature a facing, with a front and back (the dividing line goes through the shoulders). Fighters can only see to the front, which creates entertaining possibilities for attackers to nip behind sentries once they have passed along their patrol route. This is balanced by the chance of that sentry turning to look at just the wrong moment!

In addition, there are crucial bonus dice when attacking from the rear as well as for being covert, and this takes melee attacks with a Fairbairn-Sykes combat knife from a noisy brawl into a silent cut across the throat.

I won't go into much detail about the workings of combat. The rules are fast, intuitive, and easy to learn so that you'll have them downpat and be able to concentrate on tactics after a single game. Although the dice mechanics are very different, the overall sequence will be familiar to anyone who has played my Samurai skirmish game *Test of Honour*.

Soldiers that survive an attack may suffer 'trauma', representing minor wounds as well as suppression or pinning. This makes them lose an action, and repeated trauma can take them out of the game altogether.

TELLING THE STORY

As an extra layer of detail, there are also several types of cards, drawn as the game progresses, that introduce all sorts of heroics, unique skills, and unexpected occurrences.

The attackers have Order Cards, allowing them to take two actions in a row with the same soldier, such as a sneak move and then attacking, or for two soldiers to act together, such as one spotting an enemy and the other shooting.
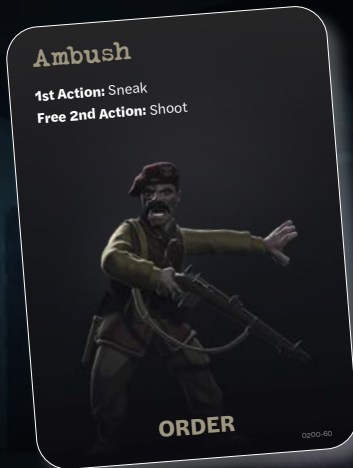
Meanwhile, the defending player gets Event Cards. These reflect more unusual defensive efforts, such as radio intercepts, searchlights, or changing the patrol route. There are also the many random, unfortunate occurrences and mishaps that could befall attackers, such as bright moonlight, low ammo, or even a sudden sneeze! For the purposes of the game, the defender gets to decide precisely when these things happen, hoping to mess up their opponent's game-plan at crucial moments.

Finally, both sides have Veteran Cards that allow you to personalise specific troops with improved abilities - being an expert scout for example - or extra kit like smoke grenades, or a hip flask of whiskey. If you are playing a series of battles in a campaign, Veteran Cards can be kept, so your force becomes more experienced over time.
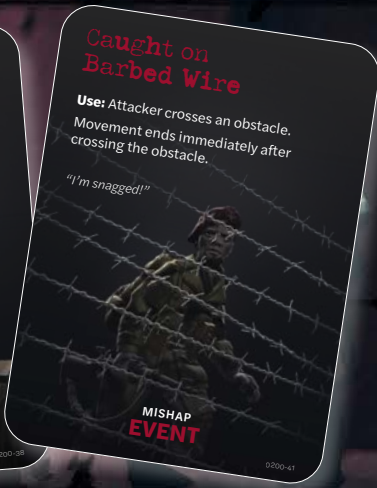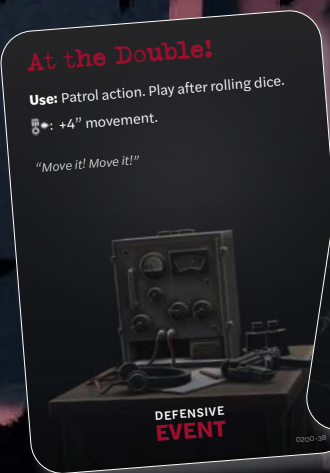
Dead Eye Shot

⚅✦(Shoot action):
Re-roll the ⚅ result. Cannot be used with a weapon that has Spread.

VETERAN
0200-73

Deadly Hands

⚅✦(Fight action):
Re-roll the ⚅ result.

VETERAN
0200-74

MINIATURES RANGE

02 Hundred Hours comes with multi-part plastic figures, enabling you to make two opposing forces from what you get in the starter set. These have been created in partnership with Wargames Atlantic, and it has been a lot of fun researching the design briefs and learning about the manufacturing process.

On top of this, expansion sets will include metal character figures, loads of additional cards, and more plastic frames.

There are no army lists restricting which models you can use. If you want you could have an attacking force with a mix of British, Americans, French, maybe even a German defector. You can choose to stick to historical references or emulate the assorted casts of those classic movies!

The opportunity is there to write your own incredible war stories.

Hopefully players will find *02 Hundred Hours* an extremely characterfu, entertaining skirmish game. I think it breaks new ground by taking us beyond the standard wargaming mechanics of 'move, shoot, fight'. It adds the element of having to discover the enemy, not as an afterthought but baked right into the core of the game, so you now have 'move, spot, shoot, fight'. The result is a very different gaming experience!

Fighters

02 Hundred Hours is played with 28mm miniatures, based on 25mm round bases.

All the model soldiers in the game are referred to as 'fighters' in these rules.

Fighters are divided into characters' (eg. officers, sergeants, spies, etc) and troopers' (everyone else - the rank-and-file members of your force).

Characters may be either your commander (every force has one commander) or subordinates (sergeant, second-in-command, etc).

Troopers may be sentries (the norm for defending forces) or regulars (the attacking force will only have regular troopers).

Abilities

Each fighter in the game has a range of ability scores that reflect their proficiency in different areas. Ability scores are represented by chevrons on a fighter's Recruitment card. Each score is either ✓, ✓ or ✓ being the best.

Aim — Accuracy when shooting ranged weapons

React — Used to duck and dive for cover when under fire as well as moving stealthily and patrolling.

Brawn — Physical strength and stamina, required for running and hand-to-hand combat.

Smarts — Used for spotting enemy soldiers, awareness and technical skills.

Guts — Bravery, grit, toughness – the will to carry on in the face of injury and death.

SAS Sergeant (character)

SAS Trooper (regular)

German Trooper (sentry)

German Heer Officer (character)

SOE Assassin (character)

German Dog Handler (trooper and a type of sentry)

Recruitment Cards

Each fighter has a Recruitment card, providing a convenient way to pick your force and key information used during the game.

Flag of allegiance.

Points cost to recruit into your force.
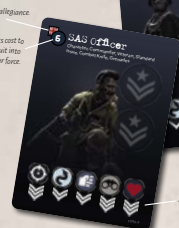
Keywords - extra information including weapons.

Space for Action token(s).

Special Rules that apply to this fighter (or in this case, pair of fighters).

Ability Scores.

Important Terms

Ready
A fighter that still has one or more actions yet to make this turn, is 'ready'. Once all actions have been made the warrior is 'unready'.

Friend and Enemy
On the same side and the opposing side.

Covert
A fighter with no Alert marker is called 'covert'. Unseen in the darkness, the enemy fighters cannot tell where they are.

Detected
A fighter with an Alert marker is considered 'detected', meaning the enemy has either glimpsed or heard them and now all enemy fighters have a fair idea of their position.

Line of Sight
What a fighter would be able to see if it was light.

Front and Rear
Fighters can normally only see, shoot or fight enemies who are to the front.

Clear View
Nothing at all in the way – neither terrain nor other fighters. See page 23.

In Cover
Within rough terrain or in a defensible position (eg. at the corner of a building or hunkered behind a low wall). A fighter must be touching the terrain in question to be in cover. See page 23.

Taken Out
When a model fighter is removed from the game after being shot or for any other reason, this is called being 'taken out'. They may be dead, but just as likely are too badly wounded to carry on the fight.

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BUILDING THE GREAT WAR FRONTLINE

Adam J. Sharp tackled the monumental task of creating a realistic WWI board with waterlogged trenches crossing the cratered earth either side of no man's land.

I am a lifelong history buff (by no means an expert), historical miniatures collector, painter, and gamer. I'm specifically an enthusiast of World War One history, and my favorite pieces of literature from this era include *Storm of Steel* by Ernst Jünger, *Good-Bye to All That* by Robert Graves, and *And We Go On* by Will Bird. These readings, plus many other books, documentaries, and museum visits, inspired me to build an incredibly detailed, hopefully somewhat accurate, playable, single-piece World War One game board in 28mm scale.

If I was going to commit to such a large building project for this period, I wanted a board that could simulate western, eastern, or other fronts of the Great War. I also wanted to create a theme that immersed players in some of the worst possible Great War living and combat conditions; this would better represent the harshness of the conflict and bring realism. With these ideas in mind, I focused on the mid to late war period with wet, cold, and winter conditions.

The board, dubbed the Great War Project, was started in March 2021 and finished by the end of the year. That's ten months and around 300 hours of work time. It is 4" deep and measures 5' across, and 4' 6" wide. The frame is made of wood and MDF board, so there is no risk of the surface bending.

THE BASIC BUILDING BLOCKS
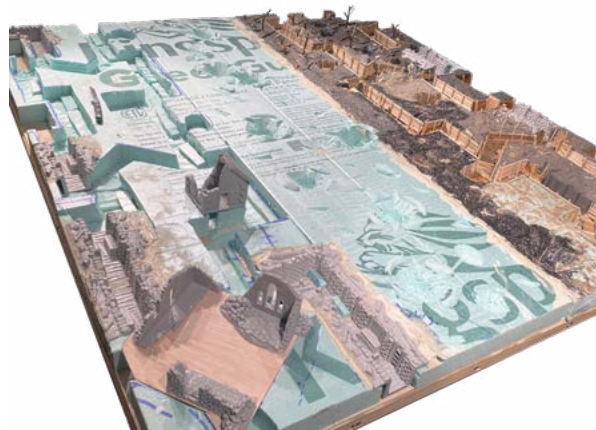
(Above) Most of the surface detail is built by carving up pieces of Green Guard insulation paneling and covering the shapes with a base mixture of DAP Dynaflex Ultra Advanced. This is an exterior sealant for windows, doors, siding, and trim, but for hobby purposes it mixes easily with grit, can be tinted with paint, and spread to make a very strong and durable non-cracking surface.

(Right) The trenches were mainly built from scratch. I used balsa, corrugated cardboard, and all kinds of other bits. I also used seven roughly six-inch pre-made trench sections from Acheson Creations. These terrific pieces are very well molded sandbag wall sections. These inserts helped the believability of the environment tremendously by adding highly detailed sections of trench that are completely walled in with sandbags. I blended these inserts into my construction and added some of my many homemade sandbags to these sections for a seamless transition.

(Below) Once all of the groundworks were built, a coat of black primer brought everything together, ready for basecoats and drybrushing with various brown tones - mostly at the colder end of the spectrum but with more warm browns present in the bunker interiors.
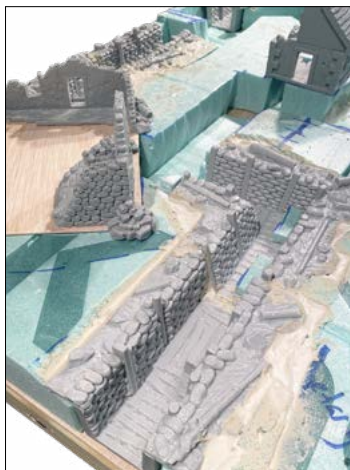
THEMATIC DETAILS

I discussed the terrible details of the Great War battlefields with my gaming and history buff friends to decide what could be incorporated into the board. I also pulled significantly from the books I've found so fascinating. I don't include these details to glorify war or celebrate the terrible side of battle; it was important to represent the harsh reality of WWI on the tabletop. Various points of interest are highlighted throughout the article and contextualized with some of the reasoning for their inclusion and the writing that inspired them.
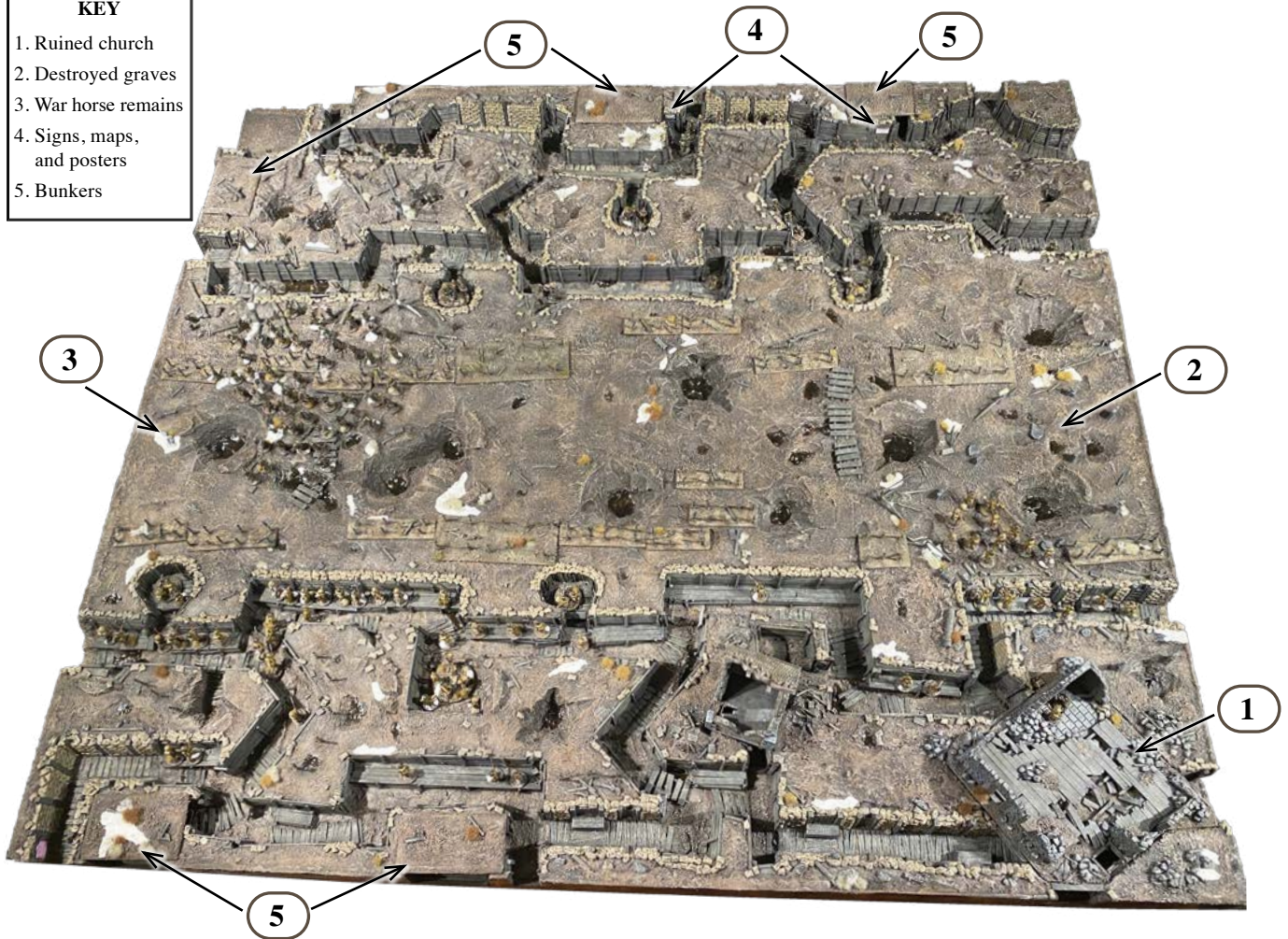
1. RUINED CHURCH

I wanted to represent the real accounts of churches getting consumed and destroyed by the expansion of the front lines, so I included a destroyed church. The walled sections are from Acheson Creations. Knowing that soldiers used cellars of buildings as bunkers, I built the church ruins to be removable; a large bunker in the cellar is revealed if you lift it off, and this is connected into the trench system.

PRODUCTS USED IN THE PROJECT

FIGURES AND PARTS

North Star Military Figures, Great War Miniatures, Brigade Games, Wargames Atlantic, Warlord Games, Company B Miniatures, Empress Miniatures, Copplestone Castings, Old Glory Miniatures, Forgotten Front Minis, and Secret Weapon Miniatures (German backpacks).

TERRAIN DETAILS

• Trench pack details, pig tails, wire: EWM Miniatures

• Wire: The Army Painter

• Stove for bunker: Berkshire Valley Models

• Insert trench sections, church walls ruins: Acheson Creations

• Bunker, trench details, rats, coffins, tables, food, beer, wine bottles, shelves, chairs, etc: Tiny Furniture Company

• Bunkbeds: Majestic Miniatures

• Grass and scenic details: WWScenics

• Horse bones: Bad Squiddo Scenics

• Coils of rope: Miniature Building Authority

3. WAR HORSE

There was widespread use of horses on the World War One battlefield; therefore, the terrible sight of fallen beasts of burden could be found. Many accounts speak of this feature, so I incorporated the bones of one such unfortunate creature into the board.

2. DESTROYED GRAVES

The church is surrounded by a graveyard area complete with shell holes that have destroyed and exposed coffins to reveal the bones inside.

4. SIGNS, MAPS, AND POSTERS

I incorporated several of these in the bunkers; they are historical trench signs, maps, and posters downloaded from museum websites, printed very small, and affixed to the relevant scratch-built signposts, table tops, and walls.

5. BUNKERS

Seven bunkers are present across the board; all have lift off tops and are mostly built around the edges of the table so that they can be easily viewed and utilized in gameplay. Bunkers in the Great War seemed to take many forms, from near complete ruins to very well built and furnished establishments.

"At 'C' Company Headquarters, a two-roomed timber build shelter in the side of the trench connecting the front and support lines, I found tablecloth and lamp again, whiskey bottle and glasses, shelves with books and magazines, and bunks in the next room."

Robert Graves, Good-Bye To All That

KEY
1. Destroyed forest
2. Barbed Wire
3. Waterlogged trenches and shell holes
4. Trench design, scale, and distance

1. DESTROYED FOREST

I have incorporated a woodland area that has been devastated by war and has little but gnarled and damaged trunks remaining.

"We reached the ruins of a village. Out of the hideously scarred soil of Flanders rose black, splintered trunks of trees, all that was left of what had once been a large forest."

Ernst Jünger, Storm of Steel

2. BARBED WIRE

I used four small plastic tubs of Battlefield Razorwire by The Army Painter to construct the 23 movable barbed wire pieces that are a total length of eight feet.

IMPRACTICAL BUT IMPROVED

A single board of this size is far less practical than several smaller modules to push together, but I can't stand cracks in between my gameplay surfaces, no matter how well constructed, so it had to be one-piece. I really pride myself on building meaningful detail into the terrain and a larger board with a singular purpose enhances that ability. These are the details that add to the gaming experience; I wanted this board to be loaded with meaningful accurate detail.

3. WATERLOGGED TRENCHES AND SHELL HOLES

I used tinted resin water effects to make them look muddy and used them to fill shell holes and trench base sections with tinted muddy water. I also incorporated several unfortunate souls found in the water filled shell holes.

"The way was littered with dead, their pale faces staring up out of water filled craters…"

Ernst Jünger, Storm of Steel

4. TRENCH DESIGN, SCALE, AND DISTANCE

I attempted to build two lines of trenches on both sides of the board to represent the front-line trenches, small connecting communication trenches, listening posts, machine guns nests, mortar pits, artillery pits, and second line support trenches. That's a lot to fit onto a board of this size while still allowing room for gameplay. I am happy with the result, though the distances between trenches is rather condensed. That said, the closeness of some trenches is well documented.

"The front trench averages thirty yards from the Germans. Today, at one part, which is only 20 yards away from an occupied German sap, I went along whistling 'The Farmer's Boy,' to keep up my spirits…"

Robert Graves, Good-Bye To All That.

TRENCH LINES AND SANDBAGS

I constructed 1,378 homemade sandbags and lined the board's 26' of trench line and seven bunker walls with them. Of the 26', only 3.5' of the trench are the purchased inserts, the rest are completely scratch built and therefore required a load of sandbags and balsa detailing.

OBJECTIVE MARKERS

These markers represent the supplies of wiring parties (troops sent into no man's land at night to conduct barbed wire work), weapons caches, medical supplies, and food and supply piles.

RATS

You can't have the Great War without rats and lots of them! Rats seemed to be everywhere and were often written about. Tiny Furniture Company, from Russia, make 28mm rats, so I purchased several and scattered them across the board.

"Rats we go after with steel traps. Admittedly, the beasts are so strong that they try and take the traps with them; their noisy efforts bring us charging out of our dugouts to finish them off with clubs,"

Ernst Jünger, Storm of Steel.

"It was an even worse place than Cuinchy for rats; they scuttled about 'A' Company Mess at meal time. We always ate with revolvers beside our plates, and punctuated our conversation with sudden volleys at a rat rummaging at somebody's valise or crawling along the timber support of the roof above our heads."

Robert Graves, Good-Bye To All That.

MINIATURES

I wanted to portray soldiers on the western and eastern fronts in cold weather gear. There are very few 28mm Great War era miniatures available in winter uniforms, so I decided to kitbash some using parts from various miniature ranges. North Star/Great War Miniatures (from Brigade Games, in the USA), Wargames Atlantic, Warlord Games, Company B Miniatures, Forgotten Front Minis, Empress Miniatures, Copplestone Castings, and Old Glory Miniatures all contributed to the finished collection.

Two armies of between 100 and 150 figures are complete - the British and Germans - while the often forgotten Eastern Front will be represented by a Russian force that I'm still working on.

Great War Miniatures make several packs of British figures in winter dress, so that worked out well. The Russians are all Old Glory, Copplestone Castings, and Empress Miniatures figures. No real conversions were needed for the British or Russian troops. I matched the paint and design of all the figure bases to the game board for consistency and overall realism.

KITBASHING THE GERMANS

Constructing many of the German winter troops took more creativity and time. Great War Miniatures make a couple packs of winter themed Germans for the early war, which I converted to mid and late war troops, but no companies make mid to late war winter Germans.

For many of the Germans I used torso parts from Warlord Games' World War Two Winter German troops, Forgotten Front Minis, and Company B Czech Troops, along with others. Wargames Atlantic's Great War arms, heads, and equipment were perfect to add the details. I also used backpacks from Secret Weapon Miniatures and other spares from prior projects (mostly Warlord Games bits).

REALITY VERSUS THE MINIS

It's helpful to consult historical images from eras where there are photographs. Here you can see some of my finished figures alongside their historical counterparts.

MONSIEUR LE MARECHAL TOURNANT

Colonel (Retired) Bill Gray introduces us to the fascinating French General Aimable Jean-Jacques Pélissier whose rise to prominence after the Napoleonic Wars took him to Crimea and France's most famous victory at the Malakoff.

On 16 May 1855, General de Division Aimable-Jean-Jacques Pélissier took command of all French forces in the Crimea. This came after future Marshal François Certain Canrobert resigned due to Napoleon III's constant interference.

The interference of a superior was not something likely to upset General Pélissier. His ascendency came after years spent avoiding, ignoring, or flagrantly disobeying orders. A series of bold actions that generally went against the grain (and sometimes set the grain alight) somehow saw him rise to the highest levels of command; these same actions would have led a less imposing man to a court martial.

Stanford University's Dr Gordon Wright notes that Pélissier, "was neither a yes-man nor a courtier type. Pélissier was a rough and ready bulldog who had won his spurs in Algeria; as the French say, he was a man of character, which is to say, difficult character."

This is understatement defined! One need only to look at one of his most notorious moments a decade earlier to see how Pélissier's bold character really put the French army on notice.

FROM SMOKED CAVES TO SCORCHED EARTH

On 18 June 1845, Pélissier was hunting down the Ouled Riah tribe after driving them from their homes. Several hundred fled into hiding in the Dahna Caves near Mostaganem, a port city in northwest Algeria. Rather than risk following them in, Aimable took a different, less nameworthy approach; smoking torches were tossed into the caves to encourage his enemy to surrender.

Intense negotiations followed but an impasse was the only result. Pélissier's response was to throw in more torches and literally smoke the natives out. Only silence followed, and when the French finally entered the caves, they found 500 of the tribe - men, women, and children - had suffocated to death.

Though the survivors were treated with care and treated humanely, Pélissier's deadly strategy sent shock waves through France; when the news reached Paris, Minister of War Marshal Jean-de-Dieu Soult was mortified. Even though Soult expressed his deep regret back at home, out in Algeria Governor General Thomas-Robert Bugeaud so approved of the effectiveness of Pélissier's actions that he promoted him to General de Brigade.

In 1852, Pélissier brutally punctuated his rise through the ranks when he directed the Siege of Laghouat. By now he had been promoted to General de Division (Major General) and once again faced holed up Algerian insurgents. Yet again Pélissier showed no mercy to his opponents, and as part of a deliberate scorched earth policy, like that employed by Marshal Suvorov when Russia took on the Poles, his men massacred the Laghouati defenders. The intent was to so effectively pacify the people of Laghouat that other Algerian tribes would rather negotiate than fight back. It worked, but it was a fervent and brutal attack against the people within the city.

Algerian tradition holds that an earring in one ear will protect a boy from evil; that tradition began at Laghouat. With boys being put alive into sacks and tossed into dug up trenches as part of the brutal French suppression, mothers would attempt to disguise their sons as girls; this included an earring in one ear.

AN EAGLE IN THE DESERT - AIMABLE-JEAN-JACQUES PÉLISSIER

Born: 6 November 1794 in Maromme.

Education: Attended the military college at La Fleche before enrolling at the Specialty College of St Cyr.

First commission: Second lieutenant of artillery in 1815.

After blitzing several military examinations in 1819, Pélissier was appointed to the general staff and provided service as an aide-de-camp in the 1823 Spanish campaign and the 1829 Morea expedition before his promotion to Chef d'escadron in 1830 after his first success in Algeria.

It would be Algeria where Pélissier's reputation would grow - that of an obstinate, short-tempered, stern disciplinarian who often won because of his tenacity and belief that he was never beaten. Despite this, he looked after his men, led from the front (getting wounded twice on campaign), and was recklessly brave.

His soldiers loved to talk about the time when an emotionally distressed officer lost his temper, pulled his pistol, pointed it at Pélissier's head, then pulled the trigger. The weapon misfired, after which the unflappable commander calmly said, "Capitaine, you are under arrest for a week because your weapon was not properly maintained!"

As the French say, "a man of character".

Then, in 1854, the Crimean War began; the rising star of the French army went … absolutely nowhere! Pélissier fumed, but he had not actively supported the coup that made Napoleon III Emperor of France and his motivations were seen as suspect. The culprit was politics, or rather Pélissier's lack of interest in politics than any lack of ability.

Marshal Canrobert and his predecessor Jacques Leroy de Saint-Arnaud were both qualified for the job, of course, but to the irascible, self-assured Pélissier only one man was fit for the position and it was not them! Nevertheless they had the appropriate military education, extensive service in the field, desire to prove their worth to France, AND had supported Louis Napoleon's coup and coronation. That was the deciding factor; Pélissier did not have that political cachet.

A DECIDEDLY FRENCH BULLDOG

After the winter of 1854, change was needed to shake things up amongst the allies in Crimea and get them moving. General de Division Pélissier landed a little late, on 9 February 1855, and was given command of the French I Corps d'Armee. When Canrobert (who, to his credit, remained as a division commander) threw in the towel, Pélissier was named head honcho of the entire French Army of the Orient, much to the delight of the rank and file and allied generals. "All the better, we can move forward," said the troops. Others chuckled that they could smoke the Russians out of Sevastopol.

For his part, Napoleon III expected Pélissier to carry on with his overall strategy of forcing the Russians into a decisive field battle. Pélissier preferred

continuing the siege of Sevastopol, which caused General Adolphe Niel to howl in protest. Niel had been sent to the Crimea as something of an Imperial Commissar, providing the Emperor's advice and wisdom, then reporting back to Paris if there was resistance. Pélissier's response was to publicly reprimand Niel at an allied staff meeting, order him not to contact Paris without the chance to see and censor his *communiques*, and a blunt threat to ship him back to France if this order was disobeyed.

Pélissier had already ignored the Emperor's telegraph to "explicitly follow the orders I gave you," so this latest affront incensed the French ruler. Napoleon telegraphed: "There is no question of discussing strategy between us, but of giving and obeying an order." The general in chief responded he could

Algeria 1840. Défense de Mazagran by Horace Vernet.

not perform his duties "at the somewhat paralyzing end of an electric wire."

Meanwhile, back on the field, with his British allies in support, Pélissier helped the Russian Mamalon, White Works, and Quarries fall by assault on 9 June 1855. An initial and ill-prepared assault on the Malakoff Redoubt was brutally repulsed by Russians on 18 June, but this proved somewhat a blessing in disguise, if a very costly one. The action convinced Russian General Prince Mikhail Gorchakov to risk a field battle with the French, which occurred at the Chernaya River on 16 August 1855.

The battle was a disaster for the Russians. The French, aided by the newly arrived and hard fighting Sardinian Expeditionary Corps (especially those superb, high stepping Bersaglieri), beat them soundly, inflicting 8,000 casualties while losing but 1,700 of their own. The battle also seemed to satisfy Napoleon - the open battle he desired was fought - so he left Pélissier alone to run the show.

And that show's final curtain fell on 8 September 1855. Pélissier was a general who learned from reverses and was never intimidated by them. He was adamant not to repeat the debacle of 18 June and directed his engineers to dig more siege parallels closer to the imposing Malakoff Redoubt, the key to the entire Russian defensive plan for Sevastopol. They did, with the final trench located only 20 meters away from the outer escarpment; so close the two armies could hear each other talking.

Evidently a frequent visitor to this little piece of real estate, Monsieur Pélissier himself and the very talented General de Division Pierre Bosquet, commander of the French II Corps, studied the enemy schedule. They determined that every day, like clockwork, the Russians changed the fortification's garrison at noon. To avoid overcrowding, the old garrison was marched out before the new garrison was marched in. Noon was set as the time of the attack.

French and British siege batteries bombarded the enemy throughout the day before and the morning of the assault in exactly the same manner as they had done previously. The first pounding came at 5am, the next just before dusk, thus luring the Russians into believing these were the two most likely times for any attack on their position. As the garrison changed at noon on the 8th, many Russians stacked arms and retired for lunch, thinking the bombardment's cessation meant safety. It was at this moment that 9,000 men of General de Division Patrice de MacMahon's 1st Division charged into the fort, Zouaves in the lead. British troops followed across 200 meters of

THE METZ CAMPAIGN - PÉLISSIER IN A FRANCO-PRUSSIAN 'WHAT IF'

After the war, Pélissier served as Napoleon's ambassador to Great Britain from 1858 to 1859, before being recalled to command the French Army of Observation. In the same year he returned to Algeria as its new Governor General. He died there in 1864, but would have happened had he lived at least another six or seven years?

Would he have been a candidate for command of the French Army of the Rhine instead of Marshal Francois Achille Bazain? As commander, would he have boarded a train for Metz uttering the words, "Nous marchons à un désastre." When facing the Prussians at Gravelotte on 18 August 1870 would he have declined to commit the French Imperial Guard? Would this battle have occurred at all, or would an engagement have happened on ground more of Pélissier's choosing?

This is a tempting 'what if' that could be played using your favorite set of Franco-Prussian rules. Putting a character with such strong command, control, and leadership abilities in charge of the French would be fascinating to see what kind of turning point he might be able to bring, to change the outcome of the war.

It would be simple to replace Bazain with Pélissier (using similar, game related characteristics as noted above) to alter the way battles played out. Imagine a contest where the will of a single, superlative soldier is thrown against the collective wisdom of the German officer corps in the guise of the general Staff. Might it have confounded them? Perhaps you can see Aimable French Marshal as Governor General of Berlin and spawn decades of further 'what if' options!

open ground toward the Great Redan, confirming the French success.

"The French were in the Malakoff before our boys had a chance to grab their guns," recalled Prokofii Podpalov who watched in horror from the Redan. "In a few seconds they had filled the fort with hundreds of their men, and hardly a shot was fired from our side. A few minutes later, the French flag was raised on the turret."

Most of the Russians who did resist were but mere teenagers from the 15th Reserve Infantry Regiment, 'seeing the elephant' for the first time and certainly no match for the 1st, 3d, and Guard Zouaves who spearheaded the attack.

Counterattacks came, of course, and they were particularly bloody with one Russian soldier writing, "the air was filled with a thick red dust from the bloody ground, making it impossible for us to see the enemy. All we could do was

fire through the dust in their direction, making sure to keep our muskets parallel to the ground in front of us."

A GLORIOUS END

Pélissier watched the final show in the Malakoff from the forward and extremely exposed position of the Mamalon. He knew it was enough. While the Great Redan held and other French attacks fell back, the Malakoff was secure.

French artillery began to position themselves inside to bombard the city, and the Russians evacuated the next day, effectively ending the war.

A grateful Emperor made Pélissier a marshal four days later, and on 22 July 1856 Napoleon made Pélissier a senator, awarding him the title Duc de Malakoff along with a pension of 100,000 francs per annum. He and MacMahon (for Magenta) were the only two officers given a victory title by Napoleon III.

DUC DE MALAKOFF SUR LE TABLEAU

Many rulesets have different ways to categorize the abilities of historical commanders and their supporting staffs. Ultimately, of course, it is the player who makes final gameplay decisions and lives or dies with their results; so, forcing a gamer to do stupid stuff because his historical counterpart did is normally a non-starter.

However, there can be attributes and dice roll modifiers to judge the efficiency of the historical staff system or encourage the player to act a certain way.

A gamer may not be keen on leading from the front, but if his historical character did and there is a large enough bonus in the game for doing so then why not? Here are some suggestions for using Aimable Pélissier on the tabletop.

BATTLEFIELD COMPETENCY

The French had a well-developed staff system for getting orders up and down the chain of command, but Pélissier's iron will and disregard for excuses ensured the process was always rapid. For this alone, when using a Poor-Average-Good-Excellent rating scale (or equivalent), he should always be classed as Excellent. This is especially critical for games using formal orders rules.

OBEDIENCE

This rating is more for Pélissier's subordinate commanders and concerns any rules that judge whether a lower ranking officer will follow the orders of the boss.

Given Pélissier actually dismissed and sent General Bosquet to the rear

for protesting the first assault on the Malakoff (he was later reinstated), obedience should be automatic for any lower echelon commander. Bosquet could be an exception, but even then he should carry some sort of designation indicating obedience most of the time.

In multiplayer games, I would also allow the Pélissier character/player to supersede the command and directly control the units of uncooperative colleagues, though you should only do this on occasions if you want to keep your teeth! You probably don't terrorize your gaming friends with the same intimidating presence, gravitas, and self-assurance that Pélissier possessed.

COURAGE

Pélissier was wounded twice, actually went to the forward set of trenches to evaluate the Malakoff himself, and positioned himself at the most exposed piece of real estate available to

manage the final assault on the Russian fortification. Should the need arise for this man of character to attach himself to a unit and lead from the front, a rating of Charismatic or similar would not be inappropriate.

AGGRESSIVENESS

If you can't already guess at the level of aggressiveness, you haven't been paying attention! Allow combat units within a certain table distance from Pélissier to receive a one level bump in their morale.

Hopefully, this will encourage the controlling player to charge a bit more than normal with those formations. Someone once described the Imperial Guard Marching Band that served the first Napoleon as being able to "make a paraplegic charge." Pélissier was a one-man band at the gates of Sevastopol, accomplishing similar motivational feats through his stubborn focus and tenacity.

THALASSA PREVIEW

NAVAL BATTLES IN THE ANCIENT SEAS

Ricard Fortun - boss and game designer at Room17 Games - visited the *Wi* office and gave James an advanced preview of his upcoming Ancients naval wargame *Thalassa*.

"I've been developing *Thalassa* for a year now; I was in Lockdown and things had slowed a lot, so I had time to really dig in and read about the period. The more anecdotes and information I took in, the more I got inspired, and I started to write these rules. They were just for me, at least at first - an excuse to play with some new figures… It's amazing how things change and how quickly things move ahead!"

We look down over an impressive array of ships and figures while Ricard describes his new project's origin. Like ancient Greek Gods from *Jason and the Argonauts,* we change the fate of the battle beneath us as we talk, moving the miniature ships, drifting our enemies into islands, lining up rams, and making decisive boarding actions, all aided by fleet command dice that further manipulate the action on the tabletop.
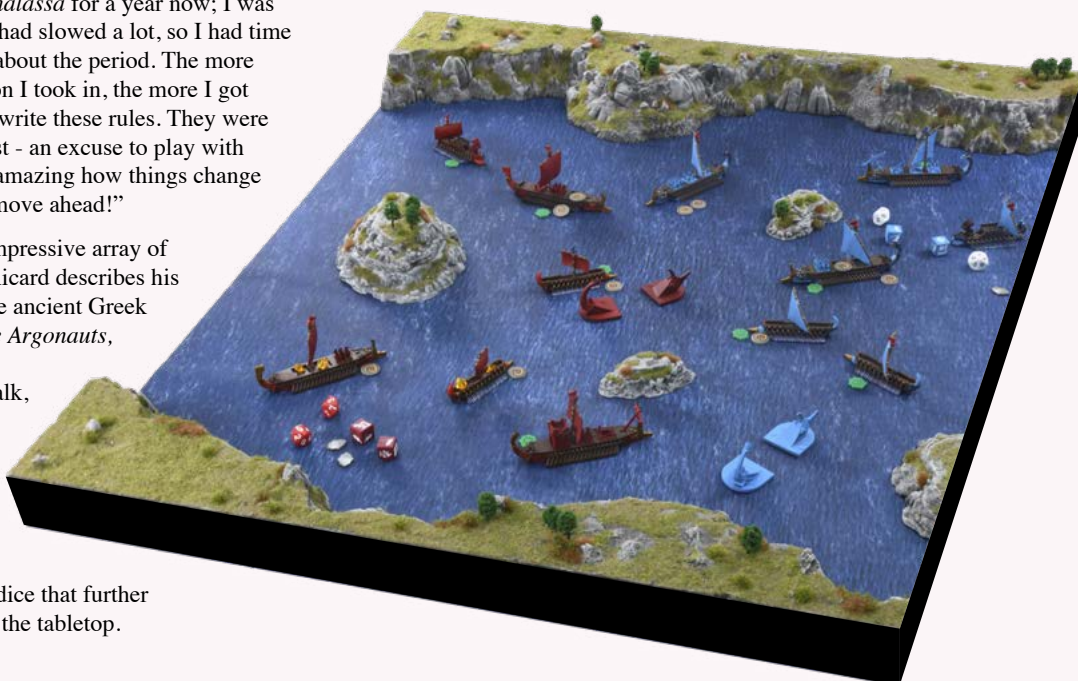
"For the last five years, I've been producing board games professionally, but I'm a wargamer at heart so I wanted to get this right - my first proper tabletop wargame," he explains. "The hobby element in wargaming is so important to me, and I think that's been lost a little bit recently with so many one-piece minis out there for just about everything you could need. I wanted to develop a range that players could paint easily to get gaming but also offered the options to embrace the details if they wanted to. 6mm is the perfect scale for this as you can still make out just enough detail on the figures - from the ships to the men who sail on them - while having a practical game.

"The real surprise was that this is an area of warfare that is largely untouched," Ricard tells me. "Not only could I not find any skirmish Ancient naval games, but there also weren't even ships available to download and 3D print when I wanted to start playtesting. That was exciting; rather than worry about being the first to take it on fully, I saw it as an opportunity. The important things with any new project are to give it your best, approach it with passion, and make something that you want to see. Hopefully that will bring in more passionate followers - those who have been waiting for it and those who didn't know they wanted it until they saw it!"

FULLY CUSTOMISABLE WAR GALLEYS

The 'elites' on the tabletop before us are the Triremes; these mighty war galleys are impressive ships with varied crew options that can be slotted into spaces on the deck, along with their trademark rams (of varying design) used to puncture the hulls of their enemies.

Each Trireme is a heavily modifiable kit, and Ricard is busy working out the production nuances to get them produced as a plastic frame. This will include many different crew variances, which are vital to gameplay rather than just offering cosmetic pizzazz.

Each stand of crew represents a different option in the game, and the first challenge, before you even set your fleet on the tabletop, is to decide the makeup of your ships. Triremes offer the most granular detail for those who enjoy tinkering, but they are not the only ocean-going options in Thalassa. Agile skirmishing Penteconters can rapidly skim over the tabletop to flank the enemy with ease, while Siege Barges, bedecked with oxybeles and other artillery, bring a ranged spin to the game's many tactical options. Ricard has models for them all.

ACTIVATION AND DICE

Dice are at the core of the gameplay. D10s are used to execute basic actions, referred to as mastery tests. The first of these activates your ship. Fail this roll and your ship will stall and be utterly immobile unless you opt to use a flag or drift command dice, explained shortly. Other actions - determining combat results, morale, and tests like putting out fires - are resolved on a basic 4+. You can spend recruitment points before the game to increase the mastery level of your ship and reduce the required roll.

Each roll is offset by negative modifiers, such as chaos - a core mechanic that represents the way ships are gradually 'fatigued' through the battle and will struggle to pass tests that were initially easy.
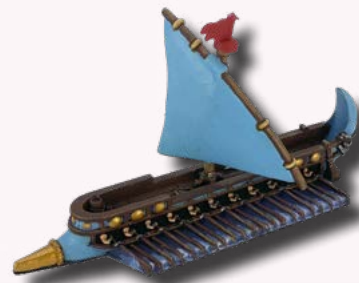
Penteconter (above) and Siege Barge (below).
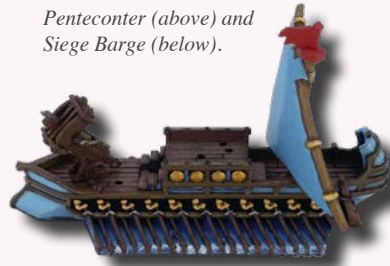
"It's the D6s that are the most interesting bit though. These are your more specialist fleet command dice," Ricard says as he and I each distract ourselves by rolling the 3D printed dice he has designed. "You'll have a limited number of these available - usually five - rolled at the start of each turn; they modify the actions of your fleet, but they can also be used to hinder your enemy. Each facing has a different effect."

Below: Command Dice next to a damaged and ablaze Trireme.

Left: Trireme and its gaming profile.

DENOMINATION	MOVEMENT	MASS	STRUCTURE	HULL			ARMOUR SAVE
				FRONT	SIDE	BACK	
Hellenic Trireme	3"	6 (7)	3	6	6	6	6+

Ram
Add +1 to the Mass when ramming (already included in the profile). +1 Armour saves against impacts received on the Front Hull.
Crew Slots (3)
The Hellenic trireme is manned by a hand of four sailors crew stands that can be upgraded with the options available on the fleet selector list.
Foredeck slot (1)
Can select up to one foredeck upgrade from the Common Upgrades available.

CREW	RESILIENCE	ARMOUR SAVE	ATTACKS/ ARMOUR MOD	SHOOTING/ ARMOUR MOD	RANGE
Sailors	3	8+	3/-	-/-	-/-
NOTES					

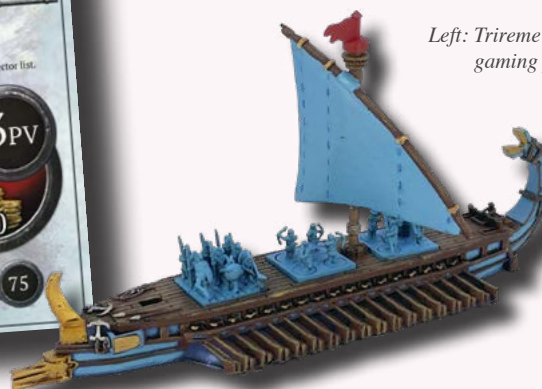**Mastery Level (Novice)**
The starting Mastery level of the crew of a Hellenic trireme is Novice (4+)

2PV 3PV 50 COST 75

Through these dice facings, *Thalassa* adds dramatic moments to the game:

Drift: This order represents the use of the current to shift the position of a ship. A player can burn this dice and resolve a drift action with one of their ships or force an enemy ship to drift during the operations phase (see more about that on the next page).

Discipline and prayers: This order represents the absolute commitment of the crew to their gods and their duties. A player can discard this and receive a blessing token. These blessings allow you to remove chaos tokens, re-roll a D10, and more, or they can be cashed in at the end of a phase to gain a victory point.

Fleet order: A player can use this to resolve their fleet special rule. Each fleet benefits from this result in a different way, bringing play variation. Athenian fleet orders act as blessings; the Spartan fleet order allows them to activate a ship ahead of the activation phase, the Cretan fleet can resolve drifts a chaos token, and so on.

Manoeuvring: Allocated to a ship to make it move or turn following the normal rules for manoeuvring. This action is in addition to the three manoeuvring actions a ship normally has. The player with the most initial flags also has the initiative in the turn.

Any: A player can always discard a fleet command dice, regardless of the result obtained, to re-roll a mastery test.

These dice, particularly the fleet orders, define the way your ships play in a more historically and period appropriate way.

NATIONAL DEVIATION

"I'm very proud of how the game touches on a lot of gaming and flavour elements through minimal systems," Ricard smiles as he explains those dice, then touches on another element of command he enjoys: "Each nation gets a fleet commander. These commanders give the ship they are on a boost to its mastery roll, a blessing token, and have one of three specific characteristic traits: a strategist can change one command dice to a different result each turn, a hero gets two extra dice in his command ship's boarding pool that hit on 2+, and an inspiring leader generates an aura of mastery so that he can offer his 2+ mastery roll to other nearby ships. The characteristic of your commander, along with your chosen nation, creates a lot of variables to consider."

THE AGE OF ~~SAIL~~ CURRENTS

The ships all have sails on the models, but Ricard explains that is more a visual flourish to keep the ships interesting because this is a rare beast; a naval game where wind is not a factor in the rules.

"There's no wind mechanic to impact your galleys because the motion of a Trireme was down to the 160 or so men below deck pulling the huge oars. When we finally make the plastics, we have plans for folded sails but there are many anecdotal tales of ships pulling up on a beach before battle and removing their mast and sails completely. That huge piece of wood and massive bit of linen was a major resource and removing it would keep weight down; speed and dynamism were the most important things."

The oarsmen afford the ships in *Thalassa* a good bit of movement; each can make three manoeuvres and a captain's order when they activate. The movement of all basic ships is 3" and they can turn 90 degrees in a manoeuvre if they wish. Captain's orders can be issued before, between, or after the manoeuvres and let your ship fire if they have crew such as archers or oxybeles, ram an enemy, rally to remove chaos, or fight in melee if the ship is engaged in a boarding action.

DRIFTING WITH THE CURRENT

There's an extra tactical consideration in the game that takes some of the properties of wind and condenses them into a simple mechanic - drift. Ricard lights up whenever he talks about this one, clearly proud of the way it affects the game.

"A predominant current is in place from the start of the game; this impacts the drift actions that ships can make. Drift shifts the facing and positioning of ships and can be used to a player's advantage to perfectly line up a ram or get out of trouble, but your opponent can cause an involuntary drift on your ship (using one of their command dice) to put it out of position. If you talk to people who have played the game, it is drift that they remember because it's a simple system that gives them the potential to really screw their opponent over!"

Ricard chuckles as he uses a poker sized card to illustrate the workings of drift. It is placed to the side of the ship that the current would push them into, and this is the drift zone. The player performing the drift can then move that ship anywhere as long as it doesn't turn more than 90 degrees and the mainmast stays inside of the drift card's area.

In gameplay, this can shunt ships to collide with islands or each other for plenty of mayhem, but it can also be used to execute unexpected ram attacks as you cunningly change the angle of approach.
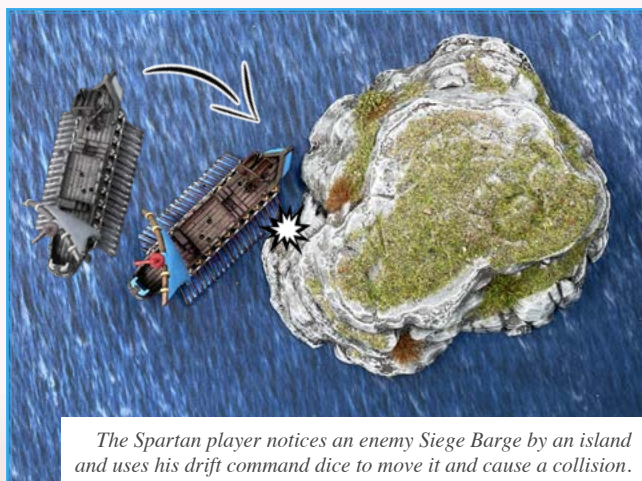
The Spartan player notices an enemy Siege Barge by an island and uses his drift command dice to move it and cause a collision.

NATIONALITY TRAITS AND PIRATES

As well as the special fleet order rules, each nation gets a trait inherent to its nationality: a Corinthian ship that activates on a ten will gain you a blessing, Spartan ships ignore chaos when boarding, Cretan ships that remain stationary can double the range or boost the accuracy of their ranged weapons. This makes for intriguing combinations, but the possibilities expand when you bring in allies.

Up to a quarter of your recruitment can be spent on ships from another nation. This means that the core fleet order special rule of your major nation still applies to them but combines with the different nation trait of your new ships.

Should you take an ally of the nationality you are facing - a Syracusan Trireme against a Syracusan fleet, for example - then that ship will change into a freebooter. Instead of getting the usual nationality rule, these pirates get +1 to all mastery rolls.

Gettin' Jibby With It!

A jib sail upgrade helps your ships without the need for specific wind direction rules. "It's a potentially huge advantage as the jib lets you drift to port, starboard, aft, and stern regardless of the current's direction. We're still working on the cost balance for this one as it's an interesting and powerful tactical element. If I put jibs on a Trireme, they really have to be included on all of them as I won't know which of them will need to use the jib until the game is underway. At that point, I'm making the choice between jib sails or affording another barge! It's ultimately about resource management and there are always decisions to make. You can't drift if you don't get a drift result on your command dice either. That's a one in six chance, so while drifting with a jib is very powerful there's no guarantee. This is reflective of every part of the game; it's all about decision making with an enormous number of possible combinations."

RAMMING SPEED!

We get onto the subject of ramming - another major element in the game and a great way to damage your opponent as rams use a template; the more distance away you ram from, the more damage you have the potential to cause. Ricard suggests that may not be the best course of tactical and historical action though:

"Unless you are looking at a crazy all-out battle like Salamis between the Greeks and invading Persians, where they just wanted to take the ships out, these fights were about the spoils of war. The Peloponnesian War, for example, was all about resource management, and a Trireme was very expensive to build and maintain. Battles would only happen in good weather, and things like the harvest would take priority too - let's stop the war and get some apples!

Below: A Spartan Trireme rams into a Cretan vessel as battle escalates.

A Trireme lines up for a long range ram against an already crippled enemy and will almost certainly sink it and split it apart.

The game has models to represent a Trireme that has been split in half.

GETTING THE GAME TO THE PLAYERS

When the UK's spate of Lockdowns ended, Ricard finally had the chance to share the game with friends; it became clear that the *Thalassa* rules had potential: "My first ports of call were Roger Gerrish [*Seven Days to the River Rhine, Judge Dredd Miniatures Game, Doctor Who: Exterminate!* - Ed], who I have worked with on many games, and Anders Johansson, who I worked with at Battlefront. They were the two target audiences as I saw them. Roger is the sort of person the game is made for, really, while Anders is more of a tournament meta player. He's also Swedish, so if your game's rubbish he's not going to be scared to tell you! They both seemed to like it a lot.

"It's all about resources: human resources, metals, other equipment, so the rules for ramming reward players for crippling ships rather than just sinking them. Crippling means that a structure point is removed; you get two victory points for crippling a ship and three for sinking it. With ships having three structure points it can be tactically sound to ram for two victory points then back off, ram again for two more, and a final time to sink the ship for a total of seven points. You want to milk - depending on the scenario - as many victory points as possible from your enemies. That's a big decision though because crippled ships aren't disabled; they can still move and counterattack. If you ram a ship, you give it a chaos token to disrupt it and have the option to board, or you can back away, but ramming is a captain's order, so you can't do it more than once in an activation. Perhaps boarding is the safer option.

"If a large Trireme takes a big run up and rams a Penteconter, it's likely that the damage will split it in half and sink it. This is a far safer option, and while it gets less victory points overall than multiple rams, it may instantly swing the tide of battle in your favour."

"Roger really loved it; he immediately started to come up with ways that we could expand the game, and you know you're onto something when that happens. The last war galley engagement was the Battle of Lepanto in the 1500s, so we have huge scope. Imagine this game with cannons! He even pointed out the American Civil War and dreadnoughts crashing into each other. But that's getting ahead of things; he got hooked and is now working with me editing the rules. Everyone who went on to play the game made it clear that they saw many strategies and gaming options, so I started to consider it as a possible tournament game. We've furthered playtesting at local wargaming groups, and in Spain there's a playtesting group too who are very into *Flames of War,* so they are pushing the competitive side more."

WHAT'S NEXT?

With playtesting well underway, and the game at a competitive and increasingly balanced state, you may be wondering when you can get your hands on *Thalassa*. A Spartan frame is in the works, but plastic tooling is likely to take some months; this will eventually form a basic starter set and should include Triremes with optional parts to indicate the command ship and other details.

Ricard can't resist listing nation specific options he'd love to add but quickly laughs at his own enthusiasm: "A Trireme is a Trireme, it doesn't need variation, but that's not stopped us making figureheads and tails for Sparta with sturdier builds, owl figureheads for the Athenians, Cretan parts with bull designs, and more - not historically accurate at all, but it looks cool. We'll hopefully get there, but until that can be done in plastic, there's 3D printing. The files can go online."

We'll be back later in the year to report on *Thalassa*'s progress, bring you more details of the game, and hopefully a whole lot more.

Right: Tower and artillery pieces.

Clockwise from left: Hoplites, crew, and bows.

THE SILVER BAYONET SOCIETY
PART FIVE
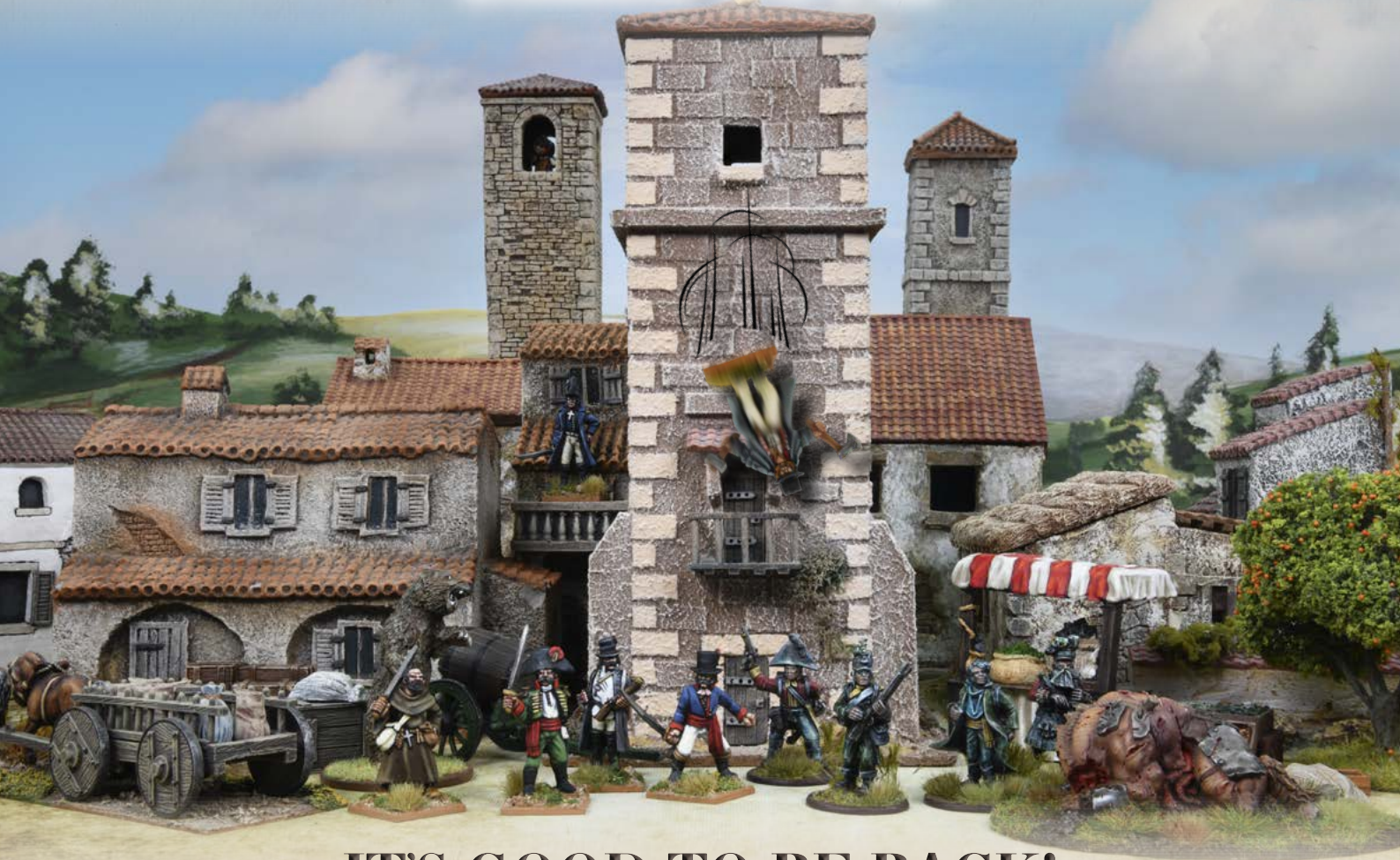
IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK!

Campaign GM James is back to cover The Silver Bayonet Society's penultimate month of adventures in the Peninsular War.

With a lengthy holiday and Omicron related isolation keeping us away from the tabletop (and each other), it was wonderful to return to *Wargames Illustrated's* gaming room and get back to our *Silver Bayonet* campaign. We were finishing the Prologue in *Wi*409's article (*Wi*410 was a hobby focused installation) and then outside circumstances put a halt to things. Players' units had established themselves in the early gaming; heroic, blundering, lucky, and comedic characters had emerged; clues had been gathered; and some of 1808's Peninsular War battles had been skirted and gamed around.

Months later, bloated on Christmas turkey leftovers, but starved of gaming, our players returned hungry and ready for miniature based tabletop fun. I progressed their units to the later stages of the Peninsular War and the dice started to roll!

MOVING ON IN THE BLINK OF A RANDOM NUMBER GENERATOR

This month, our coverage explores the Silver Bayonet Society's adventures in the first half of the main campaign; it's 1811, units are hardened, the plot has thickened, and we've got a load of gaming to report on. But first, I should explain how we crammed the events of 1809 and 1810 into such a short amount of gaming time and arrived at the aftermath of the Battle of Barrosa, 26 March 1811. Well, we didn't!

It was always my intention that the Prologue would set the scene, offer players time to learn the rules, and establish characters in each unit. Once those games were through, the unit's Officer would remain, but I'd let the players pick the soldiers they wanted to retain - a minimum of three - and ditch

any 'deadweight'. We'd then re-join the action years later with their leader and chosen soldiers returning to battle after some time out, called back into action in 1811 (along with some 'new' recruits) to face the powers that had begun to rise in the Prologue. This meant that injuries to figures, badly judged advancement choices, and general tactical blunders from our early games would not completely ruin the chances of players succeeding in the later games.

To represent the undocumented adventures between late 1808 and March 1811 (I determined that each unit would still have seen scattered action throughout the war and advanced their skills accordingly), I turned to that most trusty of GM aids, a random number generator. This 'rolled' how many tiers of

IMPROVED CLUE COLLECTION

The more games we've played, the more we've come to realise that clue placement dramatically impacts the quality of *The Silver Bayonet* gaming experience. In our early games, we used the regularly recommended 'cross' placement - one clue in the centre of the board and two nearer the deployment area of each unit. This saw games start with figures sprinting to the nearby clues in turn one and uncovering them, uncontested, in turn two. Four of the five clues had very little impact on the game.

To counter this, I increasingly skewed games toward the scenarios from the rulebook that have clue placement across the centre line of the board or based around an objective location. Failing that, I used a line placement even when a cross was suggested.

This makes clues more exciting because both units tend to reach the same clues in the same turn. If an opposing figure is within an inch of the clue, or the model trying to uncover it, that clue can't be investigated. This leads to lots of melee action and potshots as players contest the clue collection quite viciously.

As we have moved on with the campaign, I added a house rule so that even 'safe' clues become areas of tactical consideration:

Before investigating a clue, each opposing player can activate a model out of sequence (may not be activated again this turn). This model can make a ranged attack at the model due to investigate the clue or make a move or sprint at them. If the result of this means the model cannot investigate the clue for any reason, the investigating model (if still alive) may choose to perform a different action.

Above: Matt's Veteran Hunter uncovers a clue after a safe sprint. Going ahead even trying this will bring risks as other players will be able to open fire or charge at him!

advances each model had made, up to tier seven, as well as any unfortunate injuries, maladies, madness, or extra equipment they had gained.

The first activity for the returning players was to pick what to do with those experience levels. Most unit commanders bumped up the amount of Recruitment their Officer could spend. This allowed them to add expensive new soldiers to their units. Specialists such as Veteran Hunters, who were beyond the spending budget of the Prologue, joined the ranks, though some of the riflemen and infantry from early games remained.

Other experience gains were pumped into Health and Melee or Accuracy (depending on the soldier's specialism), but attributes were chosen too. Marc's British favoured the Expert Climber and Master of Cover attributes, allowing his unit to scurry up and over terrain or stay safely behind it when necessary. Dan's Spaniards chose Indefatigable for many of their melee specialists to ensure they wouldn't be worn out in hand-to-hand combat. Matt's Russians decided might was right and took Strong; this allowed them to do more melee damage, and combined with Hard to Put Down, he also got more rerolls when negating damage so could battle on for longer.

The players were given a new handout detailing their return to Spain and were quickly back at the gaming table.

AFTER THE BATTLE OF BARROSA - INTO THE FOREST 26 MARCH 1811

Your unit is back on Spanish soil to follow up on reports of strange happenings in the woods where the Battle of Barrosa took place. Unseen dangers lurk in the trees where locals once foraged, hunted, and searched for firewood and building materials. These are not earthly beasts or the natural hazards of the war; the touch of the Harvestmen is here, something evil has taken root, caused dozens of deaths, and left the populace in a state of terror.

A set of large animal tracks have been located; something prowls these woods. Your unit must take up the hunt and head into the trees to kill this creature. You will bring at least some peace to the people of the area and might acquire information that will further your investigation of the Harvestmen.

Much to your chagrin, cracking undergrowth beneath men's boots can soon be heard from different directions. Inquiring yells into the leafy unknown are responded to in foreign accents. It seems you are not the only unit investigating the woods. A volley of insults in a mixture of languages fills the air. The atmosphere is almost jovial as soldiers from each unit try to one-up each other with the vulgarity and creativeness of their insults, perhaps to break the tension, but a sudden and alarmingly close howl pierces the gloomy depths of the forest.

Your unit scurries to take up defensive positions and prepare for battle.

Games of *The Silver Bayonet* can include a huge variety of terrain, and I covered this board with a mass of individually based trees. Many of these are from Debris of War, but I added others along with custom hedges and rock piles (also from Debris of War) to offer the units more cover.

A table like this can be confusing for players in the heat of battle due to so much scatter terrain, so I simplified things. Any two or more trees that touched at the top would block line of sight through them but any models under the trees would count as in cover. Moving under those trees would count as moving through difficult ground.

1

1. Three of the returning units clashed in this first game back after the break. Dan's Spanish, Matt's Russians, and Nick's British all had plenty of *Silver Bayonet* experience by now, but their commanders had clearly forgotten quite a few rules when play began. I could have done a better job of reminding them to take their reactions when being attacked, I was rusty too, but I did step in to lay down the law at times. Here, in this clearly candid and unstaged picture, I remind Matt that he has already activated half of his unit; his werebear must wait. This moment, along with many other errors and misplays, made for an unpredictable, entertaining, and thematically appropriate return to the field; the soldiers had clearly gone soft in their downtime!

2

2. I had foolishly given the briefing (on the previous page) to the players before they picked their special equipment; all of them stocked up on silver items. Their prediction that they might be hunting a werewolf meant that when the beasts from Scenario 8, Loup-Garou Surprise, arrived they were rather less terrifying than I'd hoped. The Brit's Supernatural Investigator, Lord Byron, was rushed by the first werewolf but the rest of his unit swiftly dispatched it from range.

3

Above: Have you heard the one about the Russian orthodox priest, the Spanish monk, and the Cossack who go into the woods together?

3. Thankfully, the players showed no mercy towards each other. Where werewolves were mere distractions, the terror of man and his devices of war proved more deadly. Huge brawls broke out in clearings; here Matt's werebear has transformed, charged, and killed the nearest enemy target (Dan's swordsman whose finesse was no match for massive claws!), then been peppered with shot. Further melee broke out around the bear's body, and Champions of Faith fight to prove who is most righteous. Both were 'rewarded' with injuries at the end of the game!

4

4. Each player split their unit so that roughly half their number attacked each opponent. This made for challenging decisions when activating only half of their figures. Should they make a decisive action on one flank and leave themselves vulnerable to attack on the other, or take the safer option and split activations evenly? Here Nick considers shooting at Dan's Commander and Irregular, to stop them uncovering the clue they are next to, but he knows Matt's Russians are approaching just off camera. The aeons long friendship between Dan and Nick meant that, generally, they'd opt to get stuck in and try and demolish each other!

5

6

5. On a board this packed, line of sight often became a matter of debate. Matt was more inclined to long range attacks and had to regularly uproot my carefully planted trees to better check what could be seen. Other players advised, and Dan was especially eager to 'help' whenever Nick was being shot at! If all else failed, we rolled a dice and let fate decide if Matt could take his distant shots.

6. At the end of the third turn, four Dark Wolves rushed the players and another werewolf appeared from the woods. This is exactly as written in the scenario rules, but the players all accused me of trying to target them by adding extra difficulty to the game. I've clearly been doing my GM job properly if they think I'm out to get them!

The extra beasts could do little against the masses of silver shot and blades they faced. The game ended with Dan's Officer dispatching the last werewolf, leaving the locals free to roam the woods again.

FILLER GAME - LAST STAND

Not every scenario in a campaign needs modification and backstory. Sometimes the players took on simple 'filler' battles to progress toward the broader story beats. I placed these 'en-route' to the major battles they'd investigate more thoroughly, and they were randomly chosen. One of the more interesting games was the Last Stand scenario, taken directly from *The Silver Bayonet* book. The only adjustment I made was to reward the players with extra handouts if they killed the Changeling or secured the Book of Cain. These extras will all come into play in the finale.

We used buildings from Grand Manner and delved into the Debris of War tree collection once again to create boards that represented the South of Spain. The hills are by Gale Force 9. Dan's Spanish were on home ground, and he had laid out the terrain. He faced Nick's Brits by the Mediterranean Sea, but knowing the land didn't prove advantageous. Nick observed the board from above, noticed he would have more cover if he deployed behind the wood to the rear of the farmhouse, and left Dan wishing he'd spread the terrain out more evenly!

1. Dan won the initiative and opted to move half of his Spaniards directly towards the farmhouse and its bandit defenders, but quickly realised his unit was decidedly short on firepower. Trading shots with bandits in a strong defensive position became a dangerous business and left his advancing troops exposed and vulnerable in the fields.

Above: Nick celebrates as Dan erases some health from his Sapper.

2. Nick's British unit also advanced, and a combination of more firepower and better luck saw him take out some bandits from long range. He also wounded a couple of Dan's soldiers for good measure.

Shaken by this, Dan moved the other half of his unit on a circuitous flanking manoeuvre through the hills surrounding the Farm. He later abandoned this safety conscious advance to move his Guerrilla and Infantryman directly to the defences, but the diversion meant they arrived too late to have any real effect on the game. Decisive action is key in your *Silver Bayonet* games!

Right: We used a Deadzone Plague 1st Gen Mutant to represent the Changeling.

3. Whenever a bandit was killed, a playing card was turned; one of these was a Joker. When the Joker was revealed, the dead bandit would turn into a Changeling. Tension built before each card was drawn as Dan and Nick chanted a complex song they composed especially for the occasion, based on a crowd favourite tune from hit British TV show *The Masked Singer*: "Turn the card. Turn the card. Turn the card". Such creativity!

Seven renditions of "Turn the card…" later Nick uncovered the Joker; the Changeling sprang into life. By this time, only one other bandit remained - the units had killed three each.

4. Remaining models moved into the farmyard to tackle the pink monstrosity that had been revealed. Nick's men kept on shooting, while Dan's Officer and Champion of Faith went in arms flailing and blades flashing, neither very effectively.

We found an excuse to use a 'what're the chances' dice discovered at the bottom of the *Wi* Dice Bag to decide who the Changeling would attack. We could have used a standard dice, of course, but Dan and Nick had excited eyes as wide as those of children on Christmas day as they rolled this new discovery. "Will it attack the Officer?" they asked. 'Unlikely,' said the dice. "Will it attack the Champion of Faith?" The dice's 'Likely' was all that was needed, and the Changeling swiftly eviscerated the holy man!

5

5. Lord Byron, Nick's Supernatural Investigator, finally (and cowardly) took down the Changeling from behind; it then dropped (don't ask where from!) the tentacle-tastic Book of Cain. In our campaign, this was changed to a more campaign suitable item, rolled for on a table of artifacts I had devised (in the downloadable campaign pack on the *Wargames Illustrated* website). In this case, Nick added a book of underground defences and weaknesses to his collection.

A simple game but one that shows you don't always need to tinker with the existing scenarios to have a lot of fun. Dan was at a distinct disadvantage due to his lack of long-range weapons, while Nick used the 'dive for cover' reaction to good effect throughout the game to move ahead a little quicker, gain positional advantages, and make good use of that cover.

ANOTHER FILLER - TROLL BRIDGE

Our in-house painter became an out of house painter for a while due to car trouble; this meant that Marc missed some gaming sessions. He reluctantly relinquished unit control to wargaming newbie and campaign wildcard Joe who took the fight to Matt's Russians around a bridge that was the home to a troll.

Joe couldn't remember the correct names for each of Marc's models, so he renamed them based on *The Lord of the Rings* characters … sort of. Thus, the legend of Rifleman extraordinaire Billy Gimli was born. Billy valiantly defended the troll bridge against the Troll, a transformed werebear, and Matt's Officer for two turns. He would eventually go down fighting, from a lobbed rock to the skull, but he helped the British salvage a moral victory from the absolute trouncing they got! How much of a trouncing? I uttered the words "Ok, you've activated a model, that's half of your unit done - over to Matt." Ouch!

Find out how we made this Spooky House by checking out the video on the Wargames Illustrated YouTube channel.

AFTERMATH OF THE BATTLE OF SAGUNTUM - 1 NOVEMBER 1811

Eventually the players' investigations took them closer to the end of 1811 and nearer to the conclusion of the campaign. Tensions were high as news of the disastrous rout at the Battle of Saguntum reached the units. Marshal Louis Gabriel Suchet's crushing victory gave the French army the clear advantage in the region; that would make things even more dangerous for the players, with more than just nasty beasts to defend against, they'd also have to be on guard against a French attack.

I modified Scenario 9 - Infested Monastery - to highlight this change of events; the game I created pit the players against a French group who had captured some of their soldiers. This was a chance to bring the French (who I had originally controlled before ditching them to focus fully on my GM duties) back into the games and ready them for their part in the finale. French Infantry replaced the scenario's usual Bandit defenders, a French Officer took the place of the Possessed, and each captured soldier from the Spanish and British units was held at a random clue counter.

Joe films the action. We'll have some coverage of this game in a Silver Bayonet Society YouTube video when the campaign wraps up.

1. It's become a bit of a running joke in the campaign that there will never be an objective or occurrence in the story arc that doesn't see at least two units arrive in perfect synchronicity. Sure enough, as Marc's Brits marched to rescue their Supernatural Investigator and Veteran Hunter (above right) from their French guards (Officer shown above centre), Dan's Spanish arrived to free their Sapper and Rifleman (above left).

3. On one particularly dramatic occasion, Dan's Champion of Faith (who often seems to be in the thick of the action) scurried up the middle tower, investigated the clue, and revealed Marc's Veteran Hunter. Tight melee combat ensued with Marc attacking and Dan fighting back (seen above). As neither injured the other, Marc's Hunter was pushed back. With a window behind him, we rolled to see if he was pushed into the wall or out the window (seen below). Out into fresh air the defenestrated Veteran Hunter fell! As Marc had given him the Expert Climber attribute, the fall only took off most of the Vet's health rather than all of it!

2. What ensued was a great fight, perhaps the best of the campaign so far. The real beauty of this game was that the towers spanning the centre of the board had clues at the top of them as well as French defenders. This made for some brutal, close quarters combat in and around the buildings. There was action packed combat for the middle clue, a massive, felled minotaur.
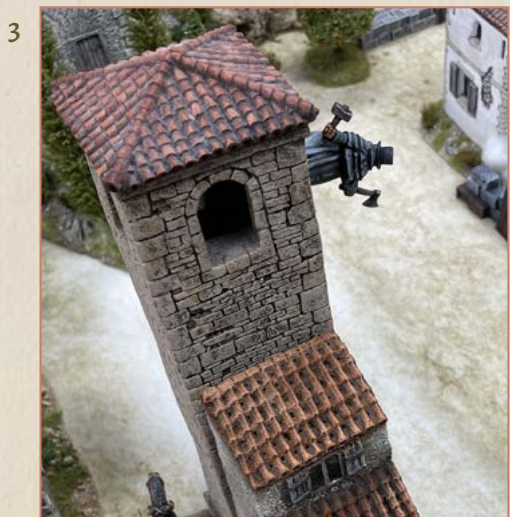
PAWN TO QUEEN, CART TO BEAST

In every Monster Phase of the prisoner rescue game, Dan moved a horse drawn cart and buxom driver forward 6 inches across the centre of the board. This provided a screen of moving cover and became a point of focus for some of the fights. I saw an opportunity, and when the cart finally reached the other end of the board, I informed the players that just as a pawn becomes a queen if it travels across the whole board in chess, a cart becomes an enraged werebear. Dan, whose Veteran Hunter had one health remaining and was stood right next to that board edge, wasn't particularly happy with my ruling, but it certainly added a lot of unexpected drama to the end of the game!

Above: The cart makes its inexorable way across the board …

Right: …and magically transforms into an angry werebear when its journey is done!

4
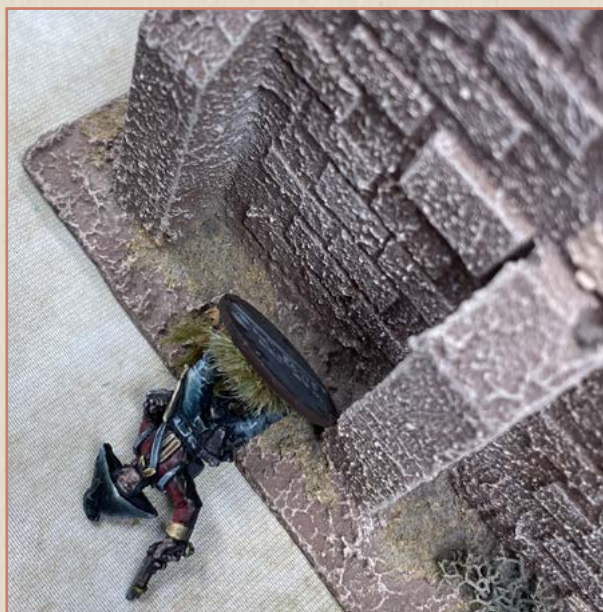
4. Marc's officer fared less well when he faced similar circumstances at the top of another tower. The French defender rolled a crit to send him off the top and down to a bone crunching loss of health. Seeing this 'fun', I made a mental note to bring more verticality into the finale's games!

Despite tower based mishaps, the players staggered off with their rescued comrades, ready to fight another day, but the French would now be more alert to their activity in the region.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Next month's Silver Bayonet Society is the finale, and there's a suitably climactic, potentially cataclysmic, battle to report on. Every single one of the units has a part to play in the last battle; I'll reveal some of the story details I've kept secret so far (not wanting to drop spoilers), I'll reveal how the clues and items players have been collecting add drama and challenge to the final game, and I will get some concluding thoughts from the players.

MAKING THE MEDITERRANEAN

James Morris shares how he added realistic coastal detail to his El Cid gaming set-up.

For the Partizan show at the end of 2021, I'd decided to put on a large El Cid battle with my gaming compadres. Having settled on refighting the Battle of Bairen - a 1097 clash between El Cid and the Almoravids that was fought on the eastern coast of Spain - I needed some Mediterranean coastline to act as the focal point of the game. A few years back, I'd sold off all my terrain boards in favour of cloths, so I now required a 'drop on' terrain piece to represent the water.

I wanted something shiny to contrast with the grainy look of the terrain cloth. I had already made plenty of water features in the past by painting and varnishing very smooth wood (such as MDF), but in this case I was worried about warping, which would ruin the effect.

ACRYLIC AFTERNOONS

Fortuitously, I had some 4mm thick clear acrylic sheet in the loft. I had bought this from a local plastics merchant when my kids were tiny to act as a safety barrier at my house - cut to size, they conveniently blocked off the gaps in between the (rather wide) Edwardian banisters on the landing. With my children now being big enough not to fall through the banisters, I decided to recycle some of the acrylic sheet into the coastline of the Costa Blanca!

Having roughed out the outline of the sea with a marker pen, I then cut a curving coastline with the finest blade of my electric jigsaw bevelled at a slight angle. As the sea section was destined to be over one metre long, I opted to have a join between two pieces to make the finished terrain piece easier to transport and store - this was achieved by simply butting up two (factory-cut) edges of the acrylic against each other at right angles.

WORKING BACKWARDS

The key idea was to paint the sea onto the underside of the sheet so that the thickness of the acrylic, when viewed from the other side, would create the illusion of depth but retain a reflective top surface. I did a small test piece to practice the technique and work out a logical order before getting stuck into the main project, which was carried out in the garden over a couple of sunny days.

Planning the painting stages was vital as everything needed to be done in reverse, so I spent some time studying photos of the area using Google Earth and holiday snaps. I began by dotting brown spots in some places to represent rocks under the water, which was followed by patches of sandy paint for the shallowest patches of water on the edge of the beach. After

this, some white was stippled on to represent the crests of the waves. With these complete, multiple layers of blue-green were then added to develop the depth: lighter towards the shallows of the beach and darker as deeper water was reached further from the coast. Everything was painted with a mixture of craft acrylics, although the main weapon in my armoury was Daler-Rowney's excellent Phthalo Green, which has a translucent quality and gives superb depth when applied in layers.

With the painting done, I could flip the sheet over and see the result of my efforts.

BEACH READY

I added a layer of very fine chinchilla sand and clean cat litter - to represent rocks - to make the beach. This was applied with wood glue before basecoating and drybrushing it in the appropriate sandy colour to match my cloth. My sand stuck well enough, but if I was worried about adhesion, I could have sanded the acrylic first to get a more secure bond.

1.

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OUR DAY IN THE SUN

With the terrain now complete, everything was ready for the Partizan show. Despite the hordes of figures on the table, the main talking points of the day were the colourful Mediterranean coastline and the Almoravid boats that spent the day peppering El Cid's men with arrows. The acrylic sheet was perfect for an easy-to-transport, drop-on piece of terrain, and a far more practical proposition than creating the whole table from sculpted boards. Although this is the first time that I have used acrylic for this purpose, it certainly won't be the last. I can see rivers, bogs, and swamps working well with this technique, but first I have plans for more coastline to add to my collection. Alaska will most certainly require a different palette to the Costa Blanca!

If you'd like to see more about the El Cid game and my other hobby and terrain-building activities, please check out my blog: **mogsymakes.net**

SURFING THE COSTA BLANCA

The finishing touch was to create textured surf at the crests of the waves, which involved mixing a paste of wood glue, white paint, and Woodland Scenics snow flock. Again, while looking at reference images of the area, this paste was applied to the waves with a spatula and an old brush to create the illusion of movement and add some additional three-dimensionality to the sea.

DESIGNER'S NOTES:
STRENGTH AND HONOUR

Mark Backhouse takes us on a journey, beginning with his newly found love of 2mm scale wargames, and ending with the publication of a new set of rules for gaming the sweeping battles of the Ancient Roman World: *Strength and Honour***.**

Over the years I have played a wide variety of games and scales, but in more recent times have found myself drawn to smaller scales and the possibilities they can offer. A few years ago, I discovered 6mm, which in itself was a revelation. As Pete Berry of Baccus 6mm always points out, you have to paint the units as a whole rather than focus on the individual figures, and that leads to a shift in mindset in the way you consider the battle, and the battlefield, as a whole

TINY-TASTIC

In recent years, I have been experimenting with even smaller scales, in particular 2mm. Previously, I had always connected such tiny scales with games of poorly based and painted figures, which provided a pretty uninspiring canvas for gaming. However, I'd been inspired by the rolling and realistic terrain used in Bruce Weigel's 19th Century games [see *Wi*329 to

admire some of Bruce's work - Ed] and I ended up developing a participation game based around the English Civil War and the Siege of Portsmouth in 1642 using 2mm figures. The game was very well received (even winning an award at Partizan) and, interestingly, opened up all kinds of possibilities that aren't really achievable in games with larger scale figures. Rather than just focus on a section of siegeworks, as I'd have to do in 28mm, I could represent the whole city and the surrounding districts; sailing ships could be seen
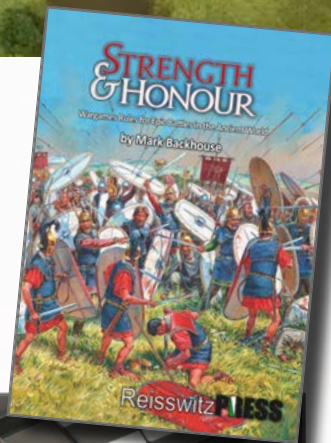
Above: The award winning Siege of Portsmouth game at Partizan. Mark Backhouse on the right, Sidney Roundwood on the left.

off-shore, fortifications, huge baggage camps, a number of villages, and even a castle, presenting the whole picture of a city under siege. What's more, I could have a 1:1 ratio of real troops in the battle with all of the units present represented. It was a revelation that got me thinking about how smaller scale did things that the larger scales, much as we all love them, cannot.

THE PULL OF MICRO-MINI ROME

I have had a passion for the Ancient Roman World, especially the Late Republic and the Early Principate, for a long time. Whilst I've gamed all kinds of other projects - Biblicals, Dark Ages, Medieval, English Civil War, Napoleonics, Colonials, and both World Wars - ultimately, it's the Roman world I keep returning to every few years and trying to consider how best to game them. I've enjoyed many different rulesets, although nearly all in larger figure scales. However, I was often left thinking how these battles bore very little resemblance to the bigger historical actions of the era. In particular, I noticed how in larger scales they often neglected the historical formations of the Roman World. Twenty-four legionary figures might be a cohort, or in even more abstracted games a whole legion. This seemed something I wanted to challenge and rethink.

I started off by experimenting with making my own 2mm troops based around proper formations. With no figures, or actually whole units in this scale, available 'off the peg', I made my cohorts using 2mm depth MDF bases with a scored topping of greenstuff to create a sense of texture. With a clever paint job, they made a pretty passable

cohort of four or five hundred legionaries. While up close Kevin Dallimore won't be worrying too much about the competition, from a distance of a couple of feet - a wargaming general's eye view - they looked really convincing and brought something of the aesthetic I wanted to achieve. With a very small fiscal outlay, I managed to build two scratch-built experimental armies to get playing with. Even now, with companies like Warbases producing ready-made units in this scale, the outlay is very small when compared to larger scales.

Of course, building the armies is the relatively easy bit; the real challenge was finding rules to game with. While the 2mm figures as individuals are obviously ridiculously small, the legions had a footprint exactly the same as 28mm *Impetus* units. I'd originally thought of using a system similar to *Principles of War* to simulate a gradual deterioration over time of a unit's cohesion and capacity to fight, but in the end my initial playing around didn't quite work as I wanted and seemed too clunky. Several more rulesets were tried and abandoned, and the project got shelved.

TAKING THE BULL BY THE HORNS

Sometimes a good break is what is needed, and a few years ago I found the ideas that had been rattling around my head began to congeal into something that had me getting my armies out again. Inspiration came from a diverse range of rulesets that I had enjoyed over the years. Games such as Arty Conliffe's *Crossfire* and Jervis Johnson's *Bloodbowl* had mechanisms in them that seemed to provide a starting point. I adopted a turn sequence that involved activating units

until it failed a test, then the initiative jumped to the opposing player. While the initial games were played on a normal table, I found I was able to play much faster using a gridded battleground, and this helped to bring in the linear aesthetic that I wanted to focus on for the larger battles of the Late Republic.

I'd also been playing a number of Too Fat Lardies games, and was keen to emphasise how command and control might work with huge forces as well as challenging the somewhat outdated view that the Roman army was a mechanical force that worked in a completely ordered way with little battlefield friction. I wanted my battles to be a bit more than "bloody drills", and capture the difficulties of controlling tens of thousands of men. Crucially, this all had to be done in a way in which big battles could be played on small or normal sized gaming tables. In 28mm I will never be able to game Pharsalus, Philippi, Carrhae, or Cremona, but in 2mm using *Strength and Honour,* this can all be achieved, and even a big battle can be completed easily in an evening of gaming. Better still, both the armies can fit into a small box file so that the game can be set up and cleared away rapidly at the club.

I was keen to focus on a morale system and experimented with a card driven system where cards were collected as things went wrong. In the end, this evolved into one of the most exciting aspects of the rules, which works really well in ramping up the tension. I was very fortunate in that a number of friends commented on the rules and were kind enough to hear me sound out my ideas. Mike Siggins, a games writer and columnist for many years with this very

Above: Strength and Honour gaming at SELWG 2021.

magazine, was particularly kind with his time and very useful for drawing out my design philosophy and refining it. The original rules were given the title *Homunculus Est* - something akin to "You are a little man" in Latin - and passed out to a few friends to have a play with. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and I thought I might have something worth developing and publishing.

I'd asked Richard Clarke of Too Fat Lardies and Reisswitz Press about self-publishing rules, and he was kind enough to give me an hour of his time on the phone talking through his experiences as a publisher and game designer. At the end of the conversation, I was wondering if I really had the time or ability to do it all myself, and he then offered to have a look at it and see if it was worth taking further, possibly publishing them through Reisswitz Press, the sister company of Too Fat Lardies. Richard came down to my place on the South Coast when there was a brief lull in the first Lockdown and we gave them a spin. I was very pleased when he said they had real scope and were starting to challenge many gaming preconceptions. It's always good to have a positive response from an established game designer, but Richard was also exceptionally helpful, taking part in many playtests, giving me some fresh perspectives, and adding to the design process to help me add further polish to the rules.

The first thirty or forty games were mostly solo affairs, but soon I realised that I needed to get some serious playtesting going. I was very fortunate to be able to communicate with a group of about fifteen playtesters spread around the world who helped to test out ideas. Knotty problems in the rules were ironed out and new ideas were contributed. Big breakthroughs came with the way to depict skirmishers and how they acted in Ancient battles, thanks to David Hunter, and I'd also managed to build in some interesting pre-battle deployment rules that recreated forming a battle line. One huge milestone was reached when much respected wargamer Henry Hyde suggested the name *Strength and Honour*. A reference to the famous line from the film *Gladiator*, this iconic and memorable name stuck, and what was a collection of ideas really began to feel like a coherent set of rules.

Another significant breakthrough came when I developed the Command Board system that allows the players to pre-set the ethos of their armies on the eve of the battle; was their intent to be focussed on combat or on fighting a battle of manoeuvre? Would they revert to ruses to try to wrong-foot their foe? While as a commander your influence on the battlefield is limited once battle is joined, this allows players to make critical decisions during the battle and greatly improves the repeatability of the scenarios.

GOING GLOBAL

While much of the last two years has been under a Lockdown without conventional gaming at my local club, I've been fortunate to take part in plenty of playtesting by embracing technology and utilising platforms such as Zoom to run games. This has provided some interesting advantages. Significantly, it has encouraged me to play with a far larger range of opponents in a wide range of countries, including games with people in the USA, Canada, Norway and Scotland as well as mates from all over England. The wide range of play-testers has helped to rectify issues quickly and combine innovative ideas from a really imaginative pool of creative people.

Using a battlefield with a grid has actually allowed games online to work brilliantly as the odd inch or centimetre here and there are not important as movement is by squares on the battlefield. Whilst gaming online might lack some of the human connection you get from playing face to face, it has been a really exciting and unexpected benefit to the process. The playtesting was a long process, but between us we managed to play through well over a hundred games and experiment with a wide range of armies.

In fact, the playtesting has been symptomatic of a very modern process, as with few wargaming shows happening to show off *Strength and Honour* to the wargaming public, the internet has provided us with a link to the hobby. The Facebook group, which I set up to post news as I went through the development process, has taken on a life of its own. As I type this, nearly 1,400 members have signed up, which whilst we all love our 28mm and 15mm figures, shows that there is also a real space in the hobby for smaller scales, and not just as a cheap or space saving alternative. I've been

Above: At a figure ratio of 1:1, the Roman Legions look an impressive sight when arrayed for battle.

Above: Game Designer Mark umpires a game of Strength and Honour at SELWG 2020.

pleasantly surprised by the way a truly global gaming community has lent its support to the game. I think the very different aesthetic of the epic scale 2mm battles drew them in initially, but I'd like to think they stayed for the rules!

Others have stepped up to run games, like Maurice Kent who took *Strength and Honour* for its first run out at Historicon in the USA; at SELWG in November, I was able to give the rules their first 'official' run out as part of the Lard Zone at that show, and already we have plenty of games scheduled at shows through 2022.

SO HOW DOES STRENGTH AND HONOUR PLAY?

Unlike many other sets of Ancients rules, the game focuses on very big battles. The legion is the core unit at the game's heart. They move as a unit, typically in a triple *acies* formation of several thousand legionaries in ten cohorts. As a general you don't focus on the plight of individual centuries or even cohorts but instead on how the legion itself is performing. This isn't a game of micromanaging small groups of warriors or particularly subtle tactical

intricacies, but of commanding a tribe of 7,000 ferocious *Iceni* warriors to charge forward with a single command and wave of a spear. It's ideally suited to refighting historical scenarios, and the main rulebook has plenty of those to get you started.

The core rules focus on the period between about 105BC and the reforms of Marius through to the end of the period in which the legion fought as the main tactical unit, roughly around 200AD. I plan to widen this with further material to cover the earlier and later Roman periods so that you will be able to refight the battles of Hannibal, Pyrrhus, and Constantine.

Carefully deploying your army into a coherent battle line is really important before the battle starts, and this provides for an intriguing game within a game in which you seek to create a broad frontage to avoid being flanked, while concentrating enough strength at key points in your line, to hopefully allow you to hold the line in the key places while punching hard in others. The system crucially creates a pre-battlefield situation that often mirrors the images you get of Ancient battles. Commanders

will need to think carefully about where to place their best troops. Just like in real Ancient battles, it's pretty tricky to carry out a drilled redeployment in the face of the enemy. The big formations of troops used in the game also don't always move precisely as you'd like them to, and even ordering a line of 30,000 trained legionaries directly forward isn't an automatic given and can result in a scrappy advance. The player then needs to make an immediate decision; if it's worth halting and re-ordering the line or seizing the initiative and maintaining the momentum of the advance.

Some of the barbarian armies can be even more impetuous and once ordered forward become hard to manoeuvre in anything but the most direct fashion. The general has a limited influence to affect the battle but can improve the coordination of their army through expending Command Points at key moments in the battle. The number of these available is limited based on the quality of the force and its leaders, and when spent they are not replaced, so a commander is wise to consider when to try to use their influence. Invariably, the

We have been very fortunate in that supporters from around the world have contributed to help this whole project take legs, not least figure manufacturers. Marco of **Korhyl Miniatures** in Italy and Tim of **Lazercast** in Australia started developing their own ranges of 2mm figures to complement the rules, and Martin and Glenn at Warbases also stepped in to produce the superb **Antonine Miniatures** explicitly for the rules.

The photos here show the official Antonine Miniatures range of Strength and Honour figures, available from Warbases.

battle becomes more confused and you are forced to rely on the hard fighting of your troops and the individual commands of their own unit leaders and training. Here the armies of Rome tend to have an advantage, yet in fighting quality their opponents are often their equals, and often numerically superior.

It was an unusual event for entire legions to be destroyed even in large battles; this was more often the exception than the rule. Instead, units in the game tend to be disordered and retire before a cataclysmic rout breaks out at the end of the battle. As the battle develops, each army collects a series of unseen Setback and Disaster Cards as bad things happen to them. These cards pile up during the battle until your opponent believes that you have surpassed your Army Break Point when they might get the opportunity to force you to reveal your unseen hand of cards. Neither side knows what's on these cards exactly, and this simulates the way a commander might have a feel for the morale of their army but be taken by surprise by their steely determination

to stay in the fight or flee in a cowardly flight! The resulting tension and exciting reveal lead to a dramatic conclusion to the game as both sides attempt to predict when their opponents will break. Call the reveal too early and your opponent can discard cards, prolonging their ability to stay in the fight: leave it too late and your own exhausted troops might break first.

The advantage of going small with these rules and using 2mm, 3mm, or 6mm troops is that you can allow for huge battles on a sensible sized table that also has the space for manoeuvre, reserves, and genuinely open flanks. This gives your games the sense of a real battle rather than an artificial construct designed for competition gaming. Terrain is easy to construct, plays a critical role in securing flanks, and provides a real obstacle for the big formations used in the game to fight around. An entire army can hold some of the hills in the game, and a sense of the scale of some of the Ancient battles fought over several miles of battlefield can be realistically portrayed.

STEP FORWARD CAESAR (OR BOUDICA)

So, if you want to try refighting some of the great battles of Marius, Pompey, Caesar, or Hadrian these might be the rules for you. With over twenty army lists to choose from, the Romans are not the only potential army and come up against a wide range of varied opponents. If working your warriors up into a frenzy before an aggressive charge is your thing, then look no further than the Gauls, Dacians, Germans, or Ancient Britons. Or will it be the tormenting light horsemen of Numidia or swarms of Parthian horse archers that capture your imagination? Maybe the last fading Successor powers of Pontus or Ptolemaic Egypt will win you glory on the battlefield? The ultimate challenge is obviously the many Civil Wars of the period, be they fought between Marius and Sulla, Caesar and Pompey, or Septimus Severus and Clodius Albinus at the twilight of this period. Whichever army you choose, you'll be fighting for *Strength & Honour*!

CLASSIC CITADEL ELEMENTALS

Marc dug these Citadel classics out of the *Wargames Illustrated* miniature vault and painted them for our 'facing the elements' theme with curved scratch built backdrops.

This project was quite a treat, but it was also a challenge, amplified by the intimidation factor that working on classic miniatures can bring. These Nick Bibby sculpts are some of Citadel's iconic releases from what many consider their glory days; I didn't want to make a mess of them! They were released in 1984, around the same time as I was born, and though they've matured like a fine wine, it must be said that some of the definition and styling of the sculpting shows its age a bit. Things have come on a long way since then in the detailing and the definition of production casts, and I had to work around some of the more ambiguous areas when creating my paint effects. But enough of my preamble, onto my favourite of the group!

EARTH ELEMENTAL

This is an aptly strong looking sculpt and was a pleasure to paint. The main technique here was to recognise the texture and adjust my painting style accordingly. I usually apply my highlights in smooth and graduated transitions, but to reflect the hard, sharp edges and density of the rock, I used an abundance of edge highlights. These aren't just straight perfect lines; some are intentionally more jagged and cut into the surfaces to add more texture.

I also subtly changed the tone of the paints across the model. It gets warmer to its central and lower areas with colder tones on top. This is a good way to bring more interest to what is essentially a very basic figure.

Marc's paints: Citadel Contrast Basilicanum Grey, Scalecolour Burnt Sienna, Reaper Blackened Brown, Reaper Redstone Shadow, Vallejo Orange Brown, and Scalecolour White Sands.

See the Elementals without their backdrops later in the article.

MY DIVERSE ELEMENTALS PAINT SET

I used a huge range of paints from various brands to paint these showpiece figures. It's always good to use your favourite paints if you can because you'll better understand their properties. I made sure to match my 'tools' to the element in question. For the Earth Elemental, I dug into my collection to find the paints that I knew had a high matt finish as this would add more substance to the rocks. The Water Elemental has plenty of inks and glazes as I know that these will make it look wetter, and I also used a glossy mixing medium. AK Acrylics provided a very smooth look on the Fire Elemental because of their consistency and finish, while the Air Elemental got a bit of a mix to represent the ever-changing nature of the wind.

WATER ELEMENTAL

I found this one tricky. How often do you paint water? The big challenge was to represent not just the depths of the water but also the whites of the foamy areas. Where I opted for hard edge highlights on the rock of the Earth Elemental, this figure was stippled to look softer and more fluid. To do this, repeatedly 'stab' at the figure with your brush tip in a controlled manner.

I brought some green tones to the depths by using my favourite Daler Rowney ink - Marine Blue - in the mix. This gives what is a relatively small figure the impression that it holds the depths of the ocean.

A bonus of using the ink is that it adds a little bit of gloss to the finish, but I took this further by varnishing the whole figure in satin then stippling on gloss with a brush in some areas to add more reflectivity. For the other Elementals, Earth got a matt varnish, Fire satin, and Air could really have been any option but I went for matt.

Marc's paints: Aero Color Neutral Grey ink, Liquitex Phthalocyanine Blue ink, Daler Rowney Marine Blue ink, Scalecolor Despair Green, Innsmouth Blue, Surfer Orc Flesh, and White.

FIRE ELEMENTAL

This one is my least favourite figure of the bunch, but I did my best with it. The key to painting flames is to reverse everything you know about painting figures! I started white and painted most of it yellow, then went back in with a wash of white to add more hot points in recesses.

A drybrush of orange became a guide for the rest of my brushwork and the rest of the painting was applied to the higher points in increasingly dark glazes to smooth it out. The smoke is quite dark to contrast with the rest of the model and match up with the black points of the background.

I spent ages matching my fire palette to the colours in the background so that the piece would be harmonious in the final display.

Marc's paints: Aero Color Red Madder Dark ink, The Army Painter Dragon Red, P3 Cygnus Yellow, AK Burn Orange, Medium Orange, and Pastel Yellow, Liquitex Titanium White Ink.

AIR ELEMENTAL

The Air Elemental was the only one of these models I started to paint before I'd chosen the backgrounds. This means that it doesn't quite fit as well into it's environment as the others and in some ways I quite like that. I did go back in at the end to bring some of the background's tones in with stippling on areas such as the base with pinks and yellows.

The real challenge here was creating motion in the painting to match the tornado effect sculped on the model. I added whites and highlights in bands; these get quite impressionistic on areas like the belly where swirls are hopefully visible.
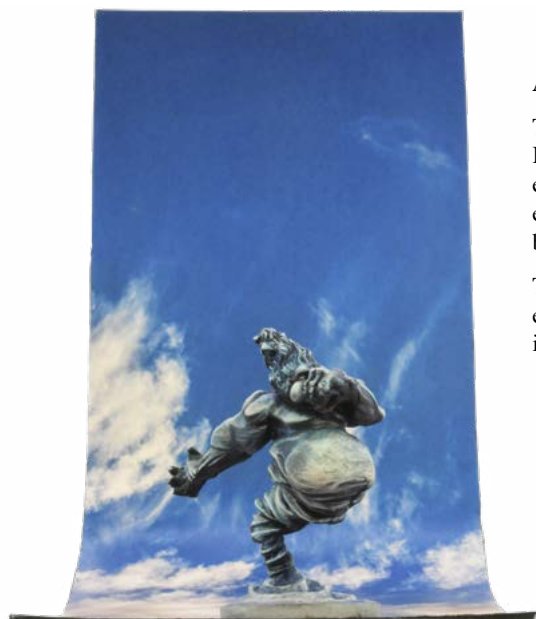
Marc's paints:Liquitex Phthalocyanine Blue ink, Aero Color Sunbeam Yellow, Warcolours Red Glaze, Scalecolor Field Grey, Scalecolor Nacar, AK Pastel Yellow, Scalecolor White.
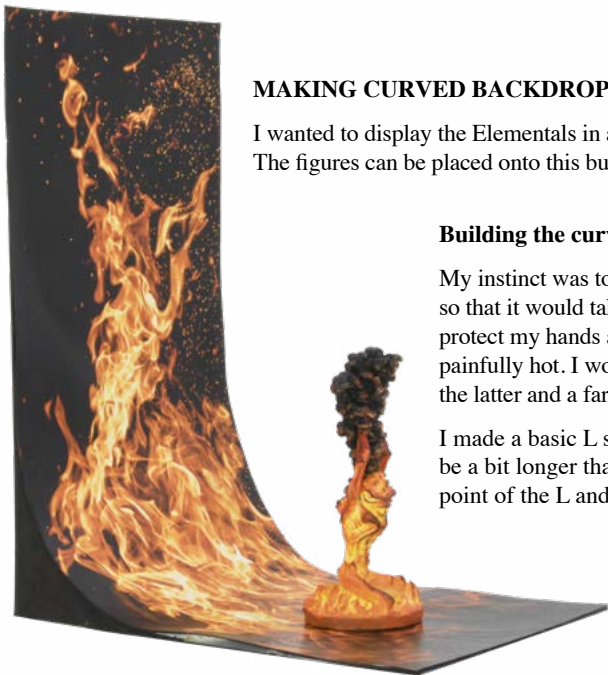
MAKING CURVED BACKDROPS

I wanted to display the Elementals in a suitable environment so I built a curved display for each model. The figures can be placed onto this but are also ready to be removed and viewed or gamed with too.

Building the curve

My instinct was to heat up a sheet of plasticard and bend it around something cylindrical so that it would take on the curve shape when it dried. Unfortunately, I had no mittens to protect my hands and the plasticard would stop being flexible as soon as it ceased being painfully hot. I would either need to blister my fingers or find another option. I opted for the latter and a far easier solution presented itself.

I made a basic L shape support from the plasticard and then measured a final piece to be a bit longer than the hypotenuse between the sides. I glued this in place at the high point of the L and the front of the base and the tension pulled the rest of it into a curve.
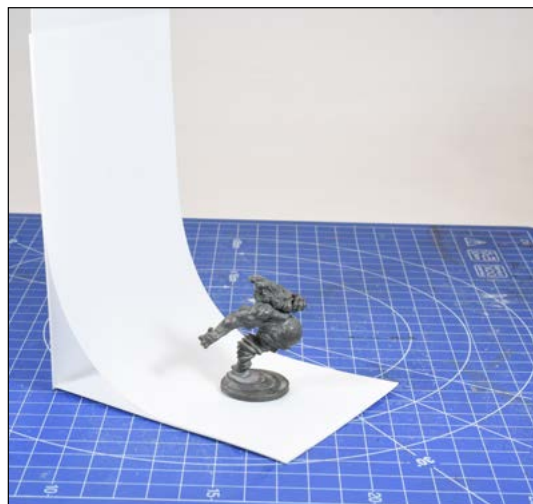
The only downside of my final method that heating would avoid is that it's difficult to create totally uniform and matching curves across multiple backdrops.

Filling the gap

I initially used Milliput to quickly plug the space left between the plasticard at the sides. Once that had dried, I finished it with standard DIY wall filler and sanded that smooth. At that point, you can do whatever you want with the backdrop: paint a background, fix one in place, give it a metal effect, spray it black, etc.

Adding a background

I did apply black to my backdrops but then got online to find suitably atmospheric photos that included aspects of each element. I picked a selection to try out, cropped them on Photoshop to be slightly bigger than the extremities of the curve, then printed them out. Be warned, when you fix these backgrounds onto the plasticard with PVA glue they will tighten up slightly and create more tension, adding to the amount of curvature. Finish things off by trimming the edges with a sharp scalpel.

ELEMENTALS IN THE SILVER BAYONET

The Silver Bayonet Society's (see page 70 for the latest installation) GM James couldn't resist making *Silver Bayonet* profiles for the Elementals Marc painted. He took into consideration the advice in the 'creating your own monsters' section of the book, examined existing Bestiary entries to get an idea of stat levels and Attributes, and created new Attributes for each Elemental to add further flavour.

These Elementals draw on the undiluted power of the elements in a deadly way. With that in mind, James has made these four adversaries at least as deadly as the toughest opposition found in the standard *Silver Bayonet* rules. You should only include Elementals in games being played by more battle-hardened units who have some experience tiers under their belts … unless you want a whole lot of carnage on the tabletop! Incidentally, you don't have to use classic Citadel figures, just Google 'Elemental Miniatures' - there are loads of new ones out there.

EARTH ELEMENTAL

These strange beings rise from the ground on which battles have taken place and can take many forms. Their shape is inconsistent; some resemble massive stone humanoids, while others are far more difficult to describe - strange constructs of rock, soil, and debris in bizarre shapes and forms - but they are alike in their capacity to cause destruction. Their tireless melee attacks are accompanied by the discordant cacophony of rock plates grinding and cracking; even at range they can fling projectiles formed from their very essence or cause the earth to shift and move beneath the feet of their enemies.

EARTH ELEMENTAL						
Speed	Melee	Accuracy	Defence	Courage	Health	Experience points
4	+2	+2	17	+10	18	3
Attributes: Allergy to Blessed; Damage Reduction (6); Indefatigable; Large; Quick Healing; Rock Hurler; Shattered Earth (S); Very Strong						
Equipment: None						

AIR ELEMENTAL

These Elementals can often be felt long before they are seen, causing a noticeable change in air pressure and temperature, swiftly followed by dangerously strong winds that are more than powerful enough to knock a grown man off his feet.

These beings have terrifying potential to cause continuing destruction, because unlike other dangers *Silver Bayonet* units face, an Air Elemental cannot be pinned down, restricted, cornered, or controlled in any way.

AIR ELEMENTAL						
Speed	Melee	Accuracy	Defence	Courage	Health	Experience points
16	+3	+0	19	+8	7	3
Attributes: Allergy to Fire; Chilling Touch; Damage Reduction (8); Dissipate (S); Ethereal; Inimical to Technology; Indefatigable; Unconstrained Chaos (S); Very Strong						
Equipment: None						

Water Elemental

Though they can appear in drier locations, it is more common to encounter these Elementals around large bodies of water or at times of extreme rainfall. They surge across the land, building from a churning squall to a huge tsunami wave to pound the weight of their water against their enemies. The true deadliness of an attack from a Water Elemental goes beyond physical blows; it can be hypnotic to stare at the beauty of the swirling water, but anyone in its radius can be swept into it and risks being submerged and drowned.

WATER ELEMENTAL						
Speed	Melee	Accuracy	Defence	Courage	Health	Experience points
7	+3	+0	16	+10	8	3
Attributes: Allergy to Fire; Damage Reduction (7); Dissipate (S); Drown (S); Ethereal; Hypnotic; Inimical to Technology; Indefatigable; Large; Strong						
Equipment: None						

Fire Elemental

Born in the fires of the war and increasingly frequent as towns burn, Fire Elementals are some of the Harvestmen's most destructive pawns in their unknown plans. They take varied forms, from leaping living flames to more humanoid creations of magma and sparks of fire, but all have the potential to cause devastation to the land around them. An attack from a Fire Elemental can not only leave victims traumatised or disfigured by burns, but can also end up in a conflagration that destroys all in the surrounding area.

FIRE ELEMENTAL						
Speed	Melee	Accuracy	Defence	Courage	Health	Experience points
6	+3	+0	14	+10	18	3
Attributes: : Allergy to Blessed and Salt; Conflagration (S); Damage Reduction (6); Demonic Fire; Ethereal; Hypnotic; Inimical to Technology; Soul Shear; Strong; Weakened by Faith						
Equipment: None						

NEW ELEMENTAL ATTRIBUTES

An Elemental ability superseded by an (S) is a new Attribute, the specifics of which are detailed here. These are designed to bring the character of the elements into your games, and though they fit specifically with these 'end of game boss' Elementals, you could also use their mechanics to further inspire your own game and scenario customisation. You could create some slightly easier to take down Lesser Elementals; you could add element-themed traps to clues; bring in some arcane devices; or give soldiers and monsters magical spells, miracles, and abilities that call on the elements.

CONFLAGRATION (S)

At the end of each Monster Phase, any soldier or terrain piece within 1" of this monster receives a Conflagration token. An action can be performed by a model within 1" of a Conflagration token to remove up to two Conflagration tokens (models cannot remove Conflagrations applied to themselves). At the end of the turn, lose 1 health for each Conflagration token on a model, or if in terrain that has Conflagration tokens on it, then add a Conflagration token to each outbreak.

DISSIPATE (S)

This being does not take damage in the same way as normal models. Any time that an attack successfully causes damage to it, no matter how much, reduce the monster's health by only one and remove the figure from the tabletop. Every player model that subsequently activates will cause the monster to reappear next to it if it rolls a 1 or 2 on any of the dice rolls it makes.

DROWN (S)

Instead of applying a Fatigue token to a soldier who has had a melee combat with this figure, apply a Drown token. These stack and reduce melee ability in the same way as Fatigue but are not negated by Indefatigable. The only way to remove Drown tokens is to end your turn at least 6" from all monsters on the table that have the Drown Attribute. Otherwise, lose 1 health for each Drown token on a model.

SHATTERED EARTH (S)

As soon as this monster is activated in the Monster Phase, pick the nearest soldier in line of sight and cause the earth under it to shatter, boil, break, and explode. The target must take a Speed Check (TN12). If the Check is failed, they take 3 damage and a 6" difficult terrain piece appears around them with the soldier in the centre. If the Check is passed, the difficult terrain piece is placed as described but the soldier moves outside of it to an edge of the player's choosing. The difficult terrain remains in place for the rest of the game.

UNCONSTRAINED CHAOS (S)

Do not use the standard order for Monster Activation. Instead, randomly determine a target unit, then pick a random soldier within that unit and move directly towards it. If within range, attack the model in melee. Also attack any other models within 3" of the monster's movement path but with a -2 melee modifier. The models passed cannot choose the Strike Back response.

RECREATING ISANDLWANA

Alexander Smith took on an ambitious pandemic project - recreating the epic battle of Isandlwana. Would the Zulu demolish the British when his gaming group finally got back together to play it? Read on to find out!

Once a year I take a day off from the usual duties of life, turn off my phone, plop myself down on the couch, turn the speakers up, and simply enjoy the 1964 classic *Zulu*. This nameless little holiday, built around viewing one of the finest war films ever made, has been a tradition of mine for as long as I can remember. Last year's viewing, however, was a little different.

The pandemic had kept me indoors for months, obliterated my usual tabletop gaming schedule, and perhaps driven me a little mad. Consequently, in a fit of *Zulu*-induced inspiration, I decided that the only proper way to celebrate the end of the pandemic (which surely couldn't be more than a month or two away … right?) was to unveil a completed Rorke's Drift terrain set, with the accompanying British and Zulu forces, and play a celebratory battle with my gaming group.

I diligently collected the necessary terrain and miniatures, painted them, and gazed upon them with satisfaction. Which was all I could do - gaze - as the pandemic obstinately refused to go away. The set sat unused in my garage, providing only nominal interest to me and my wife as we periodically went in and out to do laundry; as Lockdown dragged on, I increasingly felt that Rorke's Drift was simply not grand enough for the grand reunion of our gaming club. Only the most epic of Anglo-Zulu War battles would do: Isandlwana!

ISANDLWANA

Overshadowed somewhat by Anglo-Zulu War 'poster boy' Rorke's Drift, the battle of Isandlwana is still a popular clash with wargamers. Fought on 22 January 1879 between British and Zulu forces during the invasion of Zululand in South Africa, the battle stands as one of the greatest victories of a native force over a colonial power.

The overconfident British commander, Lord Chelmsford, left about 1,800 men at a base camp near the mountain Isandlwana, while he took the rest of his column out to look for the Zulu army. That Zulu army, having already slipped behind Lord Chelmsford's expedition, assaulted the unfortified camp. In a fierce battle, the Zulus surrounded the British garrison with a sweeping double envelopment. With retreat cut-off, the British force was overwhelmed and destroyed.

To learn more, I highly recommend Col. Mike Snook's *How Can Man Die Better: The Secrets of Isandlwana Revealed*.

As any grizzled wargaming veteran knows, the first step on a long journey project is planning your purchases and shopping for miniatures. This is, of course, the most enjoyable part of the project because you can imagine the miniatures painted and arrayed in their battle formations on your tabletop, looking glorious, before realizing you've gotten ahead of yourself. The reality of building and painting your excessive purchases sets in once things arrive!

CHOOSING THE SCALE OF THE BATTLE

For the British forces, I used the relatively simple formula of one tabletop unit to represent each company, troop, or battery (with a few exceptions for some of the smaller colonial mounted infantry groups; I combined these together). This came out to about 220 miniatures across 19 units. I mostly used a mixture of Warlord, Perry, and Empress miniatures.

The Zulu presented a much more challenging conversion to get them onto the tabletop. How does one represent 24,000 infantry at 28mm scale on a 12'x6' board in a way that is playable and gives a balanced game against a force a fraction of its size (not to mention remaining practical for a single human being to collect and paint)? If I used the ratio I had for the British - one miniature representing every five to seven soldiers - I would need a ludicrous 3,500 Zulu models!

Instead, I elected to work backwards from what would make an engaging game. I wanted the British to feel stretched thin and outnumbered but still have a chance of holding back the approaching horns of the Zulu while their ammo, discipline, and luck held. After a few tests, I concluded that a ratio of one and a half Zulu per Brit was more than enough to present the British players with serious difficulties but not immediately overrun them. Considering the historical ratio was so much higher, it's not a huge surprise that the British lines collapsed, even with their superior arms.

A flat-looking Zulu figure before his Agrax Earthshade wash, and a far better looking one after getting a bath in the Citadel Shade.

The British defenders ready to 'Die Better'.

The might of the Zulu on their colour-coded movement trays.

PACING OUT THE PAINTING AND BUILDING

Having settled on approximately 320 Zulu split across 26 units, I then set about working on a painting system that would allow me to field the force before the heat death of the universe! The solution was to prime the Zulu in the Vallejo brown I intended to use for their skin color, paint the rest of the model, then wash the entire model with a generous amount of Citadel Agrax Earthshade. Using this method, I was able to paint about a dozen Zulu each day.

As the never-ending procession of Zulu miniatures made their way across my painting desk, I did my best to replicate the shield colors of the various Zulu amabutho that took part in the battle, which lent some variety to the undertaking. It also created a convenient way to differentiate between the forces that each player would control. I also used colour-coded sabot bases for all units, allowing players to identify which units were theirs and move them about quickly.

SIMPLE TERRAIN

With every square inch of my desk covered in unpainted miniatures, I didn't want to take too much extra time putting together terrain for the table. You'd barely see it under the sheer volume of figures anyway! Aside from the eponymous Isandlwana mountain, I decided quick-and-easy was the way to go.

For the 12'x6' mat I used a simple canvas dropcloth that I had coated in a stirred mixture of caulking, sand, and brown paint. Once that dried, I went back and added color variation across it in random spots.

The hills and dongas (dry riverbeds) were mostly constructed using cans of expanding foam sprayed into mounds, then cut down to shape using a large hobby knife. These were mounted on cardstock, sealed in spackling, based with sand, and painted and drybrushed.

CREATING THE MIGHTY MOUNTAIN

The bulk of my terrain efforts were aimed towards the iconic mountain of Isandlwana. Nicknamed 'The Sphinx' by British soldiers, the mountain is an imposing terrain feature that towers over the surrounding area and would bring some vertical character to the game if I could create something equally impressive for my board. As it would be 6' wide I (rather arbitrarily) decided that the mountain should take up half of the width of the table.

In Southern California, sheets of insulation foam can be hard to come by, so I opted to try and print the beast on my shiny new 3D printer. Unsurprisingly, no 3D model of Isandlwana was widely available to download and print out, so I had to sculpt my own. Using *Blender* (a free 3D graphics program) and some nifty terrain add-ons, I was able to sculpt a mountain that was a close approximation of the real thing. I then split the model into 36 pieces so that it would fit the print bed and got the printing started.

Zulu impi close in on the British camp with the 3D printed Isandlwana in the background.

It was not long after the layers started to build up that I realized I had vastly overestimated the capabilities of my printer and my own skills in operating and maintaining the machine for the time required. Cue a montage of endless misprints, clogs, breakdowns (printer and operator), model errors, and other minor disasters. Out of pure stubbornness, however, I saw it through.

Once the final pieces had been printed, I glued them together (as seen over the page) then sealed over the seams with spackle. After that had hardened, I primed the mountain in a grey sandable auto primer. This stuff is handy for priming 3D printed parts as it goes on thick and hides layer lines.

I then sprayed a watered down PVA mixture over the surface and poured a bucket of sand and rocks on top to give it texture.

For the painting process, I airbrushed the model with increasingly lighter shades of brown and tan until I arrived at a nice highlight. I finished this off by drybrushing with a light tan and adding various tufts and bushes.
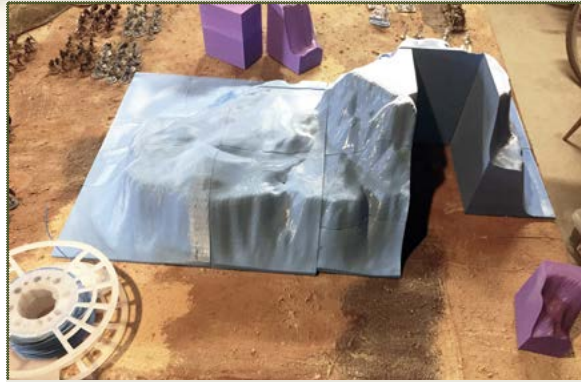
Mountain pieces gradually being put together after printing.

Bringing them all together and sealing the seams with spackle.

Priming with a heavy coat to hide the stepping.

The final footprint of the mountain is an impressive 36" long, 20" wide, and 12" tall. I'm pleased with how it turned out, but I can't help but feel I made the job so much harder than it needed to be. If I had to do it all over again, I certainly would have used foam rather than 3D printing it; sometimes old approaches trump new technology!
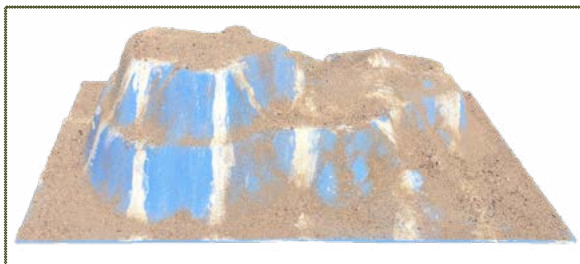
Creating texture with sand over watered down PVA

The finished mountain in all its glory.
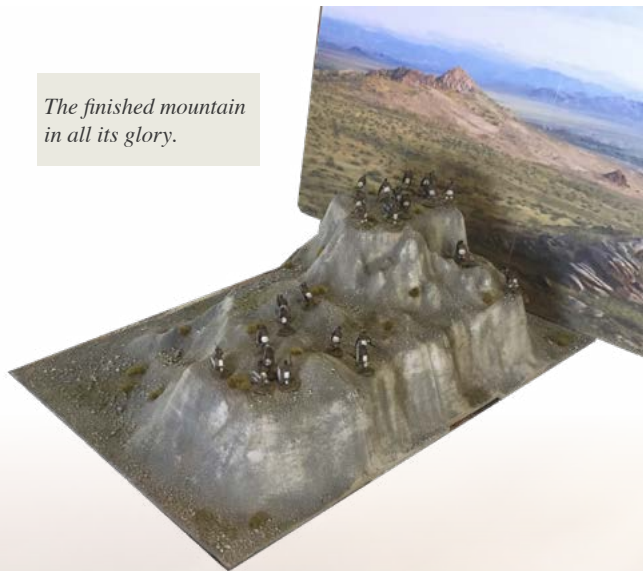
GETTING GAME READY

Picking the right ruleset was an easy choice for me as I am a big fan of Daniel Mersey's *The Men Who Would be Kings* (*MWK*), which is a great beer-and-pretzels colonial ruleset. It has just the right amount of granularity to provide the kind of events where a handful of plucky soldiers can change the tide of battle at a key moment, but still plays fast enough to accommodate a game of this size. I would really stretch what the ruleset could handle with the size of my game, though, so some modifications were in order.

In *MWK*, each unit is controlled by a leader with a randomly generated leadership value and trait - a fun feature that adds a layer of unpredictability. In this case, however, rolling and referencing 45 different leaders would have been a logistical nightmare. I assigned one leader per player instead, with each using a leadership value of 6+. I also did away with the randomly generated traits, giving each leader a different agenda to represent the clashing priorities of the commanders in the battle. For example, Col. Durnford's agenda, 'Gloryseeker', encouraged an extremely aggressive playing style, while the other British leaders had more defence-oriented agendas. The Zulu agendas, meanwhile, spurred competition between teammates, pushing them to be first into action or to capture Victory Point locations.

A couple of other modifications were more matters of personal preference. I reduced the size of Zulu units from 16 models to twelve. While this did reduce the fighting power of each Zulu unit somewhat, it also allowed the Zulu army to field more units overall, which is advantageous due to *MWK* imposing severe penalties on pinned units. This gave Zulu players enough units to attack in echelon as the front units became pinned down with those behind carrying on the advance. I also decided to use the pinning rules from Daniel Mersey's follow-up ruleset, *Rebels & Patriots*, where units become increasingly helpless as they gain pins, rather than the *MWK* system where even a single pin immobilizes a unit.

British artillery try to thin the oncoming tide of Zulu.

THE SCENARIO

I did my best to keep the victory conditions for the scenario simple. Whichever side held more of the 24 Victory Points at the end of ten turns would be victorious. The VP locations were:

- 5 VPs - the British Camp
- 5 VPs - the Wagon Depot
- 4 VPs - the Right Flank
- 4 VPs - the Left Flank
- 2 VPs - the Conical Hill
- 2 VPS - the Donga
- 1 VP - the Left Ridge
- 1 VP - the Right Ridge

I placed the VPs in this manner to force the British players to protect their flanks and not simply fall back into camp and form an impenetrable wall of firepower (which would probably have been the best course of action, historically speaking). Therefore, if the Zulu players could force the British back into the camp and capture the flanks, they should have enough VPs to claim victory as they've effectively completed the encirclement of the British in their horns.

For terrain, the mountain itself was designated impassable terrain, while the various hills and dongas were classified as rough ground. Units inside the dongas received a cover bonus from small arms fire but not during close combat.

Artillery, mounted volunteers, and auxiliary soldiers of the Natal Native Contingent defend the Wagon Depot.

HANDOUTS

As a middle school teacher, I couldn't resist designing a handout for my players. As I briefed them on the scenario, each player received a document listing the officer they were to take command of as well as their assigned units and relevant stats. For the opposite side, I put together a quick reference guide containing basic info for the ruleset we were using. With these documents in hand, it was hardly necessary to reference the rulebook at all!

ZULU POSITIONS:
1. iMbube, uDududu & iSangqu
2. uNokhenke
3. uKhandempemvu
4. uMbonambi
5. iNgobamakhosi
6. UVe, & detachments oNdini regiments

BRITISH POSITIONS:
1. Robert's Troop
2. Raw's Troop
3. NNC (Barry)
4. NNC picquet
5. A Co. 1/24th (detachment; Dyson)
6. F Co. 1/24th (Mostyn)
7. A Co. 1/24th (Cavaye)
8. 2-gun section, N/5 (Smith), with one company 1/24th (E Co. Porteous?)
9. NNC (J. F. Lonsdale)
10. 2 cos. 1/2th (C Co., Younghusband H Co., Wardell), 1 co. 2/24th (G Co., Pope), 1 Co. NNC (Krohn)
11. Rocket battery & escort (Russell & Nourse)
12. Durnford's detachment
13. Mounted detachment (Bradstreet)

Map from Isandlwana 1879 © Osprey Publishing Ltd. ospreypublishing.com

DEPLOYMENT

The British were arrayed on the table in their historical positions with a sizable portion of their force deployed forward along the ridgeline, Durnford's troops stretched out along the left flank, and the remainder 'standing to' in camp. This deployment represented the British forces at around noon on the day of the battle, right as the masses of the Zulu forces emerged from the far valley. The Zulus, meanwhile, should start the game off-table, entering in waves beginning on the first turn.

When the game began, the Zulu had the initiative and act first. As none of their forces are on the field, each Zulu player must bring on two units from their deployment table edge using a Move order. Each subsequent turn, Zulu players may bring up to three units per player onto the table in the same manner.

The impressive sight of the full board with troops deployed.

HOW OUR GAMES WENT

I've played through the Isandlwana scenario twice. In the first game, the British opted to conduct a fighting retreat towards the camp. This was skillfully performed, with most of their forces arriving intact to form a defensive line outside the camp (sans a few unfortunate units who were caught and assegaied during the withdrawal).

The left horn advances largely unimpeded as the British fight off the closer chest and right horn of the Zulu attack.

The chest and right horn of the Zulu formations had a difficult time advancing against the weight of British firepower until the largely undamaged left horn arrived in force, smashing through the mounted colonial units holding down the flank of the British line. With Zulu forces pouring into the camp through the gap, the British defense collapsed. The final turn saw a handful of surviving British desperately retreating through the tents, pursued by a mass of Zulus - marking a solid, if pyrrhic victory for the Zulu team.

The second playthrough saw the British adopt a very different strategy, holding their ground forward to delay the Zulu advance for as long as possible. This allowed the British to inflict substantial damage on the Zulus immediately; however, it was not long before the forward line of British units was cut off and systematically destroyed. With both sides badly mauled, Zulu forces closed in on the camp. A thin line of British, supported by the two 7-pdr guns, were able to deny the Zulu right horn from flanking around the mountain and capturing the vital VP there. Using the last of their reserves, the Zulu chest surged forward, overrunning the British guns in the British center. The Zulu were poised to take the camp when the few remaining redcoats stopped the Zulu advance dead in their tracks with a last-minute volley of Martini-Henry fire. Thus ended the second game - a narrow British victory (which in this case entails only a slightly better outcome for the doomed garrison of the camp).

Incredibly, despite the size of the scenario and the number of participants, each game took less than five hours to finish!

My gaming group tends to play skirmish-level games involving, at most, a couple of dozen miniatures. Although this project took many months to finish, it was worth the effort to bring so many players together in one large-scale cinematic battle - something that we would normally never be able to pull off. In the weeks afterwards, the game has continued to be a popular topic of conversation, and the discussion in our gaming group has now turned to what the next grand project should be!

The Zulu force rushes the British lines taking out isolated defenders.

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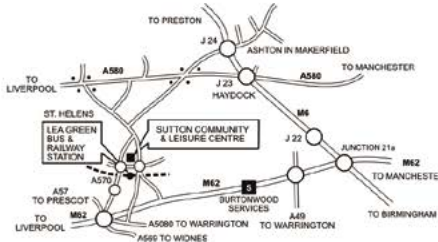
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Sláine
miniatures game
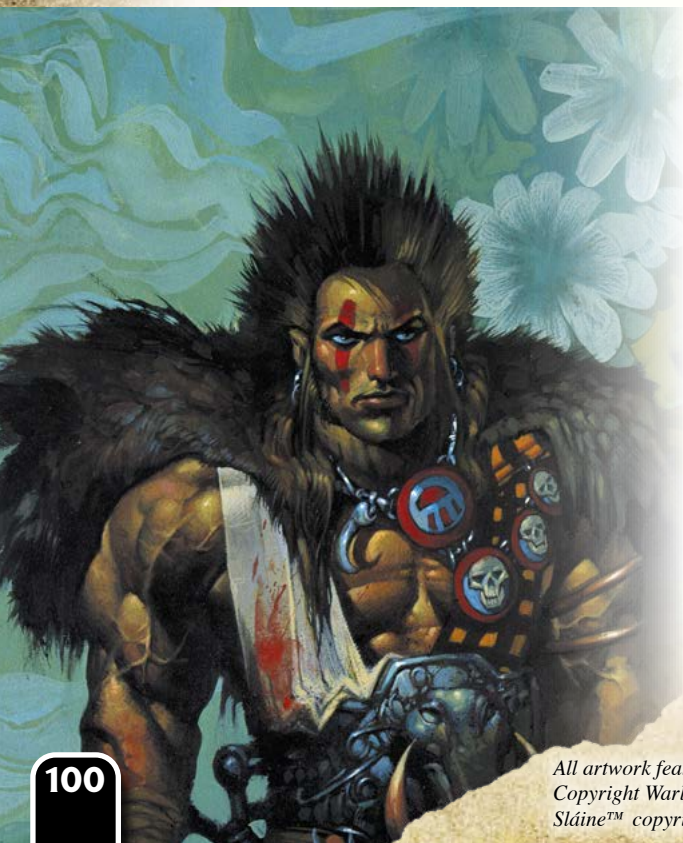
And so it was that the body of Sláine was borne up, and with great reverence (to avoid chipping his paintwork) placed in a figure case. "Hmmm, is that supposed to happen?", says I. "Sláine getting killed I mean?". There was a moment of chin scratching in the room before Gav Thorpe said what we all wanted to hear, "Of course he's not actually dead, oh no, Sláine's taken an almighty WHACK, and he's just out of action, for now. He'll be back to swing his axe another day." And there was much rejoicing, along with the clanking of drinking horns (aka coffee mugs). Andy Chambers was particularly keen to agree; he had been in command of Sláine during our game, and only moments earlier the champion of the Earth Goddess had been merrily scything down numerous Drune Warriors, and he "thought it not too many." (… although it turned out it was too many, and the mighty Sláine was felled).

My last encounter with Sláine was in the early 80s when I put down my last copy of *2000AD*, picked up a copy of *Razzle*, and never thought too much about him thereafter. That was until Warlord Games teamed up with *2000AD* publishers Rebellion and began producing games and miniatures based on the comic book antics of the heroes from "the Galaxy's greatest comic". I had already played the first and second releases in the franchise, *Strontium Dog* and *Judge Dredd*, and now game designers Gav and Andy had agreed to introduce me to the *Sláine: Miniatures Game* by competing against each other in a game at Warlord Games HQ in Nottingham.

We'll come back to our battle later, but first here's what Gav and Andy had to say when I quizzed them about *the Sláine: Miniatures Game* post-match.

WHO IS SLÁINE ANYWAY?

An extract from the *Miniatures Game* rulebook:

Sláine made his first appearance in *2000AD* in 1983. Created by veteran comic writer Pat Mills as a Conan-style barbarian with a twist; Sláine was firmly set in a world of Celtic mythology, with Sláine himself heavily inspired by the Irish hero Cú Chulainn in the Red Branch, or Ulster, cycle of Irish mythology. Sláine's enemies, the Drune Lords, had soured the lands by preventing the natural flow of magic from the Earth Goddess Danu for their own rites. Sláine began his career as a feckless wanderer, an outcast from his own tribe, and underwent a full mythic cycle by taking on the mantle of champion of Danu to defeat the Drunes and free his people, eventually - after may more challenges - becoming the first High King of Ireland.

Wargames Illustrated: So, *Sláine* is the third in the series of *2000AD* games you have written for Warlord, what are the similarities with the other two systems?

Andy Chambers: The core rules are the same. In the initial draft planning of the *Sláine* rules, I changed things quite a bit but then actually reigned them back in. Having listened to what was being said on the *Strontium Dog* and *Judge Dredd* community sites - the message being players really valued the similarity between the two games - we decided that *Sláine* should be as close to those two sets of rules as possible. We narrowed it down to a few distinct changes to make *Sláine* a heroic fantasy game, as opposed to a gunfight game like the previous two. Which, to be honest, was always the plan when we started out on the *2000AD* series.

Gav Thorpe: One of the things we identified early on across all the *2000AD* games was that we could, and should, use the unique game cards and the scenarios to tell the story, not re-write the rules. It's a challenge because you are dealing with some fundamental differences. In the *Strontium Dog* comic strip, you have a set-up, followed by a fight, followed by the payoff. In *Sláine,* it tends to start with a fight in which Sláine kills a lot of people, then Sláine warps out and kills more people, then he walks away. We looked at that escalation and how the fights came about and how we could incorporate that in a game, so players could see the stories come alive. The cards, and Blood Points, really help with that storytelling.

Wi: Can you elaborate on those elements of the game?

GT: Well, we have Boon Cards, which play the role of magic spells in the game. Then there's Fate Cards that the heroic warriors use to give themselves bonuses in combat. The Boons require Blood Points to use, and players earn Blood Points by 'overkilling' enemies (doing lots of damage) and by completing scenario based objectives. Blood Points are a currency players can earn in a game; as well as being used with Boons, they can be expended to fulfil scenario objectives. They introduce resource management into the games - manage your resources/Blood Points well and you can tip the balance of the game.

Wi: During our game, the cards certainly felt key to bringing in the character of Sláine's universe, particularly the supernatural element that is a massive part of his world.

AC: Yes, when you read the comic strip there is a lot of 'choppy, choppy' big barbarian with an axe, but the backstory is a cosmic battle between the Drune Lords, who are trying to use their Sour Magic to steal the Earth Magic, and the Earth Tribes trying to resist that, with Sláine being their champion. We wanted to try and portray that as more than just an on-table slug-fest, so there is a whole system of magic that builds into the scenarios and the terrain, which taps into that Cosmic Battle.

Left: Pages from the Sláine rulebook.

Above: Andy Chambers swoops god-like over our Sláine gaming table in the Warlord Games shop.

GT: The landscape - represented by tabletop terrain - is very important to the mythology and the game, whether that's a dank marsh steeped in Sour Magic or a bright pool providing Earth Magic. We have tried to really bring that alive and play into the Cosmic Battle, and at the same time make it worth moving around the tabletop to interact with the terrain.

AC: That's a real challenge when creating a three dimensional game from a two dimensional comic book, you need to have more than just Sláine swinging a big axe! Plus there are characters in the stories that are not really combat characters, like Ukko the cowardly Dwarf and Nest the Druid (in training), we needed to find a place for them in the game.

Wi: For our game we played through one of the scenarios in the Starter Set: *Rededicating the Stone*, which seemed to bring in a lot of elements from the game.

2000AD COMBAT DICE

Just like the other two games in the series, *Sláine* uses special six-sided *2000AD* 'Combat Dice'. Combat is settled by the roll of these dice, with the aim of scoring HITs to strike your opponent and SHIELDS to defend blows. The SPECIAL (*2000AD*) symbol allows for either.

Above: The charterers/models who featured in our game gather around the Weirdstone. In the background a scenario objective looms large - 'Alan the Wicker Man' by Ainsty Castings.

AC: Yes, there's quite a lot going on in that scenario, Blood Points are a very important factor, and the way Gav played his pot of points probably won it for him. Each scenario has a focus point or task to achieve; although for Sláine and his sidekick Ukko (on the face of it) chopping the enemy to pieces is the objective, there are often other things at play, and for characters like Nest, Medb, and Slough Throt, trying to win favour with or support their chosen deity and advance their cause in the Cosmic War is what it's about.

BOON AND FEAT CARDS

Boon Cards are assigned to the heroic characters at the beginning of a scenario. They represent supernatural or magical powers, like Summon Half-Dead, The Head Harvest, and The Cauldron Reborn.

When played, Feat Cards provide a bonus in combat. This becomes a 'Heroic Feat' if the specified number of Combat Dice are rolled.

GT: The Starter Set Booklet [see below - Ed] contains three scenarios, with the intention of providing entertaining games, but also of progressively introducing players to more rules and drawing them into the *Sláine* mythology.

Above: Starter Set Booklet.

Wi: Considering I haven't read *Sláine* for the past couple of decades (or more), it all came flooding back to me whilst watching the game being played - it genuinely felt like an immersive *Sláine* experience - which must have been your number one priority when writing the rules?

GT: Absolutely, we wanted to go into the comics and draw that out onto the tabletop, that's always been the number one mission for these *2000AD* games.

AC: No one should need an excuse to read a load of *2000AD* strips, but having to do it as inspiration for designing a game couldn't be more pleasurable.

THE HALF-DEAD

As with all the Warlord *2000AD* games, one of the main attractions of *Sláine: The Miniature Game* is the fantastically characterful minis. We got to play with the Warlord studio's wonderfully painted collection, including some of the not yet released (at time of printing) Half-Dead. Even Gav hadn't seen them before, until he summoned a band to take on, and ultimately take-down, Sláine!

Above: Sláine brings his axe to bear on three Skull Swords "and he did not think it too many".

Wi: Thanks very much for that insight guys, if you can just make sure you don't get Sláine killed next time Andy, that would be good.

AC: It doesn't happen often, but well done to Gav for outplaying me on this occasion and bringing the full might of his Half-Dead to bear against the great man. He will now be bundled onto a Skyship and presented to Lord Weird Slough Feg as his great prize.

MORE ON YOUTUBE

Watch our interview with Andy and Gav, and see more of our game, via the *Wi* YouTube channel.

Above: Slough Throt and his half-dead stand in triumph over the body of our hero Sláine.