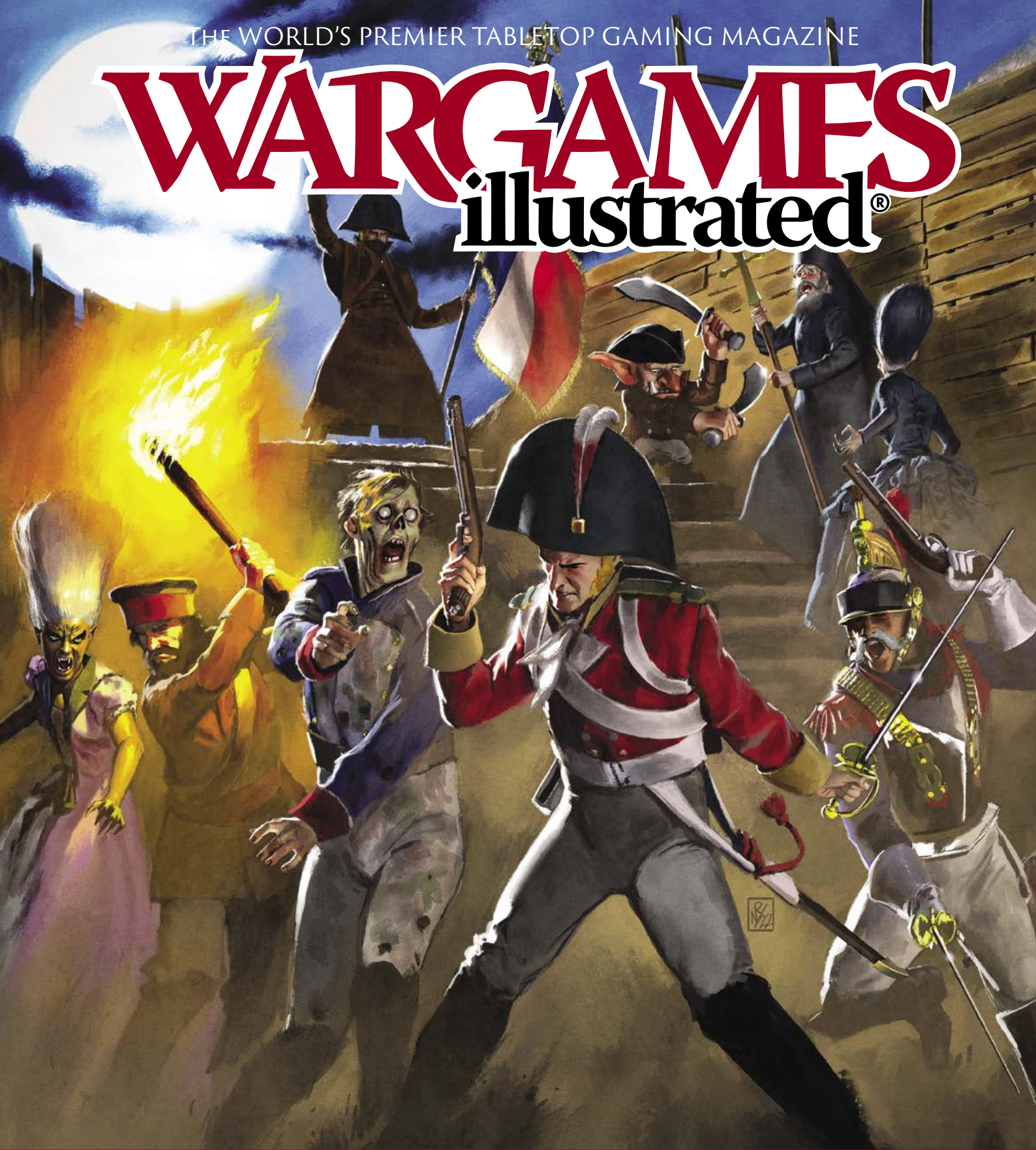


THE WORLD'S PREMIER TABLETOP GAMING MAGAZINE

WARGAMES illustrated®



ISSUE 419
NOVEMBER 2022
UK £5.99



KHORRAMSHAHR 1980
The Iran-Iraq war in 6mm



WITH MAN'S BLOOD
The dead and the maimed in Billhooks



THE IMPERIAL JAPANESE ARMY
A World War Two tabletop toolkit

TWISTED HISTORY: BLENDING FICTION INTO HISTORICAL WARGAMING

CONTENTS



▲ **OBSERVATION POST** 14



▲ **THE SILVER BAYONET CAMPAIGN FINALE** 32



▲ **HOW TO... CONVERT A STEAMPUNK GUNBOAT** 48

WARGAMES
illustrated

29 Eldon Business Park
Attenborough, Nottingham
NG9 6DZ
United Kingdom

wargamesillustrated.net



wargamesillustrated



@wargamesill



/WargamesIllustrated



wargamesillustrated

FROM THE EDITOR

This month's theme is Twisted History. But what exactly is twisted history, I hear you think? Well, it's a phrase we've coined for wargaming anything with a historical base that 'twists' into something fantastical: fictional nations and conflicts in interwar Europe with Painting Mark's Little Soldiers (page 60); dungeon crawling in the Napoleonic War in our *Silver Bayonet* campaign (page 32); pulp adventures in the 1930s with a *Pulp!* Q&A (page 68); peculiar paddleboats, or How to Convert a Steampunk Gunboat (page 48); and finally, the Cold War gone hot in Old Dog: New Tricks (page 80).

We hope you enjoy twisting with us; but if you like your wargaming straight as a die, you will find plenty of untwisted history to enjoy, stretching from ancient to modern with several stops in-between.

I'll end with a word on last month's magazine, or more specifically the *Wi*-Johnson-Perry collaboration *Valour & Fortitude* - it has proved to be amazingly popular! If you missed out, fear not, because 1) we still have copies of *Wi*418 (including free *V&F*) for sale on the *Wargames Illustrated* website; 2) *Wi*Prime members can download it at any time from The Vault; and 3) cheapskates can download it for free from the Perry Miniatures website. There is also a *V&F* Errata on the Perry and *Wi* websites so that you can keep abreast of all those annoying little mistakes we made.

Dan Faulconbridge

Owner and Editor

This month's cover artwork is by Neil Roberts and shows our Silver Bayonet adventurers during the conclusion of the Wi Silver Bayonet campaign. See page 32 for more SB action!

Below: Artwork by Dimitris Martinos, from the cover of the forthcoming Osprey Publishing 'blue book' Pulp!

Did you miss out?
Fear not, it's still available!



CREDITS

Produced in the UK.

The Wargames Illustrated team:
Daniel Faulconbridge, Ian Bennett,
Asun Loste Campos, James Griffiths,
Joe Smalley and Callum France.

Printed in the UK by: Warners.

Copyright © Wargames Illustrated 2022



Wargames Illustrated are proud to support War Child.
For more information visit www.warchild.org.uk

CONTACTS

Customer Service & Subscriptions

help@wargamesillustrated.net
Tel (UK): 0044 (0)115 922 5073

Contributions:

contributors@wargamesillustrated.net

Advertisements:

adverts@wargamesillustrated.net

Quick Fire:

wi@wargamesillustrated.net

Distribution:

trade@warlordgames.com



PEFC Certified

This product is from
sustainably managed
forests and controlled
sources

www.pefc.co.uk

CONTENTS

QUICK FIRE! 8

Modelling 'shorts' from your fellow wargamers.

OBSERVATION POST 14

Your monthly roundup of notable new releases in the hobby.

RELEASE RADAR 22

Dom Sore scans the interweb for quality and/or quirky new wargames products.

FULL PAPER JACKET 28

Neil Smith's look at forthcoming book releases worthy of wargamers' attention.

THEME: SILVER BAYONET FINALE (PART ONE) 32

James takes the players into an RPG-inspired freeform adventure for the climax of our *Silver Bayonet* campaign. The units put aside their enmities and head underground, facing unknown dangers as they search out the root of the mysterious Harvestmen's power.

THE IMPERIAL JAPANESE ARMY PLATOON 42

Paul Leach shares how he uses Japanese platoons in games of *Bolt Action* and *Chain of Command* and provides some house rules that add extra character.

THEME: HOW TO... CONVERT A STEAMPUNK GUNBOAT 48

Our regular 'How to...'er Paul Davies joins in the Twisted History action by taking a TTCombat MDF Paddleboat and enhancing it with steampunk details, getting it ready for pulp gaming.

BATTLE OF KHORRAMSHAHR 1980 52

Ian Taylor describes the making of his Iran-Iraq War 6mm table, rules modifications he made for easy play, and how games played out at The Joy of Six show earlier in 2022.

THEME: PAINTING MARK'S LITTLE SOLDIERS 60

Callum grabs some of Mark Copplestone's latest creations and varies up his painting techniques on these neo-retro figures.

"WITH MAN'S BLOOD PAINT THE GROUND GULES!" 64

Mike Peters adds unique character to his award-winning *Never Mind the Billhooks* army with some custom morale markers.

THEME: PULP! Q&A 68

As a part of our Twisted History theme, we talk to Marco Arnaudo about his forthcoming Osprey skirmish game *Pulp!* He discusses his game's development, mechanics, and the benefits and challenges of gaming in the pulp genre.

PAINTING TEMPLARS WITH WARM WHITES AND BOLD FREEHAND 74

Callum paints speedy, worrisless white with the help of 'dirty glazes' and uses the spare time he saves to add punchy freehand shield designs.

THEME: OLD DOG: NEW TRICKS 80

Twisting 1980s history to create a Cold War gone hot is a popular pastime for wargamers. Here David Bickley talks us through the trials and tribulations of gathering forces together for a 'what if?' British Army of the Rhine versus the Soviet Army battle.

MUCKING ABOUT NEAR MUKDEN 84

Glenn Clarke heads to the 'back of beyond' and finds a new setting to game with his Japanese WWII army.

CLUB FOCUS: THE FRIENDS OF GENERAL HAIG 90

A tour of some of the games being played at a recent gathering of The Friends of General Haig - the affectionate name for the Worcester Wargames Club.



▲ PAINTING MARK'S LITTLE SOLDIERS 60



▲ PAINTING TEMPLARS 74



▲ OLD DOG: NEW TRICKS 80



▲ THE FRIENDS OF GENERAL HAIG 90

WARGAMES illustrated®



YouTube

THE GREAT
BRITISH
BUILD-OFF



INTERVIEWS, PRODUCT
UNBOXINGS, HOBBY AND
PAINTING ADVICE, SHOW
REPORTS, AND MORE!

SUBSCRIBE TO NEVER
MISS AN UPDATE!

ARGYLES,
MONMOUTH,
SEDGEMOORE,
AND MORE!



SUBSCRIPTIONS

ENJOY WARGAMES ILLUSTRATED PRINT OR PRIME

WI **PRINT** CONTENT INCLUDES:



12 ISSUES
FROM ONLY

£60

QUARTERLY SUBSCRIPTIONS
AVAILABLE FROM £20

RECEIVE THE WORLD'S BEST-SELLING WARGAMES MAGAZINE DIRECTLY TO YOUR DOOR AND SAVE ON THE COVER PRICE!

PRINT SUBSCRIPTIONS
NOW AVAILABLE DIRECT

IN THE USA VIA
IRONHEARTSARTISANS.COM

AND

IN AUSTRALIA AND
NEW ZEALAND VIA
KHAKI-GREEN.COM.AU

IRONHEART
ARTISANS
EST. 05 230 12 003

KHAKI
GREEN

FREE \$10 K&G VOUCHER WITH EVERY ISSUE!

WI PRIME CONTENT INCLUDES:

MONEY OFF EVERY MONTH AT:



**BEHIND THE SCENES GOODIES:
EDITOR'S EXPLOITS, FROM THE
VAULT, AND ARTICLES FROM
UPCOMING ISSUES**



**EVERY ISSUE OF WI AVAILABLE
(AND SEARCHABLE!) VIA THE VAULT**

**ALL FOR A
MONTHLY
MEMBERSHIP OF
£5.99**

**TRY PRIME FOR JUST £1.00
FOR THE FIRST MONTH**

**COMBINE THE TWO FOR A
DISCOUNTED MONTHLY COST OF £10**

INCLUDES THE MONTHLY PRINT MAGAZINE AND ALL THE BENEFITS OF A PRIME MEMBERSHIP.



WWW.WARGAMESILLUSTRATED.NET



French Lancers of the Imperial Guard
£17.50 €21.00 \$28.00

French Chasseurs à Cheval of the Imperial Guard
£17.50 €21.00 \$28.00



French Empress Dragoons of the Imperial Guard
£17.50 €21.00 \$28.00

French Grenadiers à Cheval of the Imperial Guard
£17.50 €21.00 \$28.00



French Imperial Guard Horse artillery 6-pdr battery
£10.00 €12.00 \$16.00



French Gendarmes d'Elite of the Imperial Guard
£10.00 €12.00 \$16.00



CONTAINS MORE THAN 1,000 PLASTIC SOLDIERS!

WELLINGTON'S BRITISH ARMY STARTER SET

£95.00 €114.00 \$152.00

Refight one of the most famous battles in military history - in Epic scale!

You can now take on Bonaparte's French army with the Anglo-Allied Army or the Prussians, whilst those wishing to serve the Emperor can once again lead the Grand Armee into battle.

Superb value starter sets for each nation, packed to the gunnels with plastic infantry, cavalry and artillery as well as scenery and

Black Powder Epic Battles rules are the ideal place to start. In addition to all the plastic loveliness we now have the French Imperial Guard cavalry available in highly detailed Warlord Resin™.

Choose your sides and Have at them!/En Avant!/Vörwärts!*

* Delete as applicable



**CONTAINS
MORE THAN
1,000 PLASTIC
SOLDIERS!**

BLÜCHER'S PRUSSIAN ARMY STARTER SET

£95.00 €114.00 \$152.00



**CONTAINS
MORE THAN
1,000 PLASTIC
SOLDIERS!**

BONAPARTE'S FRENCH ARMY STARTER SET

£95.00 €114.00 \$152.00

VISIT OUR HQ STORE:
UNIT 1 CENTRAL COURT, FINCH CLOSE,
NOTTINGHAM, NG7 2NN

SCAN ME!
FOR PRODUCTS
& INFORMATION



QUICK FIRE!

Short, quick-read posts from *Wi* readers about their hobby projects, notes, news, and observations.

MARCH TO MADNESS

By Jimmy Gibbons

Earlier this year, Northeast England lost one of its gaming venues, and a small but active group of players found themselves looking for a new gaming home. At the same time, some of the players from Newcastle Warlords were about to start playing *Kings of War*. A perfect storm was about to hit the gaming scene in the Newcastle area with some of the smaller group slowly migrating north of the River Tyne; with brief pleasantries exchanged, the opportunity arose to do something I had been considering for a while: run my own *Kings of War* league!

Fourteen players were keen to get involved, and I began planning how the league would function. Coming up with a name was simple enough; the league was starting in March, so it became 'The March to Madness.'

As many players were just starting out with *Kings of War*, a three-month 'slow grow' league of seven games per-player was decided upon. This would allow new players to build their forces as we progressed.



We had an even split of Good and Evil armies, so Good vs. Evil was the determining factor in who played who through the campaign. Scoring was three points for a win, two points for a draw, and even one point for a loss; bonus points were awarded for each opposing unit killed during our battles and a further point for a fully painted force. Models didn't have

to be painted, but those who had an army in glorious painted colour received a bonus for their efforts!

To spice things up, bonus points were awarded for scenario wins in the final two matches, while the final game was on the clock. A draw was also awarded when players could not make it to a game to stop the campaign stalling.



Getting gaming

We fitted in two matches per-night during our first two sessions thanks to the low points value of the armies used. We then played one per-night as more units were added to everyone's armies.

When the dust of battle(s) settled, the armies of Ratkin, Nightstalkers, Undead, Halflings, Ogres, Salamanders, Rift Orcs, Northern Alliance, Kings of Men, and Abyssal Dwarves had clashed swords, shot fireballs, and threw the odd flying curveball on the way to killing 542 units and capturing plenty of objectives across 49 games. Evil triumphed over good, with our evil contingent securing four of the top five spots.

As a first-time league commissioner, I identified elements I would change if I organised a second tournament. The bonus points system for units killed would focus on unit strength as killing a chaff unit or a bold hero both resulted in one point being awarded regardless of how easy they were to kill. A better scoring system if someone missed a game would also be considered to avoid players being too harshly punished when real life disrupted the fantasy battling for both players.

Despite those lessons learned, the league was an overwhelming success. We received prize support from Mantic, and local company DesignedUpNorthCo provided excellent trophies! (below).



A bond forged in battle

The tournament brought our two gaming groups together; a now tight-knit bunch are planning to go to other tournaments and have started to game outside of club nights. We're even getting t-shirts made!

Most importantly, though, is our daily contact through a WhatsApp group. This is something I would recommend to any potential league commissioners; I thought the group chat would simply be used for the odd rule clarification question and maybe a message here and there, but pings fly back and forth daily, usually starting from breakfast until well after midnight. Photos of models are shared, matches are arranged, army lists are discussed, and there is even the odd bit of sledging ahead of a potential grudge match.

Since starting with 14 players, our ranks have grown to 17, and there are a couple more planning to play in the future. Two more tournaments look to be on the way, with other members of our group planning their own competitions.

Was running the tournament worth the occasional headaches and worry? Overall, I'd have to say yes. Anything that helps to grow our hobby is worth any small problems you encounter. Would I do it again, though? Well, that is a different story for a different day!



MORE **QUICK FIRE!** PLEASE!

Send us your Quick Fire! pieces and get a FREE magazine or Giants in Miniature figure.

Please get in touch with a photo or two and less than 500 words of text about anything similar to what you have seen in this column; so that's painting or modelling projects, rules, wargaming notes, and observations.

Send your emails to: wi@wargamesillustrated.net

Use the subject title 'Quick Fire!'.

MINAS TIRITH MEETS PERRY MINIS

By Nick Folley

My main wargames interest used to be Games Workshop's 28mm *Lord of the Rings* game, and fantasy in general; but in recent years, my interest has shifted to historical - especially the Wars of the Roses - in the same scale. I came across an unused box of 12 plastic GW Minas Tirith knights, and inspired by *Pike & Shotte* type units, I decided to convert them to have a hedge of bristling pike points to keep the enemy at bay!



The rest of the material for conversions came from a 'bits box' I'd built up of Perry Miniatures plastic 1450s Foot Knights and European Mercenaries. These and the *Lord of the Rings* figures were made by the same sculptors, so pieces had a natural cohesion in their style and level of detail. Arms covered in plate armour came mainly from the Foot Knights, while pikes were obtained from the European Mercenaries box.

The shields are a part of the Minas Tirith figures; so in some cases where removal would have been problematic, I opted to leave them in place. The great thing about fantasy is there isn't any 'historical accuracy' to worry about, although some might object to the practicality of using a shield with a pike. Quivers presented another problem when bows were cut away from the original figures; I left some in place as removing them would have meant rebuilding that entire part of the model.



Matching arms from the Foot Knights and pikes from the European Mercenaries was relatively straightforward, and the plate armour of the Minas Tirith knights suited the Perry Foot Knights pieces beautifully.

The European Mercenary hands and arms sometimes had to be carefully cut away from the pikes, and the pikes themselves were then smoothed down with a scalpel and sandpaper to get the best fit. As I ran short of Perry pikes, I added two Fireforge Games spears. These were slightly thicker, but I think this only served to enhance the overall look as historical weaponry wasn't up to industrial-era standardization, and variation added some realism.

Once gaps were filled with plastic putty, the newly-formed pikemen were given a spray undercoat in black and painted. Though Minas Tirith knights are normally depicted with black frocks under their tassets, I have always painted mine white as I think it brightens up what would otherwise be very dark figures. It also echoes the White Tree of Gondor that is emblazoned on their black shields.

I placed shields underfoot, added plastic bricks to other bases (mindful that much of the fighting was done amidst the ruins of Osgiliath), and thrust a broken spear shaft into the ground on one. Once the obligatory grass tufts were added, they were good to go, and I now have a unit of doughty Minas Tirith pikemen more than capable of standing their ground against a rabble of Mordor Orcs!



Above: Converted knights in action. The church is from Pegasus Hobbies Gothic buildings small set 4924, with scratch built roof and tiles.

BILLHOOKS BASH THE THIRD

By Mike Peters

Boards and Swords Hobbies in Derby was home in September to the third *Billhooks* BASH; all the usual suspects were there, plus some new faces, as well as *Billhooks* author Andy Callan.

The format for this event is now well established; each player uses a force of 120 points representing either Lancaster/Tudor or York, plays three games against the other side, and the team that wins the most games is declared the 'One True Ruling House of Royalty'.

Never Mind the Billhooks' mixture of old school wargaming combined with some very new ideas (such as random activation and the use of cards) guarantees a fun game with a capricious system that makes a mockery of tactics and rewards the side with the luckiest dice! A happy buzz soon filled the air at the great venue as old rivalries were reignited and new foes found their feet and joined in the light-hearted *Billhooks* banter. Billhookers are a friendly, sociable bunch, and most of us had met up the previous evening for a visit to the Brewery Tap followed by a nightcap in the hotel bar!

My first opponent was Ralphie Dutton, and we fought a protracted battle reminiscent of our last encounter at a previous BASH! I was lucky enough to pull off a win in the last minute of the game against the run of play in what was one of the most unusual and interesting games I have ever taken part in.



Above: Standing (left to right): Simon Clark, David Gretton, Ralphie Dutton, Mark Taylor, Stephen Wood, Andy Callan, Ian Callan, Peter Harris, and Jan Ash. Kneeling: James Morris, Mike Peters, and Richard Bason.



Above: James' award-winning Irish Kerns, which were still being based on the eve of the battle!



Lunch was a Medieval dish of mixed meats and vegetables in a fiery paste served on the traditional trencher, a plate of bread - yup, a Pizza Hut delivery - then came the Best Painted Army competition, deservedly won by *Billhooks* virgin James Morris for his Irish.

It was back to the tables in the afternoon; I won one and lost one in my final two games - draws are practically unheard of in *Billhooks* - and the overall result after three rounds was Lancaster with eleven wins to York's seven. Light cavalry was the 'in' accessory at this BASH, with most armies sporting a unit of prickers. There were more pikes and Kerns than in previous years too.

Congratulations to Simon Clark who was the only player to win all three games, and commiserations to Mark Taylor, the only player to lose all three games.

Overall, it was a brilliant event; thanks to all the Billhookers who played, to Andy Callan (for writing the rules, umpiring, and playing), and Peter Harris for organising it all.

The provisional date for *Billhooks* BASH 4 is 15 April 2023. See you there?

Below: Andy Callan laying down the law!





PICTURESQUE AND POST-APOCALYPTIC

By Alan Jay Wescoat

If there is one thing which will surely set the mood for post-apocalyptic wargaming, it is an orange-coloured sky! The battlemat and sky here are both painted with acrylics on canvas to add drama and mood to my setup. The tiles and building prints are from Modular Urban Construction Kit 3 - After the Bomb (M.U.C.K. 3) by Stoelzel's Structures. The buildings are scaled for 28mm gaming, and the block and road tiles printed at 108% to match the building footprints.

The outer shell of one building slides off to reveal five layers - four floors and a roof - allowing the battlefield to be instantly converted to a building crawl if required. Doors and windows were cut out and trimmed with wooden coffee stirrers to add some micro-detailing. The outer shell of the complete building and tiles were printed onto 80-gram paper and laminated to 1mm rigid white cardboard. Each floor was made by printing onto 80-gram paper and laminating onto 5mm foamboard. The block tiles were likewise laminated to 5mm foamboard.



WORLD WAR III

TEAM YANKEE

THE COLD WAR JUST GOT HOT



COMING
DECEMBER



Visit our Website to see the full range
of World War III: Team Yankee

WWW.TEAM-YANKEE.COM

OBSERVATION POST

New and forthcoming wargames stuff you need to know about

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

UNDER FIRE MINIATURES - KING'S AFRICAN RIFLES

Two new sets from Under Fire here, both representing the 3rd Regiment, King's African Rifles during World War One. KAR3 is the platoon command pack of two officers, an Askari NCO, and a bugler; KAR4 is the rifle group of four Askari riflemen.

Mouldings are crisp, and all but one of the figures are made up of three white metal parts: the body, the head, and hands holding weapons or other equipment - walking sticks for the officers and the Askari bugler's bugle. The firing Askari has his weapon raised and only the head is separate, and the command pack also provides a couple of shouldered rifles you can stick onto your figures. The infantry have a variety of rifles and carbines, offering a relatively wide range of poses. The only issue we found with the casting was that one of the thin rifles had broken just before the bayonet. This is a slight weak point, but the counterpoint to this is a great looking rifle barrel that is very thin.

Research of uniforms and general styles of campaign dress are well represented; the Askari puttees and lack of shoes reflect the reality of warfare around the great lakes and northeast Africa during World War One. For skirmish gaming, these are a welcome addition to this relatively little gamed aspect of the conflict.

DETAILS

- SCALE: 28mm
- PERIOD: World War One
- PRICE: £8 per pack
- MATERIAL: Metal
- WEBSITE: underfireminiatures.co.uk



Putting the figures together is an interesting task, and we advise studying the figures on the Under Fire Miniatures website before reaching for the glue. Things fit well for the most part, but the heads will require some attention. Keeping them as a separate part gives you the option of varying the angle and adding character and variety to what would otherwise be quite repetitive figures, but the necks on some heads are quite long. Concerns about giraffe-like Askari were eased through light application of the rat tail file!

Rifles and other equipment are easily glued to the arms, with hands holding the weapons/walking sticks/bugles fixing into the relevant recesses at the ends of sleeves. There are 'sweet spot' angles here, and you might need to go through some trial and error to get the fit just right.

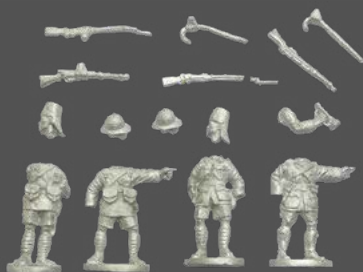
Once glued together, the figures do look good; but if you are a perfectionist, you will probably need to use some filler to ensure that necks fit to bodies without gaps.

The command pack looks animated and full of character, but the same cannot really be said of the rifle pack, which has slightly pedestrian poses. Despite this, there's enough detail and uniqueness in this range to make them well worth a look, and they're a valuable addition to the wargaming pantheon, shining a light on this neglected front in World War One.



UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

PARTS IN THE PACKS



Left: The command pack with a variety of equipment including stowed rifles with or without bayonets. Note that one of our rifle barrels broke.

Right: The riflemen pack also has the option of bayonets but not on the one-part firing body.



GRINGO 40s - MACV-SOG ASSORTMENT

A real treat here if you like your Vietnam miniatures detailed, quirky, and absolutely loaded with kit! Gringo 40s have expanded their Military Assistance Command, Vietnam - Studies and Observations Group range with new specialists. They'll add spice to your gaming as skilled combat veterans, but they could also become the central figures in skirmish level gaming or even as solo participants in AI scenarios.

As is always the case with Gringo 40s figures, the casting is good and the detail is impressive/obsessive. Although we're looking at codes 14 to 18 here, there are currently 23 options available, which will make for some diverse squads if you collect the full range. Let's take a closer look:

Trooper Advancing to Contact with Suppressed S&W type 76 SMG

The Smith & Wesson type 76 SMG was incredibly reliable in the harsh conditions of Vietnam, and the Navy acquired a small number of them, one of which is wielded by this trooper. He has a suppressor attached and is advancing, ready to fire, while loaded down with full kit.



Trooper Standing in Full Kit Firing Hush Puppy Pistol

Another Smith & Wesson here, but this time it's the Navy's heavily modified Model 39 pistol, nicknamed the 'Hush Puppy'. This silenced pistol was ideal for taking out sentries on clandestine missions, but with full kit to back him up, this soldier will be fine if a sustained firefight develops.



Trooper Kneeling with Swedish K and Trooper Turning to Fire Swedish K

The Kulsprutepistol m/45 was a Swedish designed and produced submachine gun, better known as the Swedish K. The Swedish government ceased sales of the weapon to the US (in protest of the continuation of the Vietnam War), but these troopers have managed to get a pair. They may not have gotten proper training in how best to fire them, though; they seem to be gripping around the mag, rather than in front of it. Should this method of fire cause the gun to malfunction, at least the kneeling trooper has a LAW stowed on his back.



UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

NEVER HEARD OF 'EM?

These elites were a badly kept secret during the Vietnam War; the unit's existence wasn't admitted by the US military until the 1980s, but that didn't stop *Apocalypse Now's* main character, Willard, being assigned to SOG as he takes on his unconventional 'terminate with extreme prejudice' mission. That classic film started shooting in 1976, so clearly there were some loose lips sinking PBRs!

For the still uninitiated, the MACV-SOG was a US multi-service special ops unit established in 1964 that undertook covert missions during the Vietnam War. Willard's weird, clandestine, total deniability mission is suitably representative of some of the tasks that these men took on, but they also performed more routine reconnaissance missions.

These specialists were present in most of the war's significant operations, including Tonkin and Tet, which makes these figures a useful addition to any collection.

Trooper Advancing Firing MKII Sten With Cut Down M79

More explosive support here if this trooper chooses to lift the cut down grenade launcher that's slung from his front and go loud! Before that, he'll be able to make stealth takedowns with his MKII Sten; but once again, an elite is gripping the mag and risking jams. It's a little pedantic to pick on this detail, but it's really the only negative we can spot in these figures. You could even look at this as a positive if you're after the 'action movie' look.



Above: View of the trooper's other side, showing his grip on the mag.

DETAILS

- SCALE: 28mm
- PERIOD: Vietnam War
- PRICE: £2.50 each
- MATERIAL: Metal
- WEBSITE: gringo40s.com

WARPAINT FIGURES - JUNGLE TERRAIN

If you're keen to add some visually pleasing features to your tabletop but don't have the time to put terrain together, this could be the solution for you. Warpaint Figures' Jungle Terrain range offers different packs of scatter and feature terrain at various prices. Throw a few larger bases down in between the scatter and you'll quickly have a thick jungle... perhaps a perfect tabletop for your new Gringo 40s SOG troopers to move up through (see the previous page).

The bases are sturdy and come with aquarium-like foliage planted in place and a scattering of ground level dirt and detritus fixed on. You'll need to add the taller trees into the pre-drilled holes, and these are marked with small sticks making sure that even an idiot such as your humble *Wi* scribe managed it first try!

The hand crafted pieces are triple sealed for protection, and although the Warpaint Figures website suggests they will work for 15mm, we feel the leaves look too oversized at that scale; 20mm and up seems about right to us.

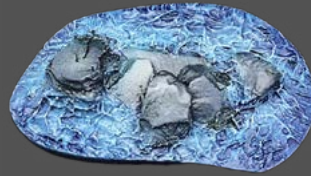
You may be thinking that this is all stuff that you could make yourself without too much effort; you might be right, but the next question to ask yourself is... will you? If you're like us and you have a million and one other projects fighting for your attention, then some quick-fix terrain such as this could be the perfect tabletop addition.



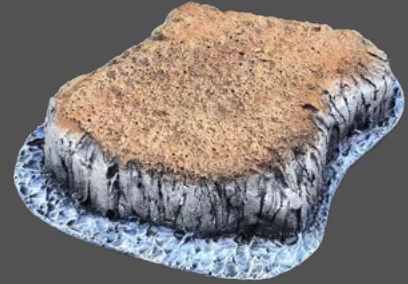
UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

NAVAL GAZING

Warpaint Figures have other options beyond these jungles. There's arid desert, bamboo jungles, assorted scatter options, and should you want to add your own painting stamp onto things, they've got a new set of resin naval terrain. This currently includes unpainted islands and rock sets that will be perfect for 1/700 to 1/2400 naval gaming. Shown here are painted samples - you'll get bare resin.



Above: Naval rocks scatter set.



Right: Resin island.



Left: Five piece starter set.



Above: 9" x 5.5" large piece.

Below: Eight piece scatter set.

Below: 6.5" x 5" medium piece.



DETAILS

- SCALE: 20mm and up
- PERIOD: Assorted
- PRICE: £11.99 to £34.99
- MATERIAL: Various
- WEBSITE: warpaintfigures.com

AMMO - HOW TO PAINT MINIATURES FOR WAR GAMES

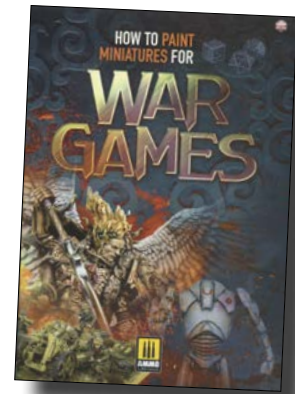
How to Paint Miniatures for War Games is a new offering from Ammo by Mig Jimenez, and it's chock full of painting tips and masterclasses that promise to help new and experienced painters alike. From the outset, the high production value of this book is clear; it's a lovingly created and well-presented guide that will probably inspire with its visuals just as much as it teaches.

After an introduction from Editor Rubén Torregrosa (who is no slouch with the paint brush and presents masterclasses on 15mm DAK Artillery and Spanish Tercios), the guide begins with a tour through the painter's toolbox and advice on miniature prep. Ammo already create some great hobby products - paints, pigments, weathering sets, and more - and QR codes link to these through the book. These never annoy, and it's certainly not a promo guide, they are just a useful addition should you want to pick up some hobby gear.

Next the book covers techniques, and this is where the ordering of advice may get confusing for newer painters. Colour theory is vital in creating a great looking miniature, but should it come before basic concepts, such as using a brush and thinning paint, as it does here? Perhaps not, but each section is presented beautifully, and the accompanying text is dense but quite readable, although a few sub-sections wouldn't go amiss in the larger walls of words.

Different painting techniques are shown - colour blocking; drybrushing; basecoat, wash, and highlight; enamel washes; triad system; wet blending; and layering - then there's a section on weathering effects and a brief chapter on basing. Each part is presented very well, and we suspect even veteran brushwielders will learn some new things.

We really like the variety of ranges and scales that are shown in the painted examples throughout the book, and it's interesting that some of the techniques are applied to figures you might not expect to see them on. The enamel washes section, for example, is presented on a Space Marine, the kind of figure we've come to expect will be used to illustrate edge highlighting.



DETAILS

- SCALE: Any
- PERIOD: Any
- PRICE: €34.95
- FORMAT: 168-page softback book
- AVAILABLE FROM: migjimenez.com



UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

TOP TRANSLATION

Originally written in Spanish, the book is also available in English (the version we looked at) and French. We can't speak to the French translation, but the English text was great; none of the awkward phrasing that we have come to expect from guides converted by non-native English speakers or translators who don't understand the hobby. Well done to the English Edit team of Jamie Tranter and Iain Hamilton!

Into the masterclasses

The book's second half consists of seven masterclasses from notable painters; each of these takes a deep dive into a specific project and the techniques relevant to it. Different approaches are presented on varied miniatures - David Imrie's 28mm ACW figures are followed up with Omar Olabi's 32mm Droid Infantry, for example - and while these guides begin with simpler 'fast painting' advice, things get increasingly elaborate. Iván Sanz De Castro's Riders of Rohan are lovely and present many approaches that will translate well to historical figures; Editor Rubén's Spanish Tercio looks outstanding (15mm painted like 28mm!); and anyone wanting to improve their freehand will love George Hatzopoulos' Hundred Years' War painting guide on a French sub-commander.

Galleries of the work are presented to inspire and inform, each step of the way is explained clearly through images and text, and useful diagrams pepper the book, showing paint applications at different angles on geometric shapes and more.

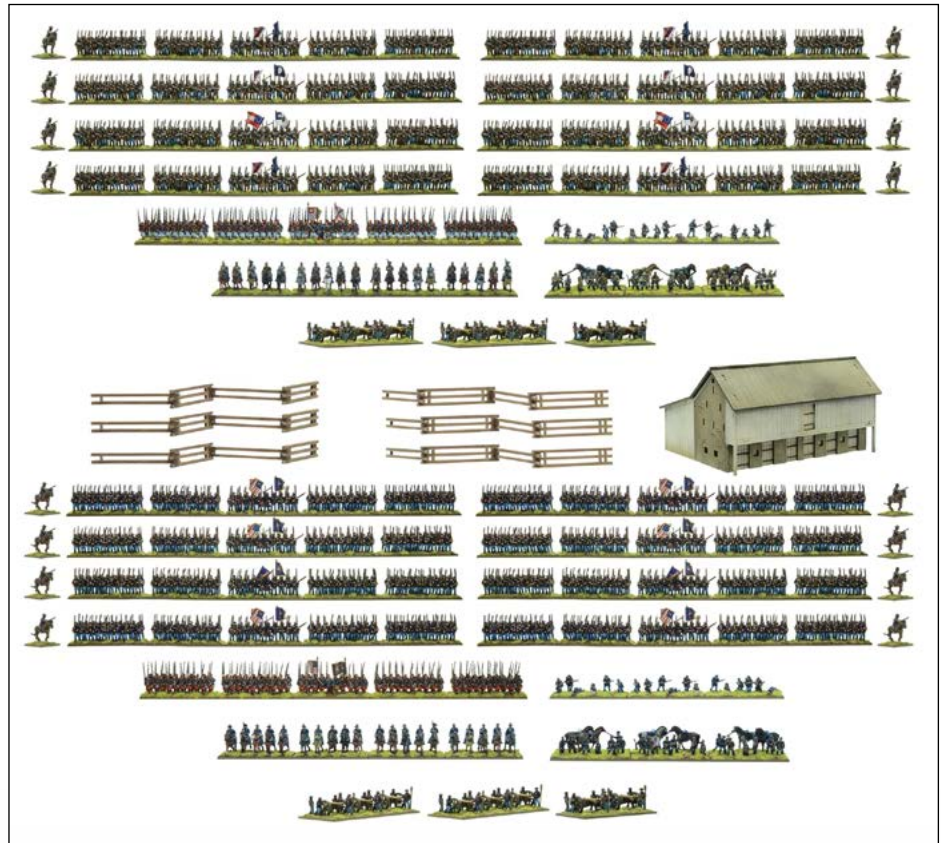
How to Paint Miniatures for War Games is a bit of a jack of all trades, but no worse for that; we think painters of all levels will enjoy the contents, but intermediate level hobbyists, in particular, will find that it really levels up their brushwork.



WARLORD GAMES - EPIC BATTLES - AMERICAN CIVIL WAR GETTYSBURG BATTLE SET

Warlord's Epic Battles range looks to be going from strength to strength, and gamers will soon be able to fight the American Civil War's grandest battle with figures straight out of the box thanks to the new blue and grey plastic found in their Gettysburg Battle Set.

This Gettysburg box feels like the natural follow up after the success of their expansive Napoleonic range; it returns to the ACW and includes a freshly tooled frame of figures to complement the existing ACW frame as well as other Gettysburg goodies. There's nothing completely new in this box, but notable tweaks in production make the contents well worth a look if you're already invested and want to bolster your armies. Best of all, this is a far more accessible set for gamers who might be new to Epic Battles, the American Civil War, or the hobby in general.



Above: The huge amount of models in the Battle Set.

Below: Confederate cavalry.

Below: Confederate Dismounted Cavalry.



DETAILS

- SCALE: 13.5mm
- PERIOD: American Civil War
- PRICE: £119 (smaller sets also available)
- MATERIAL: Plastic figures, MDF terrain, and softback books.
- WEBSITE: warlordgames.com



Above: Union cavalry.

Below: Union Skirmishers.

Below: Union Zouaves.

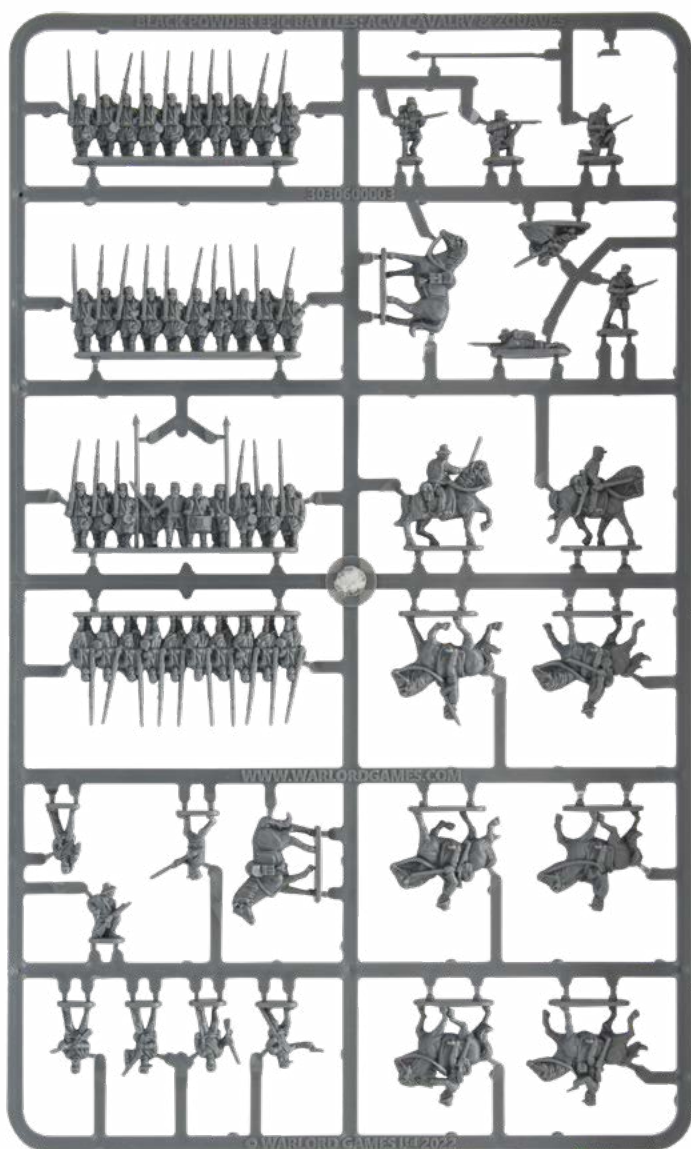




UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

WHAT ELSE?

As well as stacks of plastic, the Gettysburg box contains an A5 *Black Powder* rulebook; a 36-page American Civil War background, scenario, and supplemental rules booklet; flag sheets; and dice. That's your gaming needs sorted out, but a little terrain wouldn't go amiss. Have no fear, the connection between Warlord and Sarissa means there's some MDF included too. McPherson Ridge was the site of fierce fighting, and the farm building included in the set looks to represent the barn building from the farm of Edward McPherson. Add some snake rail fences around it, and you're all set and ready to get to battle!



From metal to plastic

The headliner in the Battle Set is the new frame - Cavalry & Zouaves - which takes figures that were previously available in metal sets and plonks them all onto a plastic sprue. The joy of this is that all the figures you need for your army now come as blue and grey plastic to represent the Union and Confederate troops. This makes for a glorious, game-ready mass of figures to take into battle. If you do want to paint them, you can, of course, but with over 2,500 figures in the box, it's nice to not need to!

The new frame adds a Zouave regiment, cavalry regiment, dismounted cavalry regiment, and skirmishers regiment to the eight infantry regiments, eight cannons, and eight mounted commanders available to each side. That's two impressive armies that will fill a standard 6' x 4' board. There was nothing wrong with the Zouaves, cavalry, and skirmisher figures in metal, but they felt a little inconvenient compared to the new ease of clipping plastics from the frame and fixing them to their bases.

If we're getting picky, the horses in this set look a little weak compared to the splendour and drama of those in Warlord's follow-up Napoleonic range. If we're getting really picky, we would have loved to also see a re-tool of the other frame, so things like the infantry's headgear could have gotten a bit of a mix up. Bringing in extra kepis would have made things look a little less one-sided as there's currently a lot of slouch hats on show.

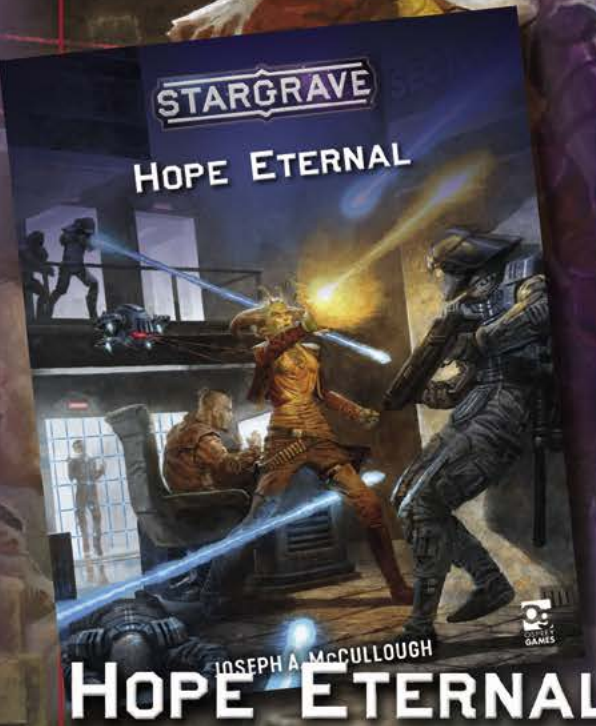
But we're quibbling in the face of generosity; this is one of history's most famous clashes crammed into a box and costing £120. That's less than it costs to run a single light bulb for a few hours in the UK! And look at these pictures; those are some suitably dramatic Zouave pants, some nicely posed skirmishers, and some impressive ranks of infantry. Drama at the smaller scale is something we love at *W*, so we're very happy to see Warlord putting their Epic focus back onto the American Civil War!

Above: The new plastic Cavalry & Zouaves frame.

North Star Military Figures Ltd,
Unit W41, Lenton Business Centre, Lenton
Boulevard, Nottingham,
NG7 2BY, UK
Mail Order: 0115 9704107
Trade Sales: 0115 9786656
Email: mailorder@northstarfigures.com
Web: www.northstarfigures.com

Nick Eyre's
NORTH STAR
Military Figures
Presents

STARGRAVE



HOPE ETERNAL

Hope Eternal is a solo and cooperative expansion for Stargrave. Along with full rules for playing the game in this new style, the book contains an intricate campaign of connected scenarios. Whether you brave the perils of the campaign alone, or enlist the aid of another independent crew, this is your chance to bring back a little hope to the ravaged galaxy!



20 MULTI-PART HARD PLASTIC 28MM FIGURES

MERCENARIES II

20 MULTI-PART 28MM PLASTIC FEMALE MERCENARIES FOR STARGRAVE.



OSPREY
GAMES

www.northstarfigures.com

JOIN NICK EYRE'S
NORTH STAR
Newsletter





HOME OF GAME MATS



VARIOUS
SIZES



DIFFERENT
MATERIALS



LOTS OF
DESIGNS



FRIENDLY
SHIPPING



DICE TRAYS



PREPAINTED TERRAIN

PRINT-O-MAT - YOUR IMAGE ON MOUSEPAD MAT

WWW.DEEPCUTSTUDIO.COM

INFO@DEEPCUTSTUDIO.COM



RELEASE RADAR

Dom Sore dons his fluffy slippers, reclines his comfy chair, sips a warm drink, and watches for signs of new wargaming goodies on his Release Radar as Autumn arrives in the UK.

(FOAM) INSERT TITLE HERE

I am a great lover of a Really Useful Box for the transportation of my painted figures, but it can be a bit precarious; I am always looking for options to reduce the risk of damage. SHQ Miniatures (shq ltd. com) and their foam laagers might be the spongy solution. They are designed to fit into 4L and 9L boxes and have ready cut inserts or a 'Pick and Pluck' option with deep and shallow variants. A 4L box will take two shallow or one deep where a 9L will take four shallow or two deep. Given my investment in Really Useful Boxes these are a nice addition, and though they may not be suitable for all armies, they will help with a few of them. Taking Tray B as an example, it stores 33 28mm figures on their sides, giving you a capacity of 66 in a 4L box with massively minimised risk of chipping.



The nights are getting longer and even a painting procrastinator such as myself is planning on spending more of the dark days at my hobby desk. That means I need to find new things to work on; here's the shiny stuff that's caught my eye this month.

ECW ANONYMOUS

My ECW army is growing at such a rate it will soon be a match for the Parliamentarian side of Naseby if I don't rein myself in... but new ECW figures from 1st Corps (1stcorps.co.uk) are more likely to dig their heels into me! There are Mounted Officers wearing Assorted Helmets and Mounted Standard Bearers, and both packs contain three white metal mounted figures. You can choose to have walking or galloping horses, the helmets are assorted in both packs, one of the standard bearers has a hat, and there are flag poles provided for your standard bearers. With these now added to my collection, I've got three new small commander groups, and the mathematics of miniature collecting makes it a requirement that I now create three new regiments, right?



Bloody Miniatures (bloodyminiatures.co.uk) bring 'A Chorus of Disapproval' to my collection. This is a set made up of four packs of four white metal 28mm figures: The Gallant Ladies, The Flying Picquets, The Unhorsed Cuirassiers, and The Village People. The figures are as good as previous Bloody Miniatures releases and will add a ton of variety and interest to our games; I can't wait to see what they get Nick Collier to do next. I might need more than just three new regiments... and some extra load bearing support in the loft to hold all the metal.



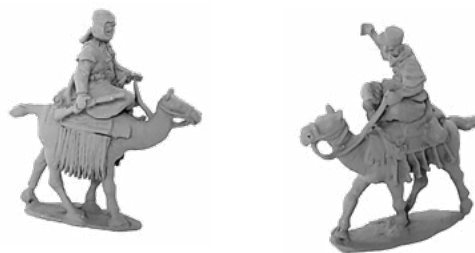
If only I'd gone smaller in scale, Steel Fist Miniatures (steelfistminiatures.com) could have helped with two new packs in their 15mm ECW range that cover the Royalist and Parliamentarian Commanders, including the dastardly King Charles, Earl of Bristol, and the righteous Oliver Cromwell amongst others. The figures are reasonably identifiable if you have a good knowledge of the period and will look wonderful leading their respective forces in battle.



SOVIET 6MM, FRENCH CAMELS, AND ITALIAN ARMOUR

Time for my regular dive into WWII, starting with Soviets from Baccus 6mm (baccus6mm.com) that provide a lot of support options and infantry for any Soviet force you might want to build. You have SMGs, LMGs, HMGs, three sizes of mortar, anti-tank rifles, normal rifles, and Combat Engineers; more than enough options to get a burgeoning horde started for the Eastern Front, or even Manchuria if that takes your fancy.

At a larger scale are the new 20mm ranges from Early War Miniatures (earlywarminiatures.com). These combine to help you build the Division Leclerc that was formed in French Equatorial Africa and harassed the Italian and German forces in Southern Libya. There are Free French Camel Mounted Legionaries, Méhariste Free French Colonial troops, and the modified Bedfords of the Leclerc column. The Leclerc Column range comes with no less than five different vehicles, and anything using camels gets my vote of approval. I really appreciate manufacturers taking the time to research and release the more esoteric offerings history throws up, especially at a time when there's so much of the 'standard' desert options available. These deserve to do well, and hopefully there will be some additions made to the range.



Above: Free French Column LeClerc.

Below: Free French Radio command Bedford truck 1.5 ton, modified for desert operations.



Above: Semovente 90/53.



Above: P4 artillery tractor.



Above: Caro Comando.



One of their opponents in the desert were the Italians, and if you are collecting those in 28mm, MarDav Miniatures (mdminis.co.uk) have a new selection of Italian vehicles in 3D printed resin: Semovente 90/53, P4 artillery tractor, Caro Comando, and L3/38 tankette. The Semovente 90/53 mounts the effective 90mm heavy AA gun and comes with a driver and loader; yes, they really were loaded from outside the vehicle. The P4 artillery tractor is the most interesting for me as these are the kinds of vehicles neglected by many ranges.

SUBLIME STRUCTURES AND GORGEOUS GROUNDWORK

Figures need something to battle around, and one purveyor of fine terrain pieces is Paul's Modelling Workshop (paulsmodellingworkshop.com). Their products are mainly produced in resin, and I can highly recommend their 20th Century trench set. New to their catalogue is a Redoubt in 1/56 scale (right), which takes up a hefty 8.5" square, providing 6.25" of internal space in which to place your artillery or infantry. There are two main options - with or without stormpoles (holes are pre-drilled to accept the dowels) - and you can get it in bare resin, or for the more time-strapped gamers, painted. The stormpoles are 4mm walnut dowel and the whole thing comes in at just under 1kg. It is a hefty terrain piece that will form an excellent addition to any table, though I wouldn't want to drop it on my foot with the dowels attached!



Your figures need bases as well as fine looking terrain to fight around. Black Site Studios (blacksitestudio.com) have some interesting sets coming out soon that'll help you there. They call them Basing Elements, and each set contains 51 pieces of small resin or laser cut details for you to add to your chosen base. The first two sets - Jungle and Street - contain a load of characterful details for those environments and will be perfect for 28mm to 32mm figures. I might have to revisit the bases on my World War Two Japanese with the Jungle set, and I am very interested to see what comes in the Horror set, especially given the horror figures Black Site Studios already produce. While I'm talking about this company, I can't leave out a mention of their bonkers big Northwood Mall MDF kit. This is a gigantic piece of terrain - 34" x 25.5" - and if you're ready to invest the time and money into it, you'll end up with an impressive multi-story shopping mall to battle through.



Above and right:
Two views of the
Northwood Mall
MDF kit.



Above: Jungle set
basing details.

MISCELLANY

Not sure where to start painting your World War Two German desert tanks? Then Ammo by Mig Jimenez (migjimenez.com) have the answer... actually, to be more precise, they have the solution! The WWII German D.A.K. Vehicles Solution Box (right) contains one primer, one paint, a filter, two washes, and four other weathering effect products from this purveyor of great quality hobby products. The prize item here might be the 55-page painting guide, which will take you by the hand through the process of using those products to make a tank that will be the envy of anyone who faces your army.



Above: German D.A.K. Vehicles Solution Box by Ammo.

New(ish) 28mm Roman Advancing Hastati from Aventine Miniatures (aventineminatures.co.uk) next; I say newish as they are a slight redo and remaster of their existing range. Aventine are tweaking and improving their sculpts, and so far it looks like they are doing a cracking job if the Hastati are anything to go by. They come armed with the pilum and wear pectoral armour and carry a scutum. I am looking forward to seeing the next releases for the range.



Above: Aventine Romans.



Above: Pendraken AWI Mounted Militia.

Not in the least bit related to that are 10mm American War of Independence figures from Pendraken Miniatures (pendraken.co.uk). This already excellent range has had a raft of new additions to three of the belligerents: American, British, and French. These include Lee's Legion, Queens Rangers, Chasseurs, Mounted Militia, four different guns, and the Duc de Lauzun. The guns are all French weapons and come with crew.

And different again is the final offering of this month, a large World War One release by Trenchworx (trenchworx.com). It is a doozy; no less than ten 28mm Great War vehicles have been made available for download. Yes, download; these are the STL files you need to print your own tank brigade to attack the trenches. You can choose from FT-17, Schneider CA1, Crossley Tender, Rolls Royce Armoured Car, Mark IV, Mark V, Saint Chamond (Early and Late), Whippet, and A7V. Some of these still appear well after World War Two and are perfect for any inter war games you might be playing. That is without adding in customisation possibilities to really hit the Heath Robinson vibe that is inherent in all Early War armour.



Above: Crossley Tender.

Below: Rolls Royce Armoured Car.



Above: Mark IV.



Above: FT-17.

And that's it for another month. Until next time, fare thee well, and happy gaming!

THE INTELLIGENT WARGAMES TABLE

VALKYRX



BIRMINGHAM VALKYRX CENTRE NOW OPEN!

We are pleased to announce the opening of our Gaming Centre on Saturday 1st October.

Regular Opening Times:

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 2pm - 9pm

Saturday and Sunday 11am - 8pm.

COME AND MEET US AND ENJOY 21st GAMING ON THE INTELLIGENT WARGAMES TABLE (IWGT).

YOUR FIRST VISIT IS FREE OF CHARGE!

You are welcome to play our "Days of the Valkyrx" and Napoleonic games on the IWGT, or use our tables to play traditional style games of your choosing. More games on the IWGT will be available soon!



ATTENTION ALL WARGAMES CLUBS IN BIRMINGHAM!

Have you considered re-locating your club night to a new venue?

We can offer:

- 3,500 sq ft of themed space with world class wall art
- 350 sq ft of Tables
- Free use of over 12,000 house miniatures
- Free to use popular board games
- Refreshments area with lounge seating
- Storage for your miniatures and scenery
- Affordable costs
- A warm welcome!

Make the Valkyrx Gaming Centre your new prestige HQ. Others already have.

Contact Alan on 07856 893685 or e-mail: birmingham@valkyrx.com

VALKYRX GAMING CENTRE: 136 ICKNIELD PORT ROAD, EDGBASTON, BIRMINGHAM B16 0BJ

VALKYRX.COM

@Valkyrx_Gaming

Head Office tel: 01327 368 498
email: info@valkyrx.com

Valkyrx_Gaming

Gaming Centre tel: 07856 893685
email: birmingham@valkyrx.com

@valkyrx_gaming

PULP FIGURES

by Bob Murch

ASTOUNDING, 2-FISTED 28MM MINIATURES
FOR MANLY ADVENTURE GAMERS
AROUND THE GLOBE !

www.pulpfigures.com



Arcane Academics

28mm Metal Miniatures
of Foolish Seekers after
Forbidden Knowledge



PMH-3
Arcane
Academics

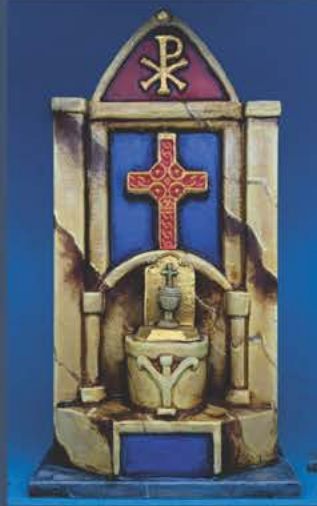


PMH-6
Altar of Evil



PMH-9
Devilish
Accoutrements

PMH-4
Student
Investigators



PMH-5
Shrine of the
Grail



PMH-9
Mediums
& Mystics



Available in the UK & EU from:

Nick Eyre's
NORTH STAR
Military Figures

North American
Retail Inquiries Contact
www.cruciblecrush.com



FULL PAPER JACKET

NEW BOOKS FOR THE DISCERNING WARGAMER

BY NEIL SMITH

Battles or campaigns? Or battles within battles? What do you prefer to play? The answer perhaps depends on which part of the wargaming historical-simulation spectrum you play and the rules you use. That probably also affects the books you read to inspire your gaming. Whatever your choices, I'm sure we have something for you in this month's releases.



ANCIENT

Our first book takes us to Ancient Rome and promises something a bit different as you will see in the title, *The Roman Gladius and the Ancient Fighting Techniques: VOLUME I - MONARCHY AND CONSULAR AGE* (Frontline). The author, Fabrizio Casprini, wraps his story around the pointy implement of Roman success, their sword, which is one reason many rules give Roman infantry a +1 when they get into combat.

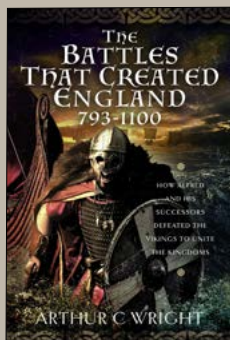
The second part of this title is interesting too because it takes us back to early Rome, somewhere we don't visit often enough. There is so much going on militarily when Rome was not assured of primacy in Italy let alone the Mediterranean world. This book has obvious wargaming potential.

Speaking of Roman supremacy, what we often see in their history is a series of waves, followed by setbacks, Roman changes, then off they go again. A textbook example came in the late 2nd Century BCE when the Romans came up against the Cimbri as told in *Invasion! Rome Against the Cimbri, 113-101 BC* (Pen & Sword) by Philip Matyszak. At first, the Cimbri stuffed the Roman armies sent against them, but the new Roman leader, Gaius Marius, for all his faults, made the necessary military changes to overcome the Cimbri. But as Matyszak points out, this was a close-run thing, and that means more great wargaming potential, especially for campaigns before and after Marius' reforms.

EARLY MEDIEVAL

Forget campaigns, most of us just like a good battle to fight. I like a bit of finesse in my battles, so I have mostly avoided the apparent slugfest fights in what used to be called the Dark Ages. You know the scene; two similarly drab armies charge across a muddy field, collide, then fight until one of them runs away after the customary massacre. That's easy to simulate; just throw lots of dice and see

who is left. Arthur Wright, however, might take umbrage at that characterisation. His *The Battles That Created England 793-1100: How Alfred and his Successors Defeated the Vikings to Unite the Kingdoms* (Frontline)

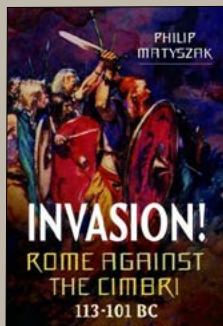


posits a different approach to understanding the formation of England through battles. Wright argues that the commanders of that era deployed sophisticated strategies and tactics, and he uses topographical and other fields

of study to support his case. If he is correct, we might need to reassess our slugfests, but that could be fun too.

MEDIEVAL

More battles? Why not? We skip forward to the Wars of the Roses with David Cohen's *Battles of the Wars of the Roses* (Pen & Sword). Some might argue this has to be the most over-hyped war in English history when, if you weren't directly involved, you'd barely know it was happening. But it was also a great, little soap-opera full of skulduggery, murder, treachery, and mayhem - a proper wee *Game of Thrones*. There were lots of battles too, and Cohen covers seventeen of them. A bit like the Dark Age battles, we often get the impression that these battles were also slugfests. Some were, no doubt, but a study like this reveals the

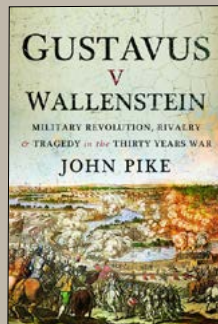


n u a n c e s in other battles, and there was significant drama in all of them where crowns were won and lost. Will I be a shameless stooge here and push the excellent *Never Mind the Billhooks* rules for the Wars of the Roses and other 15th Century wars? Of course not!

EARLY MODERN

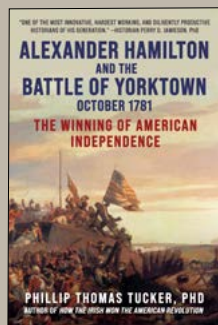
Battles need commanders, and if you are fortunate to have one on your side, the day could go well. But history has a way of matching great commanders, or at least historians do, and the Thirty Years' War is no exception. John Pike introduces arguably the two best in that war in *Gustavus v Wallenstein: Military Revolution, Rivalry and Tragedy in the Thirty Years War* (Pen & Sword). Gustavus was flair and brilliance, which cost him his life in battle, while Wallenstein was deliberate and cautious, which possibly led to his assassination. Pike assesses these two commanders and places them in the

context of the developing Military Revolution. The coming together of two contrasting styles of generalship is always interesting for wargaming; though most wargamers I know want to play like Gustavus, I've played in many games where his cavalier approach comes badly unstuck. For those thinking about a TYW project, this might be a good place to start.



AMERICAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

We don't often visit the American War of Independence, but Phillip Tucker's *Alexander Hamilton and the Battle of Yorktown, October 1781: The Winning of American Independence* (Skyhorse) presents such a tasty little scenario that I couldn't resist. This is the story of how Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Hamilton - yes, him from the musical - led a successful attack on a key British redoubt at the siege of Yorktown. It was such an egregious breach of the British defensive line, that there was little they could do to retrieve the situation, and their surrender soon followed. So, what we have is an almost perfect small-scale engagement to fight, complete with a +1 hero! It is also ideal for solitaire play, with both sides easy to programme. And if you have never visited the



redoubts at Yorktown, they were obviously no pushover, so your outcome is likely to be in the balance until the last throw of the dice.

NAPOLEONIC WARS

I'm undoubtedly unfashionable when it comes to the Napoleonic Wars, but my favourite theatre to read about and play is the Peninsular War. And even worse, I still like French v British games - they take me back to my youthful Airfix days. I also like reading unit histories.

My ears pricked up then at Carole Divall's *Wellington's Unsung Heroes: The Fifth Division in the Peninsular War, 1810-1814* (Helion). This Division was at the forefront of the British victory at Salamanca (my favourite battle) and they were first into Badajoz after that terrible siege. Yet, they haven't really been given the credit they deserve by our historians. Divall is out to fix that, using a wide range of sources from the Division. The idea of following the 5th Division through the war is appealing, but a single campaign would do too. It should work well at 6mm with some 'big battle' rules. Let the research begin!

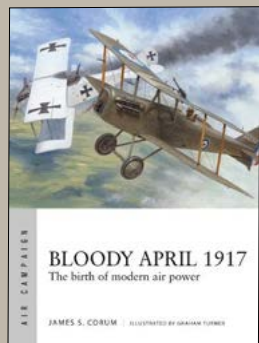
FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR

Another often overlooked war is the Franco-Prussian War. But with new figures from Perry Miniatures and some interesting recent articles in *Wargames Illustrated*, this conflict might finally get the recognition it deserves. Now we have Grenville Bird's *The Destruction of the Imperial Army: Volume 1 - The Opening Engagement of the Franco-German War, 1870-1871* (Helion) to knock out any last excuse. The hook here, other than the rich detail we expect from Helion's *From Musket to Maxim* series, is that Bird relies mostly on French sources when most works tend to be Prussian based. He sets out the stall for the war, which the French began with such high hopes, and follows them through their precipitous collapse. There is much more to this war than who had the best rifle, and it is well worth exploring. And now with figures, rules, and some good reading material, you have all you need to begin.

WORLD WAR ONE

While some wars claim to be the basis for World War One, there were still uniquely modern developments in the Great War. Nowhere was that more obvious than in the skies where aircraft transitioned from

almost a novelty addendum to an integral part of combined operations. But when did this happen? James Corum's *Bloody April 1917: The birth of modern air power* (Osprey) provides a perhaps controversial answer - I thought it was the Somme in 1916, but I plead ignorance. April 1917 revealed some serious backroom thinking on how airpower and artillery combined for major offensives, the deployment of strategic bombing, German use of high

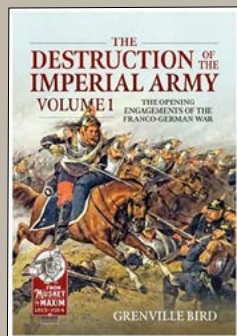


altitude reconnaissance, and the legendary exploits of Manfred von Richthofen, the Red Baron. Great War aerial wargames are nothing new, of course, but too often they focus on the gladiatorial aspects where we can all be aces if we survive. But what about more mundane patrolling, or intercepting bomber attacks, or they myriad other functions fledgling airforces carried out? This book should provide many ideas for interesting, if less spectacular, scenarios.

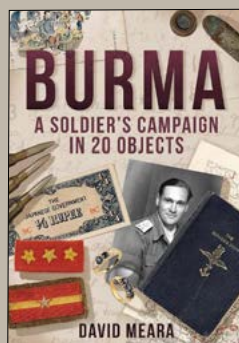
WORLD WAR TWO

As usual, there is much to choose from in the stack of new books on World War Two. This month, I will take two with the common theme of Allied retreat. Jerry Murland's *The Western Dunkirk Corridor 1940: Ledringhem, Wormhout and West Capelle* (Pen & Sword) is a new title in the excellent

Battleground series. Murland examines a slice of the Dunkirk campaign along its western approaches where a cobbled together British force held the line as long as they could against the rampant German attacks. Their sacrifice allowed the Dunkirk perimeter to form properly, thus aiding the evacuation, but they paid a high price, and not all of it within the 'rules' of war. There have been quite a few new books on Dunkirk published lately, and we are finally being told the full story from all sides. That should aid early war gamers in their research but also add to the range of potential scenarios for games.



As with the Dunkirk book, Tim Moreman's *Japanese Conquest of Burma 1942: The Advance to the Gates of India* (Osprey) considers an Allied army in headlong flight, this time through the jungles and all the horrors that had to offer. Here the lightly equipped and highly disciplined Imperial Japanese Army ran rings around the Commonwealth and Chinese forces, adding to the impression of the Japanese as 'supermen' in the jungle environment. That wasn't true, as was seen two years later when the boot was on the other foot; but try telling that to the 17th Division at Sittang Bridge, or those fighting rearguard actions in clashes at Rangoon, Yenangyaung, Monywa, and all the way to the border with

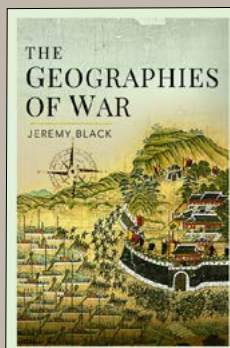


India. As with Dunkirk, the retreat to Burma offers a bit of niche wargaming in that the goal of the Allies is not to win but to survive; something that can be played at all levels from Division to Platoon. It also does not take much to work out a simple AI for either side and play solo. While I'm on the subject, check out David

Meara's *Burma: A Soldier's Campaign in 20 Objects* (Amberley) if you really want to get into the weeds for this fascinating theatre.

MISCELLANEOUS

I rarely get to mention a book that covers all wars, but Jeremy Black's *The Geographies of War* (Pen & Sword) stuck out from the crowd this month. Black points out that geography is a vital field for waging war. This isn't just the high school geography of where things are located on our planet, but includes political, social, economic, and cultural factors along with mapping, and Black spans the entire history of warfare from Antiquity to the Nuclear Age and beyond. This takes me back to this month's introduction: do you have a backstory for your wargames? I know you don't need one and might be content to throw down bits of terrain onto the table and have at it; however, there are those like me, that enjoy the setting in which our wee soldiers will fight, be that in Burma, France, or Anglo-Saxon England. This book seems like good background reading for that.



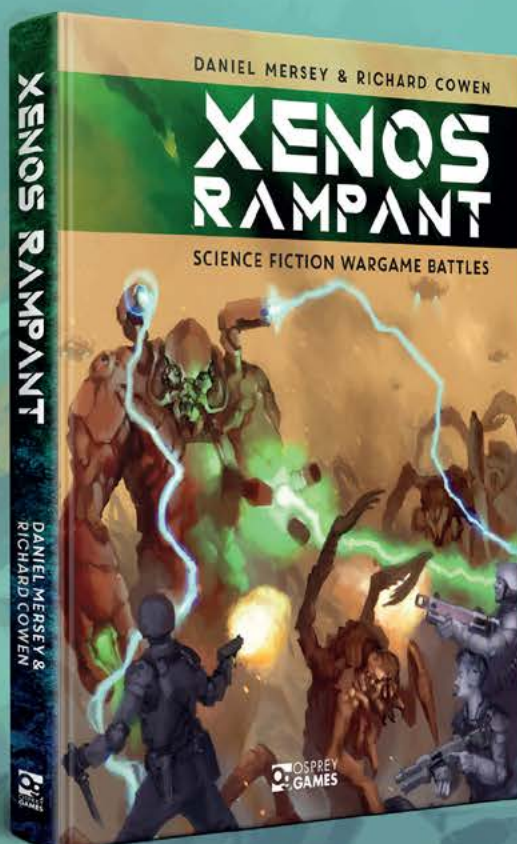
And that's all for this month but check out my reviews of new military history books on Facebook at Full Paper Jacket or my website hamsterwrangler.com/being-tsundoku/.

Happy reading (and gaming)!

DANIEL MERSEY & RICHARD COWEN

XENOS RAMPANT

SCIENCE FICTION WARGAME BATTLES



Xenos Rampant is a setting agnostic, large skirmish, miniature wargame for fighting science fiction battles using 28mm figures. Containing all the rules, army lists, and scenarios required to cover a whole host of subgenres including: post-apocalyptic, weird war, and near future.

Developed from the popular ruleset *Lion Rampant*, the core mechanics featured within will be instantly recognisable to those familiar with the other *Rampant* systems, while still being accessible to new players. So, whatever your science fiction preference, the rules can cover it – just let your imagination run rampant.

LANDING
NOVEMBER
2022

PREORDER YOUR COPY AT
WWW.OSPREYGAMES.CO.UK

 OSPREY
GAMES



ECW



MEDIEVAL



DARK AGES

WEBSITE UPDATED
REGULARLY WITH NEW STOCK



ACW



Wargames Fantasy and Sci-Fi figures always sought for cash, part exchange or swaps.

You can often exchange painted figures for castings through the Hinds Figures Swaps Scheme - Contact us for details

SECONDHAND WARGAMES FIGURES BOUGHT & SOLD

15mm & 25mm
Classical to WWII Eras in stock
Trading in figures, books & games since 1993

Figures wanted for cash, part ex. or new for old

99 Birchover Way, Allestree,
Derby. DE22 2QH. UK

Telephone: 01332 559025

Email: hindsfigsltd@btconnect.com



VISITORS BY APPOINTMENT ONLY
We accept Cheques, Credit Cards and PayPal

THE SILVER BAYONET SOCIETY

THE FINALE! (PART ONE)



James takes the players into an RPG-inspired freeform adventure for the climax of our *Silver Bayonet* campaign. The units put aside their enmities and head underground, facing unknown dangers as they search out the root of the mysterious Harvestmen's power.

Getting to the end of our *Silver Bayonet* campaign had been an epic undertaking. Our gaming sessions had been sporadic, weaved between clashing schedules, holidays, magazine and website deadlines, work trips, casting new miniature ranges, and plentiful Covid-19 infections. After so much effort, I felt duty bound to end things with a bang and bring the campaign to a memorable close!

Inspired by Pete Brown's articles on freeform play [issues 416 and 417 - Ed] I donned my metaphorical cloak and became the dungeon master for this game. The players' units would head into catacombs and passages, facing unknown dangers beneath the Siege of Cadiz (1811) before a final confrontation against a 'boss' monster.

Our four players; Dan, Joe, Matt, and Nick put aside their rivalries from previous games and teamed up to seek out who or whatever was leading the attacks in this area. They found two entrances leading beneath Cadiz as the siege continued above. Once they

moved into these unmapped underground passages, they'd face dangers in the dark before tackling the final threat of the Harvestmen.

PREPPING THE ADVENTURE

We had limited time for our final game, so I went through the unit rosters before the players arrived and halved each unit's strength to four characters, picking those who had been memorable in previous games. With that done; I created new unit sheets that were better suited to the RPG-like gaming. Each character's profile had space for notes and equipment that they might pick up along the way. I also gave most characters a thematic special rule or item, but they were only presented to players as a name on the rosters; it would be up to them to work out ways the items might be of use to them during play.

DESIGNING THE DUNGEON

I prepared a 2' x 2' board for the end of game 'boss' fight where a hefty Dagon miniature from Crooked Dice would serve as the final challenge. The Dagon

lurked in a chamber that opened up to contain a building, subterranean lake, and a frigate. Once this was prepared, I hid it away in another room before the players arrived, ready for a reveal later. Combat on that board would use the standard *Silver Bayonet* skirmish rules, but until then, players would move and fight across a grid-based dungeon using modified rules. That final encounter will feature in part two of this epic adventure in *Wi420*.

With my classic *Warhammer Quest* rooms and passageways boxed away in storage, I opted to use rooms and passageways from GW's recent *Blood Bowl* expansion *Dungeon Bowl* for the grid-based adventures. I feared these wouldn't be ideal, but they worked out well, and they feature the usual trappings of a dungeon adventure.

I'm quite an experienced DM, so I didn't feel the need to plan a lot beyond deciding on rules modifications. I knew where the players would start their adventure and a few things I wanted to fit in along the way. The rest was... jazz baby!

GETTING STARTED

When the players arrived, I introduced them to their new rosters, the basic changes to the rules (details of which are listed on the next page), then got them to roll for each of their characters to randomly select which of the two dungeon entrances they'd begin at.

As each party got formed and ready to move onto the first dungeon tiles, I took a deep breath and got busy directing the action.

This was a very different type of game, and I hoped I'd be up to the challenge of running things smoothly. We had a limited amount of time until some folks had to head home, and there were plenty of story beats that I wanted to tie up. As the game got underway, nerves vanished and fun began; I didn't end up covering half of the things I meant to, but as I ad-libbed new challenges, and the players came up with solutions to the problems that I'd never even began to imagine, my focus shifted a bit. Amplifying the fun and letting the actions of the players (especially any particularly rash ones) drive the narrative became my main goal. With a bit of luck, my cruel beasts and traps would kill off a few characters along the way to the finale and there would be an epic final showdown!



Above: (Left to right) Dan, Matt, Nick, and Joe ready themselves for the adventures ahead while my DM mission control setup fills the opposite side of the table.



Left: Some of the Dungeon Bowl tiles we used.

A GHASTLY BESTIARY OF DEVILISH DENIZENS

I scoured the *Wi* painted figure cabinets and put together a horde of enemies that the adventurers might encounter. There were some of the official *Silver Bayonet* miniatures from North Star, of course, but I hid a whole lot more under an upturned plastic crate that would act as my DM shield!

Some classic John Blanche goblins from the 1970s and early Citadel Elementals waited alongside modern resin wolves, plastic war elephants, and much more. Unfortunately, many of these denizens didn't make it out from under their crate and onto the board... but the models that did caused much trouble, and much to my delight a few unexpected injuries and deaths!



Above: Some of the varied enemies that the *Silver Bayonet* units did face: 1) A classic Citadel Fire Elemental, 2) Popeye from *Flags of War*, 3) A fearsome wolf from North Star's *Gods and Mortals* range, 4) A Revenant from North Star's *Oathmark* range, 5) One of the figures that I used to represent the corrupted French in the final battle, by *Laughing Monk Miniatures*.

FORMING THE FELLOWSHIPS

The units had made an uneasy truce. The evidence they had gathered through their previous adventures had led them to Cadiz; now they were at the besieged city, it was clear to the veteran combatants that something big and very bad was happening down below. They could sense it in the corrupted air they breathed, something foul that seemed to rise from the depths like life-sapping tendrils of doom. Nationalistic animosity was unimportant when potentially world changing evil was brewing beneath the city; the units would work together to take on whatever horrors awaited them underground.

A random roll was made for each model, and the units ended up in two groups of eight. One group of adventurers gathered to head through the catacombs that wove down beneath the city (see Catacombs Entrance on map below); the other said farewell to their friends for perhaps the last time then marched to a cave entrance (see Cave Entrance on map page 36) that might be the route to the evil they sought-out below.



Above: The Adventurers prepare to enter the Catacombs.

While most units had soldiers at both entrances, Joe's entire Russian unit was at the cave entrance. That meant four characters at the cave under the command of the least experienced gamer in the group, so I made a mental note that the right side of the dungeon where this group were might need the most managing and coddling before things got underway.

FROM SKIRMISH TO SQUARES – THE SILVER BAYONET AS A DUNGEON ROMP

The modifications I made to translate the core *Silver Bayonet* rules to dungeon adventuring were very basic. I used the KISS mentality (keep it simple, stupid) and changed any measurement from inches to squares. This meant no conversion of existing character profiles was required. When the final open board battle was reached, things reverted to inches.

The turn sequence had a basic variation of the initiative phase present, but this was used primarily to add risk. A player from each group of adventurers would roll a 12+ Courage check at the start of each turn, with no modifiers. If they passed, play would continue as normal; but if they failed, the dangers of the 'dungeon' would activate. They'd roll on the Unexpected Events or Unexpected Encounters table, and I'd come up with whatever dungeon-based alternative fitted the description in the book (e.g., Artillery Strike would become a trap that had been activated) or just decide on something based on the board tile they were on (e.g., a Fire Elemental in a room with a lava filled chasm).

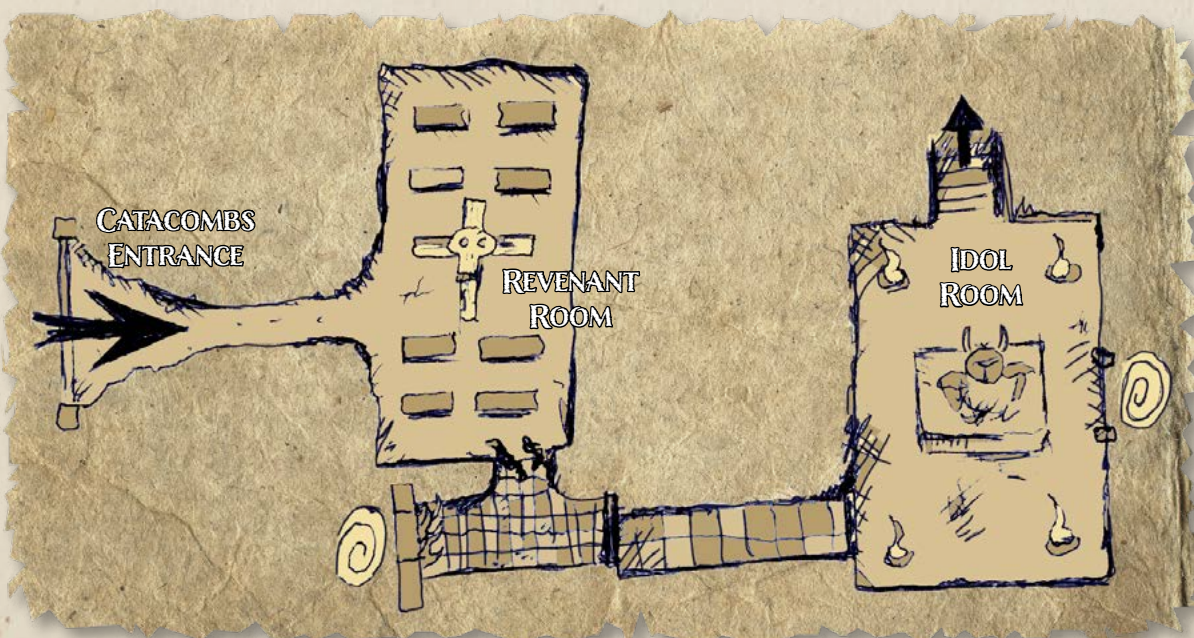
I let the players fight between themselves over which figures to activate and when. Half of the group (four on each side) could activate before the Monster Phase, and both groups performed actions at once to speed things up. That kept me on my toes, but

it added an extra level of fun and mayhem to the gameplay and meant more dungeon diving could be fitted into the afternoon we had put aside for gaming.

I considered adding an intelligence or perception stat to weave into various tests, but continuing with the KISS mentality, I used the existing Courage value to determine every test that didn't involve brute force and modified it as I saw fit. Where strength was required, a melee test sufficed; players rolled against a defence value (I'd decide the number depending on the difficulty of the task or the resilience of the item) and a pass would equal a success with no need for wounds.

In all tests, a very high roll or critical hit would have positive consequences (e.g., finding important information, items, or healing potions), while a low roll would have far more negative effects (e.g., traps, monsters, and general pain), and a critical failure would be the point where I conjured up particularly nasty fates for the rolling player.

That's about it! Reacting to the players is the challenge you'll face as a DM. Working out when to ease progress if they are struggling is vital, but at times being a little mean if things get too easy is essential. Amplifying the entertainment is always the priority.



THE REVENANT ROOM

1) The tension mounted as the adventurers pushed through a passageway and into a large, vaulted chamber lined with ornate carvings and recessed resting places for the city's previous residents.

As Matt and Nick prepared to advance into the first dungeon area, they started to ask me about their options. I'd barely begun to explain that they had a torch-bearer who would probably be best to take the lead when Dan's Officer, clearly not in the mood for caution, boldly took the lead without any form of torch in his hands.



2



2) Dan: I want to examine this tomb!

James: Um, do you want to look around at all first, maybe bring a torch over? It's so dark in here you can barely make out the details on the cold stone.

Dan: No, let's roll. What do I need?

James: Ok... Take a -4 Courage check in the darkness.

Nick: Dan, maybe we should wait...

Dan: I've failed, what does that mean?

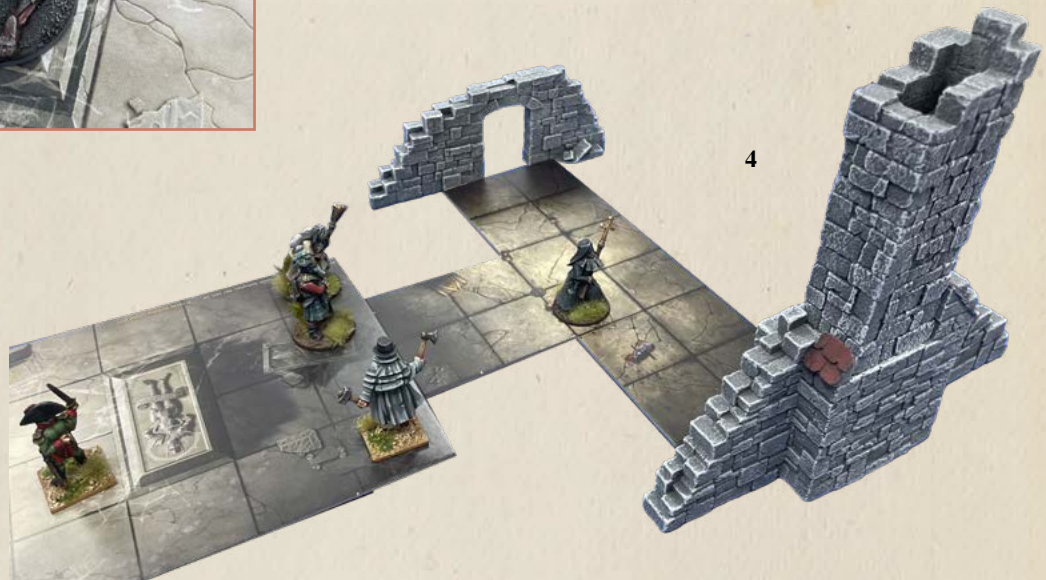
I'd done my best to show the players that caution might be the better part of valour as they explored, but the Spanish unit's blood was clearly up! A revenant rose from the tomb and began to do battle with nearby figures as more soldiers advanced.

3



3) I was a fool to think that Dan would have learned his lesson! Rather than join the fight, his Irregular moved to the other tomb to investigate it. I didn't even let Dan roll a Courage check this time and just sprang a rotten revenant from the tomb and gave the boss a 'what did you expect?' look!

4) Luckily, the levelled-up soldiers in play dealt with their foes quickly, and once things calmed down, they explored the room with care, finding a crack in a wall. Nick's Highlander boldly stepped up, swung his double handed sword, and rolled so badly that he practically missed the stationary structure altogether! Thankfully, Matt's Champion of the Faith's aim was true; the wall crumbled, and the party progressed into a corridor lit by a burning furnace at one end.



GOBLINS IN THE SMOKE

1) The other party said goodbye to daylight and headed through a cave opening that led to passageways dripping with damp. The walls seemed to emit a glow from a coating of mildew; so visibility was good, but everything was cast in an eerie green half-light. The passageway wound on, getting narrower and darker until a door appeared in the distance.

1



2) The table result for the random encounter calls for a single Goblin, but I couldn't resist the possibility of thinning the units early, so I dropped two Goblins at the group's rear and two at the front. I suspected that although Goblins had been a dangerous enemy in the campaign's early games, they'd now be quite weak against the levelled-up units. They'd hopefully cause some wounds and give the players a chance to use some of the healing potions which I had given to the less combat focused characters in the units.

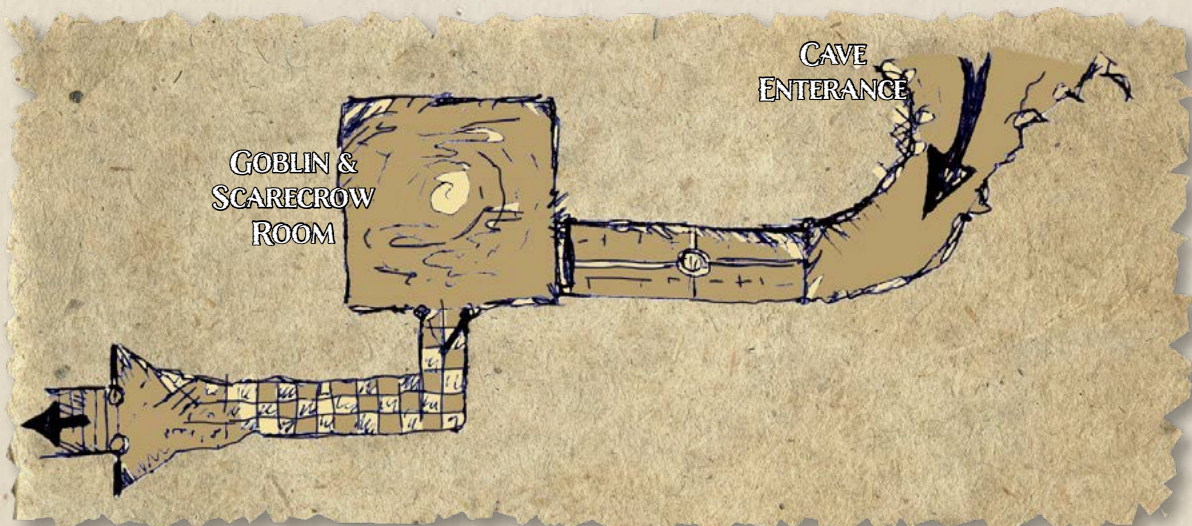
2



The play on this side of the table was uneventful at first, and Joe took me by surprise by being the first player to enquire about the special items some of his characters held. His Werebear had a small portrait of a loved one (if he wanted to, he'd be able to use this to revert to human form after changing: I'd decided that Werebears wouldn't have the dexterity to perform many of the nuanced tasks that might be required in the dungeon), while his Cossack could summon up a spectral mount. The calm was not to last; the players failed a Courage test in the initiative phase and Goblins appeared.

3) The Goblins attacked as the Monster Phase began, wounding Nick's Doctor and Joe's Grenadier at the rear of the group. The players quickly realised that they'd need to keep strong melee fighters scattered throughout the group as it advanced because monsters could drop in to attack the rear at any moment.

3



4) As one, the soldiers levelled their weapons and started to open fire. With each blast, more smoke filled the claustrophobic space until the choking mist of gunpowder meant they were firing blind and risking hitting friend as much as foe!

It was only when the players started to add cotton wool to their figures (to indicate reloads were required) that it struck me how quickly firing weapons would impede visibility in a confined area. I invented a rule on the spot to reduce the accuracy of shooting then made it more likely to hit friends rather than foes if firing continued (see below right).

Even though several of his characters got badly wounded in the ongoing combat, novice gamer Joe really enjoyed the random danger of the Goblin encounter. He later told me that it was at this point in the game he realised things would be quite different to the previous 'by the book' skirmish battles he had played in and that he could have more fun here. The finale was far and away his favourite game of the campaign. Hurrah!

4



SPREAD THIN

1) With the Goblin encounter over, Nick's Doctor and Joe's Cossack got delayed while they searched the room for possible loot. The only discovery they made was a bundle of ragged clothing, sticks, and straw, which suddenly took an approximation of human form and became a Living Scarecrow. Nick had luckily already taken an action to heal himself up as the Scarecrow's curved blade took a slice out of the good Doctor that took him close to running out of wounds.

1



2) Nick's Doctor swigged on a healing potion while Joe's attacks struggled to scratch the Scarecrow due to its Damage Reduction value of 8. Nick surveyed the rulebook and spotted a possible solution: "Scarecrows are vulnerable to fire. Matt, can your guy with the torch come back and set this problem alright?"

2



FIRING BLIND

To represent limited visibility, use the following modifiers:

- Two figures have a reload counter/smoke on them: Melee -1 and Accuracy -2.
- Three figures have a reload counter/smoke on them: Melee -2 and Accuracy -3.
- Four or more figures have a reload counter/smoke on them: Melee -2 and Accuracy -3, but any missed attacks will cause 2 wounds to a random friendly model within range.

You can choose to ignore these rules for monsters or soldiers that might have better night vision.

You can use similar modifiers if your characters are fighting in the dark without the illumination of a torch.

3

3) In a few more turns, Matt had done just that, leaving a smouldering pyre in the room as the party regrouped and reached a firmly locked door.

Through this dungeon, I did my best to mix up the types of vulnerabilities in the monsters the groups faced so that they had to cycle in different attackers when encounters occurred. I also foreshadowed some encounters with the items found in the dungeon. A stash of silver, for example, probably meant some lycanthropy action lay ahead.



IDOL CURIOSITY

1) Nick's Officer, Lucky Jim, pushed ahead and into a large room illuminated by torches that showed a space very different to anything that Cadiz's original architects and designers surely planned. This ungodly space was dominated by a massive heathen idol, presumably erected in worship of the Harvestmen, and this brass monstrosity exuded a sapping aura of danger and despair.

As if this wasn't unsettling enough, a strange, unnerving, chuckling noise was bouncing from the stone walls. Suddenly a deformed sailor man launched into view with his bizarre battlecry of "Cos I eats me spinach!" and flung himself at Nick's Officer

Lucky Jim didn't hesitate; he aimed his pistol, opened fire, then cut down the bizarre humanoid with his sabre. As the sailor stumbled and fell, he let out one last "Yug ug ug ug!" laugh then flickered with magical energy and reverted to its standard Changeling form.

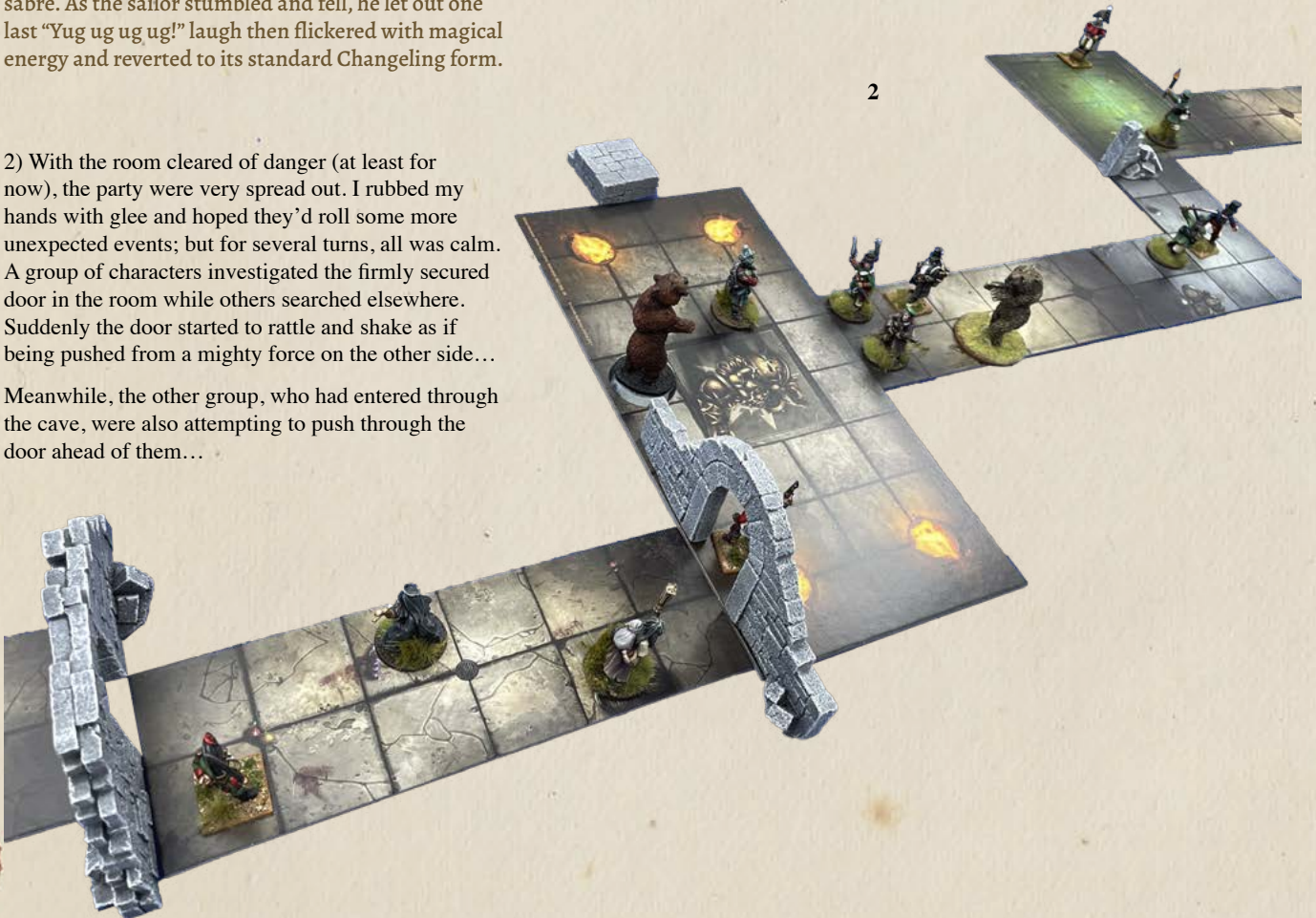
1



2) With the room cleared of danger (at least for now), the party were very spread out. I rubbed my hands with glee and hoped they'd roll some more unexpected events; but for several turns, all was calm. A group of characters investigated the firmly secured door in the room while others searched elsewhere. Suddenly the door started to rattle and shake as if being pushed from a mighty force on the other side...

Meanwhile, the other group, who had entered through the cave, were also attempting to push through the door ahead of them...

2



3) To the players looking at the board from above, it seemed that the two rooms should join up. It came as a shock to Nick, therefore, when his Highlander, eager to gain face after so spectacularly failing to break down the wall earlier, shoulder charged the door, vanished into thin air, emerged from the furnace he had passed by earlier, dropped to his knees, and promptly vomited onto his sporan and the stone slabs before him.

“So, it’s a portal?” Matt asked me. “Looks like it!” was my useful response, leaving the players to work out what was going on.

3



4) The players started to realise that while it might have looked like they were about to connect up, they were still far away from each other. I’d tricked them with my tile placement and they were probably still actually far from each other underground; perhaps something bad lurked behind the doors.

In the idol room, a secret door was located with steps leading down behind it. In the cave party, Dan’s Spanish Veteran decided a firm shoulder charge would be the best way to tackle the door problem before him. His Veteran made a melee attack against it, and much to the other players’ dismay and amusement, he rolled a critical failure, smashed the door open, and tumbled down the steps directly behind it.

4



5



5) The sound of the Veteran tumbling down lured an opportunistic mighty Vampire to attack the rear of the group, but it was dealt with by the silver cross wielding Spanish Swordsman, and eventually, licking wounds but all still alive, the parties moved down to the dungeon’s lower level...

The finale will conclude next month with traps, fire, danger, deaths, and an epic final battle with a Dagon!

PLAY THE FULL PENINSULAR WAR CAMPAIGN!

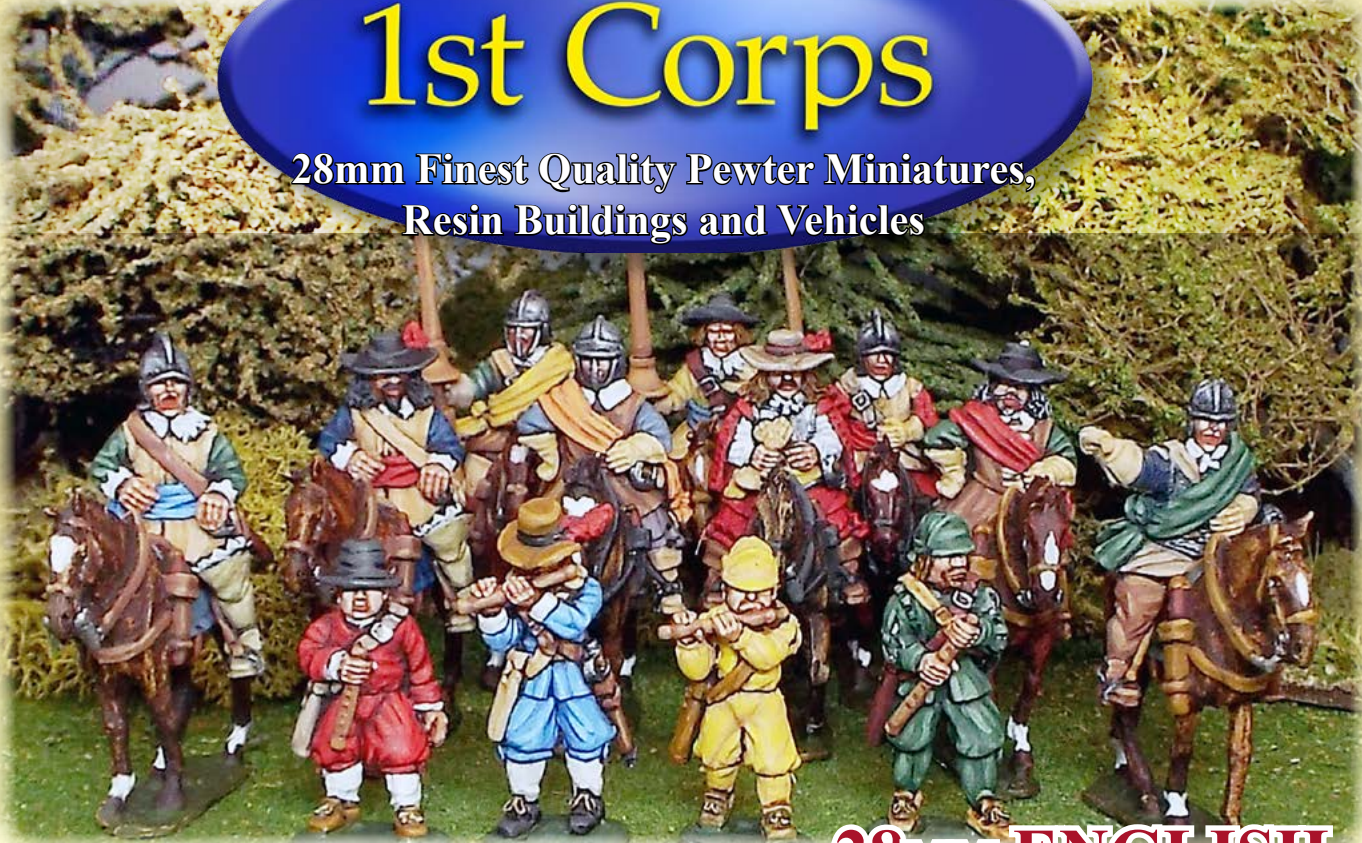
We’ve put a PDF of this entire campaign online so that you can take your own *Silver Bayonet* units through the Peninsular War campaign. This hefty PDF includes house rules, scenario and story progression, clues, items, and more!

Check it out at: wargamesillustrated.net/gaming/the-silver-bayonet-society/



1st Corps

28mm Finest Quality Pewter Miniatures,
Resin Buildings and Vehicles



28MM ENGLISH CIVIL WAR

Mounted Officers, Standard Bearers
and Fife players



Check the website or our Facebook page for more info:

www.1stcorps.co.uk

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK



FACEBOOK
Search for:
CurteysMiniatures

TWITTER
Search for: @Curteys

PayPal®

Battle Flag
Raising the Standard

Official stockists of Battle Flag
Water-slide transfers,
paper flags and HDF
laser cut buildings

3 The Parkway, Snaithe, East Yorkshire, DN14 9JN, U.K. Tel: 01405 860094 or 01405 862928 Mobile: 07732563508

available between 10am and
7pm Monday to Friday



Anschluss Wargames



Our intensely researched 'Forgotten Battles' range of Scenarios from WW2 are a great historical read but in concert with our "War on the Ground" rules provide the wargamer with challenging but little known actions to refight - each one a little gem.

Yes - averaging 20 hitherto never seen historical scenarios with full background stories.

Our ever expanding 12mm WW2 resin range complements the books and covers the vehicles you will have trouble finding, include many available for the first time in a wargaming scale.



Sherman Crab



KV2



Examples of our new 12mm range of WW2 vehicles

Panzerjager IVL48



Rules and Models by Anschluss Wargames. For more information see our website www.anschlusswargames.com



[www.artmasterstudio.co.uk /](http://www.artmasterstudio.co.uk/)
artmasterstudio@hotmail.co.uk
#: +44 (0)1255 677523

Contemporary, Professional,
Reliable, painting service!



THE IMPERIAL JAPANESE ARMY PLATOON



A WORLD WAR TWO TABLETOP TOOLKIT

Paul Leach shares how he uses Japanese platoons in games of *Bolt Action* and *Chain of Command* and provides some house rules that add extra character.

The Imperial Japanese Army makes for an excellent tabletop force to combat its Commonwealth, American, and Chinese enemies across the vast sweep of the Pacific Theater of World War Two games.

The army's historical counterparts earned a well-deserved reputation for diehard tenacity, readily embracing an aggressive disposition, personal privation, and a belief in Japan's superiority over its foes. However, they also suffered from chronic

“He allegedly was unconquerable in jungle terrain; his fanatical, death-courting charges and last-ditch defenses were broadcast until popular repute invested the Japanese soldier with almost superhuman attributes.”

Soldier's Guide to the Japanese Army

Military Intelligence Service - United States War Department

15 November 1944

shortfalls in firepower, communications, and logistics at the higher levels of command despite their ability to match an enemy's strength at the tactical level.

This article explores the wargame portrayal of the Japanese army in a few popular rulesets, primarily focusing on the organization, weapons, and tactics

of the platoon in Too Fat Lardies' *Chain of Command* and Warlord Games' *Bolt Action*. I also look at some toolkit ideas - army list and scenario-based options suitable for any ruleset - to flavor tabletop encounters with Japanese armies, whether your battles take place on the Asian mainland or the Pacific islands.



Bolt Action Japanese Army Infantry Squad.

Above: Part of a Japanese infantry section launch a banzai charge on entrenched American troops. From *Weapon 70: The Arisaka Rifle*. Artwork by Peter Dennis. © Osprey Publishing Ltd. www.ospreypublishing.com

THE PLATOON: ORGANIZATION AND WEAPONS

“Although the defensive is extremely distasteful to Japanese commanders, there naturally are occasions when they are confronted with such superior opposing forces that even the rashest commander must engage in such tactics. Nevertheless, the defense is regarded merely as a passing phase in combat.”

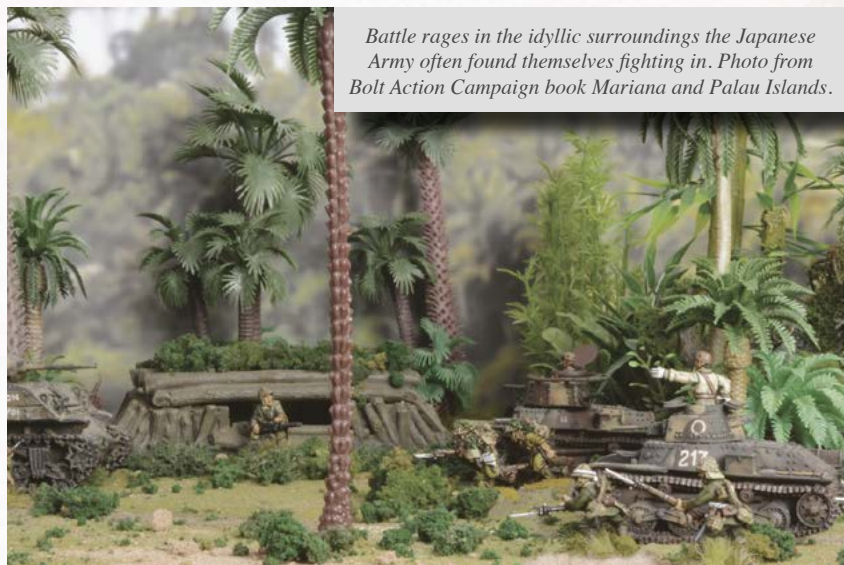
Soldier's Guide to the Japanese Army

Imperial Japanese Army tactical doctrine called for - in no uncertain terms - overwhelming enemy forces by close assault whenever possible. This battlefield mindset, which absolutely demanded an elevated fighting spirit, also defined how rifle companies would arm and deploy their platoons. By 1941, Japan had settled on a company structure, developed over the interwar decades and its war against China, which would remain intact for the war's duration.

A rifle company fielded three platoons, numbering about 55 men apiece, and each composed of a small headquarters and four 13-man sections/squads: three equipped with a light machine gun, and one armed with three heavy grenade dischargers (sometimes referred to as 'knee mortars'). The grenadier squad and the LMG teams would pin enemy units to the ground to cover an attack by the platoon's riflemen.

WEAPONS

Most of the platoon, even squad leaders, received Arisaka rifles; typically the 7.7mm Type 99 (1939) model, but the 6.5mm Type 38 (1905) remained in use. The grenadiers employed the 50mm Type 89 (1929) heavy grenade discharger to fire high explosive mortar rounds or hand grenades fitted with propellant devices; the weapons could also deliver a limited supply of pyrotechnic and smoke rounds. The light machine gun teams used the Nambu 7.7mm Type 99 (1939) or its predecessor, the 6.5mm Type 96 (1936) model, with the ammo caliber coinciding with the platoon's rifle issue. These 30-round magazine weapons could receive 2.5x telescopic sights and even bayonets, which served to further underscore the army's commitment to close combat.



Battle rages in the idyllic surroundings the Japanese Army often found themselves fighting in. Photo from Bolt Action Campaign book Mariana and Palau Islands.

AS THE WAR WENT ON

While the size of the 1941 company of 185 enlisted men (plus officers) might shrink due to mid-war reorganizations, especially in response to Japan's struggle to protect its Pacific possessions, the platoons retained their 3:1 ratio of LMG/grenadier squad allocations. The smaller rifle companies organized for island defense missions amounted to 154 men, reducing platoon numbers by around 40 percent.

Their LMG squads had an NCO and six privates; grenadier squads fared better with one NCO and eight privates plus a fourth discharger. Beyond an uptick in grenade dischargers, some types of island-based companies benefited from better access to close support weapons, which I'll review later in the article.

ON THE TABLETOP

For our baseline army list references, let's stick to the *Bolt Action* core rules

and a handful of *Chain of Command* PDFs (*Japan 1941-42* and *Japan-Island Defense*, available on the Too Fat Lardies' website). If you play other platoon-level, or even company/battalion sized wargames, you can easily adapt this article's game-related content for your chosen ruleset. So, how does the tabletop Imperial Japanese Army (IJA) platoon stack up?

Both *Bolt Action* and *Chain of Command* have you covered when it comes to the IJA LMG sections (which, by the way, is exactly what the Japanese named their LMG-equipped rifles squads). *Chain of Command* gives you a squad leader, LMG (three crew), and either nine riflemen (1941/42) or five riflemen (Island Defense). In *Bolt Action*, you receive an NCO and six riflemen, with an option to add an LMG and up to eight more soldiers. As expected, the NCOs receive rifles by default. The two rulesets diverge on how they handle the iconic knee mortar squads, however.



Bolt Action Imperial Japanese Army Machine Gun Section.



The Japanese 48th IMB hits US supply lines. Photo from Bolt Action Campaign book Mariana and Palau Islands.

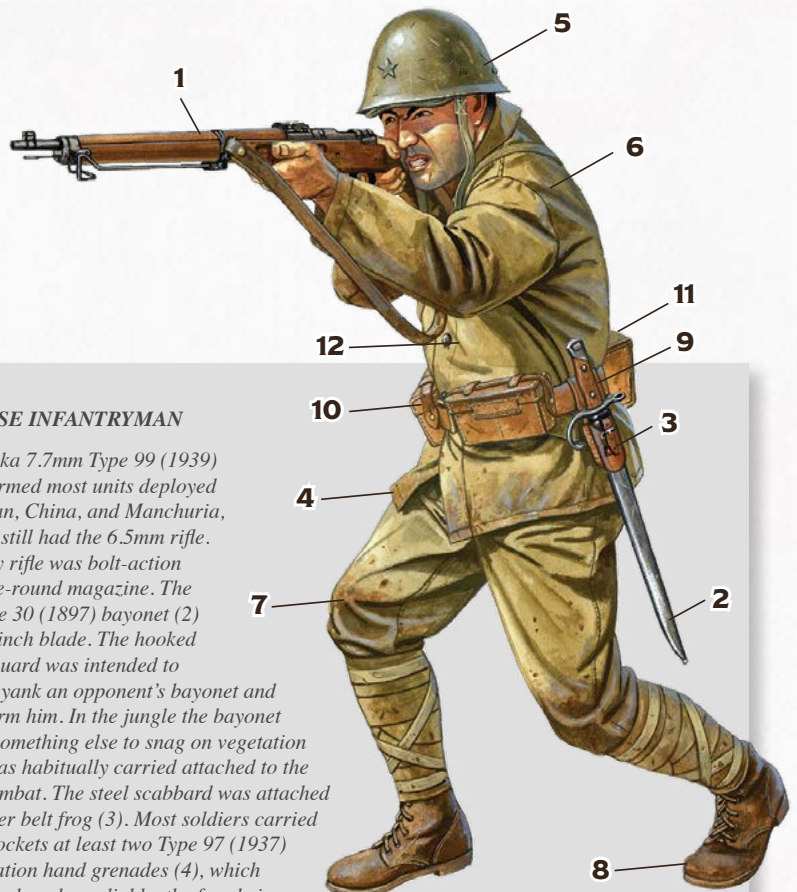
EXPLOSIVE POSSIBILITIES

It's probably not a surprise that *Chain of Command* offers a grenadier squad complete with three or four Type 89 discharger teams, aligning with the Lardies' 'play the period, not the rules' philosophy. The weapons are treated like rifle grenades and may be fired at targets at 12" or beyond; at closer range, the grenadiers use their rifles. For *Bolt Action*, a knee mortar team translates into a light mortar team, and you can only purchase one mortar (of any size) for each platoon. This certainly runs counter to the historical organization of the weapons, but it feels right as far as power balance for *Bolt Action* games.

PLAY THE PERIOD IN BOLT ACTION - COSMETIC CHANGES OR HOUSE RULES

You don't have to break the game to achieve a slightly different experience with more than one grenadier team on your *Bolt Action* tabletop. There are a couple of cosmetic options that can create the grenadier squad without upending *Bolt Action* gameplay; the simplest thing to do is always keep a section of riflemen (no LMGs!) close to the knee mortar team. If you want to improve the grenadier squad visibility and give it some punch, purchase a medium mortar team but represent it with three grenade discharger teams.

If you want to try something a little more nuanced, purchase a medium mortar team but field an infantry squad, including three grenadiers. Giving a nod to the *Chain of Command* example, only allow rifle fire at ranges of 12" or less but use HE fire beyond that. Mortar fire uses medium HE effects until only one grenadier remains, which reduces mortar fire to light HE effects.



JAPANESE INFANTRYMAN

The Arisaka 7.7mm Type 99 (1939) rifle (1) armed most units deployed from Japan, China, and Manchuria, but many still had the 6.5mm rifle. The heavy rifle was bolt-action with a five-round magazine. The Meiji Type 30 (1897) bayonet (2) had a 15 inch blade. The hooked bayonet guard was intended to hook and yank an opponent's bayonet and even disarm him. In the jungle the bayonet was just something else to snag on vegetation since it was habitually carried attached to the rifle in combat. The steel scabbard was attached to a leather belt frog (3). Most soldiers carried in their pockets at least two Type 97 (1937) fragmentation hand grenades (4), which proved weak and unreliable, the fuse being affected by the humidity.

The Type 92 (1932) steel helmet (5) offered little real protection and was later often discarded. The field cap was commonly worn under the helmet. The Type 98 (1938) summer tunic (6) had breast and skirt pockets while the Type 5 (1930), still in wide use, had only breast pockets. The trousers (7) could be three-quarter or full-length. The light cotton fabric did not hold up well in the tropics. Type 5 (1930) marching shoes (8) were made of horsehide and soon fell apart, resulting in the wide wear of sandals or even going barefoot. Meiji Type 30 (1897) personal equipment was mostly leather and held up poorly in the tropics - later, rubberized canvas was used - and consisted of a one-size-fits-all service belt (9), two cartridge boxes (10) each holding 30 rounds, a reserve cartridge box (11) holding 60 rounds with an oil container on the right end, and Type 94 (1934) two pint canteen with web sling. The leather gear deteriorated in the tropics, and rubber-treated equipment was later issued. A field dressing and triangular bandage (12) were carried in a left inside tunic pocket.

From US Marine vs Japanese Infantryman. Artwork by Johnny Shumate.
© Osprey Publishing Ltd. www.ospreypublishing.com

TYPE 89 GRENADE DISCHARGER

Japan's Type 89 grenade discharger, with its curved baseplate and the ability to lob 50mm high explosive rounds and fragmentation grenades (with propellant charge attachments) at Allied soldiers, remains one of the iconic weapons of the Pacific Theater in World War Two.

The unusual baseplate led to the incorrect belief the weapon should rest upon a soldier's knee or thigh rather than the ground when fired. Typically fired at a 45-degree angle, the so-called 'knee mortar' had a maximum range exceeding 700 yards. The grenadier set the desired range by turning an elevator knob to adjust the length of a trigger housing within the barrel. Its rifled barrel had no sights, but it did have a groove down part of its length. The weapon had no safety catch. An older smoothbore grenade discharger model remained in use, mostly for smoke and pyrotechnic signals.



Right: A Japanese soldier demonstrates the correct use of the Type 89 discharger...

Left: ... And a US Marine shows the incorrect way to fire. This method would result in a bruise at best and a leg break at worst.



DETAILS

Weapon Length:	24"
Barrel:	10"
Bore:	50mm, rifled
Weapon Weight:	10 pounds, 4 ounces
Shell Weight:	1 pound, 12 ounces
Ammunition:	HE Shells, grenades with propellant attachments
Range of model 89 Rounds:	710 yards (650m)
Range of grenades:	218 yards (200m)
Rate of fire:	25 rounds/minute (with three crew)

THE PLATOON: TACTICS

“On the offensive he is determined and willing to sustain sacrificial losses without flinching. When committed to an assault plan, Japanese troops adhere to it unremittently even when severe casualties would dictate the need for abandonment or modification of the plan.”

Soldier's Guide to the Japanese Army

The Japanese martial code, which dismissed both the concept of surrender and the enemy's will to resist, reinforced the army's aggressive tactics. This combination could leave them wrongfooted when their enemies did not respond as expected. Their infamous human wave attacks often resulted in massive losses if the enemy had a little firepower and did not immediately melt away. However, this willingness to sacrifice its soldiers to achieve victory does not mean the Imperial Japanese Army lacked tactical subtlety, especially when conducting night operations.

The Japanese valued night attacks despite their inherent risks, and they trained their soldiers in their execution. They first probed the enemy by tricking them into firing their weapons and giving away their positions, then maneuvered to flank and envelop them under cover of darkness.

Although the Japanese had a reputation as crafty jungle fighters, at least early in the war, they had no such training. One might guess their penchant for night

operations, in conjunction with any familiarity with the terrain, contributed to such impressions. Related to this is the myth of superior Japanese snipers perched invisibly in palm trees ready to pick off enemies with ease. Most of these snipers were actually just regular riflemen tasked with harassing approaching enemies and warning of their presence; they most often deployed on the ground.

ON THE TABLETOP

Bolt Action and *Chain of Command* do a great job of encouraging players to commit their Japanese troops to savage assaults and stubborn defenses through core army list traits. In *Bolt Action*, the Japanese benefit from special rules: Death Before Dishonour and Banzai Charge. In *Chain of Command*, they receive national characteristics: Fixed Bayonets and For the Emperor!

In short, these wargame traits give the tabletop Japanese advantages to overcome setbacks that might otherwise break their morale, and they dare their players to make the most of getting to grips with their opponents.



Japanese troops assault a US position by starlight. Photo from *Bolt Action Campaign book Mariana and Palau Islands*.

NIGHT OPERATIONS IN YOUR GAMING

Neither ruleset really addresses Japanese night operations tactics, at least not directly, but players should not have any problems including them in their games. You can do this by letting the Japanese get uncomfortably close to a defending enemy before the shooting starts using a bonus move and/or reducing their disadvantages to spotting and order checks. *Chain of Command* offers the Ruse option from the army's support list, which provides additional movement upon deployment. If you use the *Bolt Action* night rules, let the Japanese receive 6 plus 1D6 in base spotting inches instead of the more random 2D6.

SNIPERS

Chain of Command replaces snipers with second-rate marksmen on the Island Defense list. With *Bolt Action*, you can easily reduce sniper effectiveness by not treating every hit as exceptional, which means the sniper can't pick leaders or other special models as casualties on normal hits. Of course, players can use standard sniper rules to represent either a trained sniper or the distorted perception expected by their tabletop foes.



Lone Wolf - a solitary Japanese sniper plies his deadly trade. From Bolt Action - Campaign Mariana & Palau Islands.

Right:
 1: Superior Private, 20th Infantry Division; New Guinea, 1943.
 2: Private 2nd Class, 2nd Infantry Division; Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands, 1942.
 3: Sniper, 124th Infantry Regiment; Guadalcanal, 1942.
 From *The Japanese Army 1931-45 (1)*. Artwork by Stephen Andrew. © Osprey Publishing Ltd. www.ospreypublishing.com



Left:
 1: Private 2nd Class, 214th Infantry Regiment, 33rd Infantry Division.
 2: Corporal, 55th Infantry Division.
 3: Lieutenant, 18th Infantry Division.
 From *The Japanese Army 1931-45 (1)*. Artwork by Stephen Andrew. © Osprey Publishing Ltd. www.ospreypublishing.com

THE PLATOON: HEAVY WEAPON SUPPORT

“Japanese artillery tactics as applied thus far in combat theaters have been characterized by pronounced deficiencies and departures from the procedures of other modern armies.”

Soldier’s Guide to the Japanese Army

As mentioned previously, the Imperial Japanese Army fared poorly in comparison to American and Commonwealth artillery assets above the tactical level. A battalion commander had a battery of two or four 70mm howitzers - often employed in a direct fire role - and a dozen Nambu 7.7mm Type 92 (1932) medium machine guns, which he usually allocated to the line. He and his subordinate leaders could depend on regimental 75mm infantry gun batteries for pre-planned bombardments, but they faced serious challenges adjusting fire mid-battle due to inadequate communication networks and practices. The rough terrain of Pacific islands further compounded the artillery problem by causing a shortage of available heavy weapons and ammunition. Without suitable roads for motor vehicles, and with a climate too harsh for pack animals, soldiers had to carry the artillery and ammo, resulting in delays and lost equipment as they trekked through jungles.

However, the companies of island defense regiments did enjoy some advantages, including a pair of medium

machine guns. Amphibious regiments - waterborne mobile elements who supported the more-or-less static island defense units - had even more close heavy support. In addition to the medium machine guns, the amphibious company commander also had a mortar platoon (two 81mm mortars) and a 12-man anti-tank rifle section.

In the Pacific and Burma, the rough terrain made a good argument for transitioning from field guns to mountain guns and medium mortars.

ON THE TABLETOP

When wargaming off-table artillery, consider scenario or army build options in which the Imperial Japanese tabletop army faces limitations inspired by their historical conditions. Embrace a bias for on-table heavy weapons and pre-game barrages. If you don’t want to eliminate requests for off-table fire, make it more difficult to acquire. For *Bolt Action*, this could be as simple as increasing the delay chances on the artillery barrage chart, thereby decreasing the chances to fire for effect. Alternatively, roll twice and take the worst chart result whenever requesting fire.

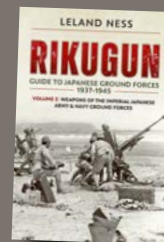
REDUCED ARTILLERY BARRAGE

This modified *Bolt Action* chart emphasizes the inherent poor communications and/or ordnance supply problems afflicting the Imperial Japanese Army:

D6 ROLL	EFFECT
1	Miscalculation
2-4	Delay
5-6	Fire for Effect

RECOMMENDED READING

Rikugun: Guide to Japanese Ground Forces 1937-1945: Volume 1 - Tactical Organization of Imperial Japanese Army & Navy Ground Forces by Leland Ness, 2014. Helion & Company Limited.



*Japanese Army Medium Mortar Team.
Figures by Warlord Games.*



*Japanese Army Anti-tank Rifle Team.
Figures by Warlord Games.*

READY FOR ACTION

My own figures are shown here, ready for battle and mounted up on bases to best represent the organisation that would be found in a Japanese Infantry Platoon. You can see my three teams of grenadiers (1) and LMGs (2) on large round bases, along with a collection of infantry making a banzai charge (3).



HOW TO... CONVERT A STEAMPUNK GUNBOAT



Our regular 'How to...'er Paul Davies takes a TTCombat MDF Paddleboat and enhances it with steampunk details, getting it ready for pulp gaming.

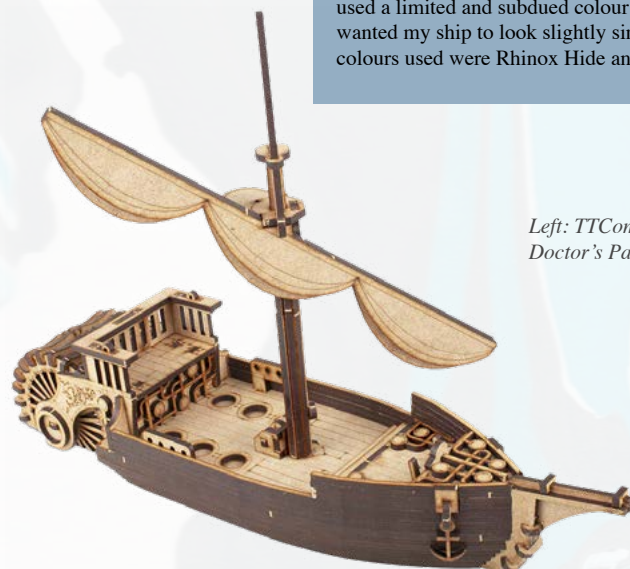
As a keen scratch builder, I favour starting with a totally blank canvas, but I appreciate that for many this approach is a bit intimidating. With that and this month's Twisted History theme in mind I've gone out of my own comfort zone here and 'kickstarted' this project with the help of an MDF kit.

Modern MDF buildings, boats, trains, planes, and countless other subjects tend to look pretty good 'straight from the box' but they can usually be better. There are limitations in the material and in the laser cutting production techniques that can leave MDF kits with room for improvement. I have never really liked the general lack of texture of the finished builds. Nor am I keen on how rounded or curved items are represented with scored greycard, or in the case of ship hulls, a series of slightly smaller stepped layers. Thankfully, there are ways around these things, and I'll share some solutions in this article as well as showing how an MDF kit can be your starting point from which to create something unique.

I decided that TTCombat's Doctor's Paddleboat, which is intended to be used in their pseudo historical game *Carnevale*, would be a great starting point for my own steampunk gunboat.

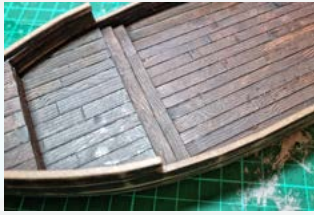
GENERAL DETAILS

The kit was assembled following the clear instructions I downloaded from TTCombat's webpage. All paints were Citadel apart from the cheap black emulsion. I used a limited and subdued colour palette because I wanted my ship to look slightly sinister, so the main colours used were Rhinox Hide and Mourfang Brown.

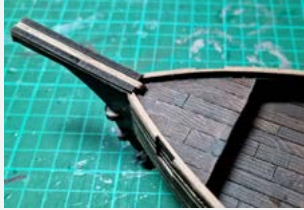


Left: TTCombat's Doctor's Paddleboat.

PLANKING, PROW, AND POOP



The MDF deck was initially painted black so that any gaps between the planks I was getting ready to add would look like caulking. To add texture to the unsuitably smooth looking deck, I used a sheet of thin card with a wood texture. I painted the sheet with Rhinox Hide, lightly drybrushed it with Mournfang Brown, then cut it into strips and glued them in position with PVA.



I sanded the kit's prow flush because I intended to add a proper bowsprit, which would be more in keeping with my model's sail heritage.



I cut away the flat MDF balusters and replaced them with some cocktail sticks I'd carved into and shaped. This made the squared miniature balusters of the kit (left) look more like the turned spindles they were representing (right).

The complete poop assembly got planked and painted. I decided not to include the handrail and cut away the locating stubs on the aft section. The assembly was then glued in place because when it came to planking the hull, some of the planks would extend over parts of the poop.

SHAPING THE HULL

As already mentioned, I don't like the stepped layer approach to representing a ship's hull, so I filled the steps between each layer with ready mixed, quick drying filler. When that was dry, I sanded it down to create a smooth, curved profile hull. This may take a few sessions to refine and really get right, but I think that the result is worth the effort.

I'd intended to plank the entire hull, but the textured card planks wouldn't bend enough to conform to the curves of the hull, so I decided to plank the hull from the point where the sides were pretty much vertical; I would paint the area below that black as if it had received a heavy coat of tar to protect the hull from sea water damage.

On the higher points, I applied strips of wood-textured planking with each strip slightly overlapping the previous one to create a 'clinker' effect.

With the planking complete, I added my own bowsprit with rounder shapes thanks to different thicknesses of dowel.



PADDLE WHEEL, BOILER, AND FUNNEL



I replaced the kit blades with less ornate and slightly shorter ones made from scrap MDF. The wheel was painted as a sub-assembly with Rhinox Hide, and the spokes were picked out in Lead Belcher. I'd intentionally made my wheel slightly narrower than the original, so I added washers each side as spacers to ensure a tight fit to the model.



The boiler and funnel was a custom construction I added to enhance the steampunk look of my model. I used a halved black pepper container for the basic boiler shape and a length of plastic tube for the funnel. Strips of plasticard wrapped around the shape represented reinforcing strips, and cut down pins pushed through drilled holes represented the heads of rivets. I finished off the funnel top with a random ring of plastic; I have no idea where it came from, other than it was in my bits box. The moral of this very short story is - throw nothing away!



A wheel was added to the boiler front and the assembly painted black with the strips and rivets painted with Lead Belcher.

DRIVE MECHANISM AND READYING THE RIGGING



I collected different sized cogs, swapping them around until they looked right, painted them with Lead Belcher, and glued them into position. You can get cogs from many sources: old watches for small ones, children's toy mechanisms for a wide assortment, jewellery crafting shops for more decorative option, and a whole host of old devices that might be sitting unused in your garage... or you can just search for 'cogs' on eBay!

Some people use cogs as decorative elements in their steampunk constructions, but here they serve a practical purpose by joining the paddle to the ship and the boiler driving it.



With the cogs in place, I fitted the paddle and the boiler onto the ship.



The funnel couldn't just rise unsupported; it would need cables fixing to it, which I would do with fine rigging thread, but I decided that would be my final job after I'd given the whole ship a coat of matt varnish. I did fit the rigging support pieces from the kit and added some supports of my own to the inside of the bulwarks, which I made from scrap MDF. Raiding my Bits Box, I found a couple of cowl vents, which I glued in place. I also made a hatch from layers of textured card. These all gave a sense of realism to the ship without too much extra effort.

ARMAMENT AND FINAL DETAILS

You really can let your imagination take flight (should that be sail... no, steam!) with this part of the build; there is a veritable armoury online from which to find suitable guns. I decided to go for a mix of the fantastical and the historical; on the focsle, I positioned a Dwarf Cannon with quite a sci-fi edge to its style. This was bought on eBay years ago from Russia; I found the seller's page, but it advised that they are "away until 1 January 2031". It might be worth looking elsewhere! Thankfully many eBay sellers have assorted big guns separated from larger kits (often Games Workshop ones) and there are other manufacturers making their own steampunk specific gun offerings.



A pair of Nordenfelts with crew from Ironclad Miniatures added a more historical element to the ship's weaponry and brought a lot of interest to the overall look.



I suggest not gluing your weaponry in position so that you can swap it around as you see fit and have as many gaming options as possible. Rare earth magnets can be very useful here; sink one in the deck after drilling out a small hole, fit the other to the underside of your weapon, and if you make sure you get the magnets' poles the right way around, the different weapons will stay in place as you game.

As previously mentioned, I was not trying to create a highly detailed ship model, so inevitably there were compromises, but I felt that a ship's wheel was an essential, which I sourced from my Bits Box and to which I added the ends of a couple of lolly sticks as the pedestal.



Anchors would come in useful too! I used the ones included in the kit but cut and repositioned the stock so that it was, more accurately, at right angles to the shank. A ring and a short length of chain were glued to the anchors to provide further realism. Two holes were drilled into the hull and washers glued on to trim the holes before the anchors were glued in place. The anchors were a bit vulnerable, which is why I delayed fitting them until the model was almost finished.



I needed to take the shine off a few places where glue had run as well as protect the painting on the ship, so I sprayed it with matt varnish. When that was dry, two holes were drilled through the funnel, two 'eyes' fitted, and the rigging added using special rigging thread. I cut some short lengths of plastic tube through which the rigging was threaded to finish it off.

I decided to fit two more 'eyes' towards the bow to provide additional funnel supports and rigged them to the funnel too.

I gave some of the exposed metal parts, such as the cogs, a wash with Army Painter Soft Tone ink as they looked a bit too bright, and that was the ship done.

FINISHED!

I found this project both enjoyable and satisfying; the ship conversion wasn't too complicated, but the result is much improved in my mind, and I have no doubt my steampunk gunboat will find many uses in future games.



BATTLE OF KHORRAMSHAHR 1980



OR HOW I PUT ON A PARTICIPATION GAME AT THE JOY OF SIX

Ian Taylor describes the making of his Iran-Iraq War 6mm table, rules modifications he made for easy play, and how games played out at The Joy of Six show earlier in 2022.

I was attending The Joy of Six and feeling somewhat self-assured that I was doing my bit to promote all things 6mm scale by presenting a game at the show. In a break from running my game, I attended a Q&A session gamely fronted by *Wargames Illustrated's* Editor alongside other hobby luminaries.

I had to ask Dan the obvious question; why do you not see many 6mm articles in the wargames press? I was expecting a predictable answer: it's too small to photograph or too niche to be of any interest to the wider hobby. Instead, we were told that not enough articles with 6mm content were ever submitted and that he would welcome any contributions. With that positive response, I thought I should step up, make the effort, and document how I constructed my Battle of Khorramshahr 1980 board and how the gaming went at the show. So here goes!

Right: Iraqi armour assault the Old Town.

WHY THE IRAN-IRAQ WAR?

The war is neglected by wargamers, I believe, because there is a lack of focused information and understanding of the conflict from a military point of view. To put it in context with its contemporaries, it has many more facets to game than say the Falklands conflict; the two protagonists are differently equipped and led, but evenly matched, unlike the Arab - Israeli wars; and it really happened, unlike NATO versus Warsaw Pact.



Many wargamers will picture a conflict that was static like WWI but imagine a conflict set in 1918 with huge defensive works, jets, helicopter gunships, and the latest tanks and Infantry fighting vehicles. That's possible here, and it is just one aspect of the war.

It was fought in mountains, there were large scale amphibious operations, armoured battles, sophisticated human wave attacks, rocket offensives against cities, COIN operations, Turkish cross border raids, commando attacks on oil installations, sustained aerial offensives, potential Soviet invasions of Iran, and naval campaigns involving the United States.

You may already have some of the forces to game an aspect of this important conflict, and if you are interested in wargaming the late 20th Century, this is a war you should take a look at.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BATTLE

In September 1980, as part of Saddam Hussein's invasion of Iran, the Iraqi army sought to secure Khorramshahr. This city controlled the Shatt al-Arab strategic waterway, the approaches to the Abadan oil refineries, and Iran's only navigable river, the Karun. In addition, holding the city would protect Iraq's second city Basra, which is only 20 miles away.

With few infantry units, Saddam relied on an armoured division to swiftly secure this key position in the oil rich region and bring the war to a victorious end. However, revolutionary Iran was not prepared to give up without a fight. An improvised force of ill-trained but fanatical Revolutionary Guards was backed up by professional soldiers and pilots of the Shah's former armed forces, many of whom were released from prison to repel the Iraqis. Ayatollah Khomeini called for a defence that resembled Stalingrad and would rename Khorramshahr as Khooninshahr; the city of blood.

THE IRAN-IRAQ WAR - AN OVERVIEW

The Iran-Iraq War, 1980 to 1988, or Persian Gulf War as it was called at the time, was the longest conventional conflict of the 20th Century. Oil was the fuel that kept it going, but the real objective of both sides was security.

Saddam Hussein had been humiliated by the Shah during the 1970s when Iran dominated control of the strategic Shatt al-Arab waterway, and then the regime of Ayatollah Khomeini (that swept away the Shah in 1979) was keen to export its revolutionary form of Islam to the majority Shia population of Iraq.

Saddam saw a chance to take back the Shatt al-Arab, maybe even secure the oil rich region of southwestern Iran and impose a friendly government in Tehran. Doing this would make him the most powerful political figure in the Middle East.

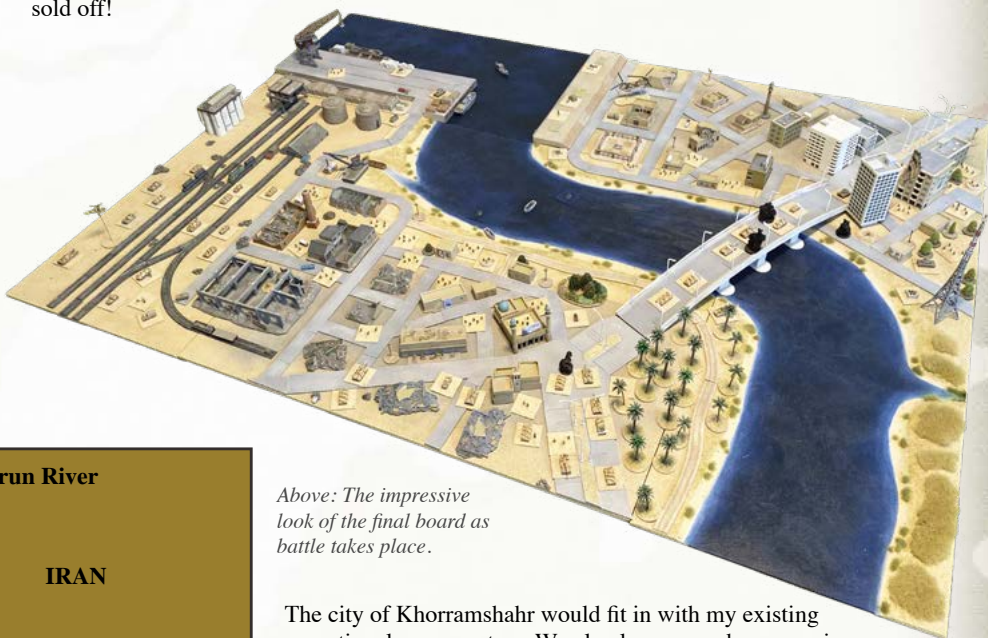
In September 1980, he saw his chance and invaded. Ayatollah Khomeini was able to call on Iranian patriotism to withstand the invasion and use Saddam's aggression to consolidate the Islamic revolution. Initial Iraqi gains were eventually retaken, and in a change of strategy, Iran went on the attack, determined to overthrow Saddam's government. Basra was the key objective, although there were major offensives up and down the border between the two countries. Thrown onto the defensive, Saddam relied on huge loans and access to the international arms markets to contain Iran in a war of attrition. Iran, with few international friends and dwindling access to sophisticated western weaponry, was eventually thrown back by a reinvigorated Iraqi army.



Above: Iranian Chieftain.
Left: Iraqi T62.

BUILDING THE TABLE

An important aspect of any project I undertake is how much future use I will get out of the various components, miniatures, and terrain pieces I am about to devote time and energy to creating. I really don't want to build a custom game that will see the light of day on a few outings then gather dust and waste storage space, or worse, be binned or sold off!



Above: The impressive look of the final board as battle takes place.



The city of Khorramshahr would fit in with my existing operational game system. We play large, one day campaigns across ten 4'x 3' tables. Such a system allows me to devote a lot more detail to these specific tables that follow common designs regardless of the period gamed. This is one of the back tables in our operational games set in the modern Middle East/Mediterranean, and with a few minor changes, it could be Kuwait City, Beirut, Bizerte, or any number of cities fought over in 20th Century conflicts. My version of Khorramshahr would fit in with my existing terrain layout, and so I already had a base table of a river flowing through arid terrain.

SIMPLE 6MM ROADS

The roads and tracks are made from mounting card, which is textured with a rub of thin grout and sanded. PVA glue, which is applied to both sides, seals the texture and makes the roads more resilient. Halfords grey primer spray is applied, and a drybrush of Vallejo Iraqi Sand lifts the detail. Take care that your drybrush is subtle as at this small scale the kind of painted texture that looks good at 28mm will look far too large and unnatural.

I don't chamfer the edges or apply road markings as this enables me to get maximum re-use out of these pieces in other games. The dual carriageway has a central reservation made from a cut piece of mounting card, with a slightly smaller piece of P80 sandpaper cut to fit and glued on top. The resulting curb is painted white, and the sandpaper is painted in the same sand colour I use for my terrain boards: drybrushed white, given a brown wash, then textured with sparsely applied summer grass to give that arid municipal look.



Above: The roads in development, after completion of the bridge and dock, to give the table it's overall structure.

I finish the look with N scale plastic street lights made in China, which originally had a smaller opposing light to the main arc. This is cut off and sanded to give that late 20th century utilitarian look. Painted white and set in an opposing position along the dual carriageway, it helps set the scene.

For me that is sufficient detail. The road network is there to add tactical options in gameplay, and it is the core element that all the buildings and miniatures (which offer the real visual spectacle of the game) are structured around.

BRIDGING THE GAP

The bridge is thin piece of MDF scored in five places to aid the creation of a curve. Mounting board acts as a sidewall, keeps the curve shaped, and once grouted and coated in PVA, it becomes quite a robust piece. It is based on the Sinbad Island bridge at

Basra, and I wanted something simple: utilitarian, but dramatic.

Street lights from Perfect Six Miniatures added a bit more detail without over-cluttering the look. Offcuts of wood, treated in the same way as the bridge texturing, then mounted on oval MDF wargame bases, made it simple and easy to place supports.

PRINTING EXTRA DETAILS

I copied and printed various Iranian posters I found on the web then cut them out and PVA glued them onto plasticard. This gave me a set of region and period specific details that I can sticky tack onto walls or place atop roofs rather than gluing them on with any permanence. I do this for several periods and settings; it ensures my core buildings get maximum use across my wargames and always look appropriately detailed without cluttering the playing area.



Above: Downtown Khorramshahr with some of the posters used to bring detail without cluttering the playing area.

Below: Iraqi commandos attack the port.



THE EXPANSIVE DOCK

The dock occupied a relatively large area, and I didn't want to clutter the space occupied. This is a gaming board, not a display board, after all. At the same time, it required enough detail to draw some attention at the show, so I'd need to add some elements to catch the eye of viewers.

To continue my board's post-show versatility, the dock piece had to be easy to remove and use elsewhere or store away; I didn't want to put time and effort into creating a specialist terrain square with a one-off use. I decided to use one of my sea terrain tiles as the dock's base, and I built a quay and promenade on two sides to tie it into the land, with the river flowing into the port area: very common in the real world and not that far away from the real Khorramshahr.

I used plasticard for the main frame as I wanted a light core onto which I could glue various components. Mounting card, treated in the same way as the roads, was cut and placed around two strips of evergreen plastic 'I' strips that simulated tram lines for the crane I'd add.

I detailed the waterline with laser cut MDF N scale canal piling from the excellent Scale Model Scenery, and their truck tyres were used as bumpers along the edge. This was sufficient detail for the larger structure elements; setting up a Kibri Z scale crane (incidentally the most complex build of the project!) and DB Miniatures barges alongside the quay added finishing touches that could be removed if they started to get in the way of the game.



Above: Plasticard provided the skeleton for the quay and promenade area of the dock.



Above: N scale canal pilings in MDF make ideal 6mm dock pilings. Sprayed grey with a wash of horse chestnut, they have a rusted, worn, industrial look.

Below: Iraqi armour advances through the marshalling yard.





Above: Khorramshahr Mosque and old town with posters used to bring it into period. These buildings can still be used for my other wargaming projects, stretching back to the crusades.

Below: The different textures of the board's surface areas make for visual interest.



Right: A Heroics and Ros SU20 bombs suspected Iranian positions. Pictured here are Novus Design ruins with a DB Miniatures grain silo in the background. The railway and rolling stock are Irregular Miniatures.



Below: General overview of the table. The baseboard, bridge, and dock area are scratchbuilt then detailed with various buildings from GC Miniatures, Novus Design, DB Miniatures, and Irregular Miniatures. In the distance is the z scale Kibri crane set.



MODIFYING THE RULES

My go to set of rules for any of the conflicts of the 20th Century is *Spearhead* in all three of its manifestations: Great War, WWII, and Modern. They are relatively fast play once you are familiar with them, and they carry a lot of doctrine and weapons details. However, I wanted a very quick game that would allow for three 45-minute gaming sessions, leaving me time to explore the show, see other games, shop, and generally gab with fellow gamers. I also wanted players to quickly get into a game, not worry whether they are making any mistakes, and feel like they are in charge. To my surprise, I think I succeeded so well that I may alter how I play the full set of rules from now on!



Above: The board prepped pre-show along with all of the different play extras.

1



2



3



4



5



- 1: Iranian cannibalised T52/D30 SP gun.
- 2: Iranian ZSU 57/2 AA.
- 3: Iranian Toyota AA.
- 4: Iraqi MTLB AA.
- 5: Iraqi BTR60 command group.

KEY CHANGES FOR EASY SHOW PLAY

I used approximately 100 individual units in the game, and while I wanted them all on the tabletop, I feared this would require an excessive amount of input from players and give me too much worry about being mishandled! The solution was three brigade sized display sheets for the Iraqis, two for the Iranians, and separate display tables for artillery, ammunition, and aircraft.

In *Spearhead*, units are shown by bases that represent platoons, and the ruleset requires detailed company, battalion, and brigade organisations with the option of cross attaching support units. This is far too time consuming to explain in a participation game, and 'bathubbing' individual units up to company size and placing all the bases within a representative brigade gives players all the assets of a modern battleground to play with.

I had drastically simplified the firing method, and players happily seemed to know enough basics to get on with things: mortars fired indirectly, engineers could be better in close combat, pointy looking APCs were amphibious, etc. Players were free to get on with the game and ask questions rather than worrying about specific rules or flipping through weapon lists.

OFF-TABLE EXTRAS

The off-table rules in *Spearhead* are quite straightforward, but I did want to speed up the options for players while ensuring they still had the chance to make key decisions. Using a separate terrain square for each side, artillery units were displayed with ammunition counters representing three turns of firing. Players marked where artillery strikes landed, and on which turn, on the off-table maps. Once the turn began, D6s were rolled: 4 and 5 resulted in suppressions and 6 got a kill without players needing to remember anything more. With the first artillery coming down at the very start of the game, it gave players a good indication of the rather limited abilities of both sides whilst creating a great deal of laughter when fire plans went wrong! Similarly, aircraft support for both sides was displayed on the separate terrain square and rolled for each turn, allowing successful players to deploy extra firepower in places they wanted to exploit; a very fast and simple way of representing airpower.

Two maps of the road network and town sectors for each side allowed for hidden deployment by the Iranians and command arrows for the Iraqis. Standard games of *Spearhead* represent cities in 3" town sector squares, but by creating a road-network and irregular sized town sectors with areas of more open ground at the port and adjacent to the industrial areas, it allowed for a more visually interesting game of a city battle. It also allowed for combats of attrition in some areas and movement in others; this gave players a variety of play experiences without it degenerating into a D6 slugfest.

AIRPOWER

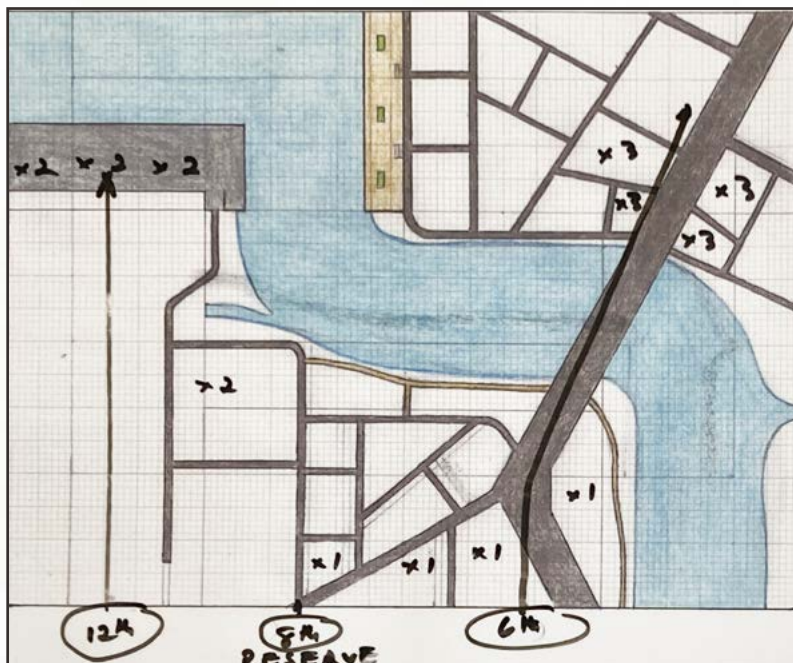
To give another flavour of the period, and make players a little bit more cautious about their use of airpower, any side that successfully shot down an aircraft gained an objective point. During the war, both sides were sensitive to photographs of downed aircraft, and the international press was hungry for anything that could be published in newspapers. In addition, the Iranian players, if they made a successful roll, could have the support of a F14 Tomcat that would shoot down any Iraqi plane on a roll of anything but a 1 on a D6.



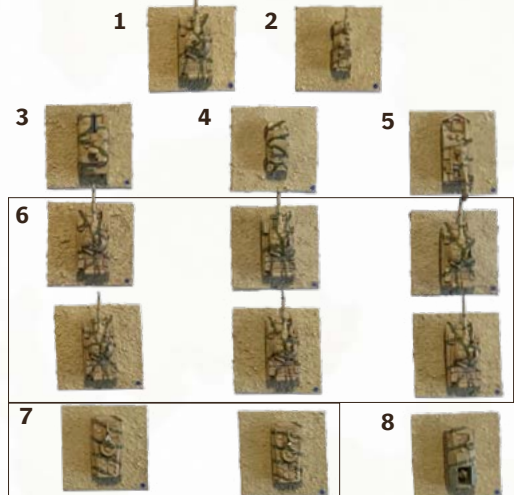
An Iraqi SU20 (below) and an Iranian F14 Tomcat (above).



In essence, the changes made for minimum handling, and sped up gameplay. Players were able to plan on the simplified map (seen below) without being confused by a table that had lots of detail to absorb, and they could organise and visualise their forces before worrying what should go where when placing them on the table. The map also gave players a chance to understand the structure of the game - that there were three objective areas in the old town, the commercial district, and the port - before becoming immersed in the play. There was also a great deal of tension as Iraqi units moved through the various parts of the town and the Iranian players studied their map to see if an ambush was about to be declared.



IRAQI 12TH ARMOURD BRIGADE
(Morale; Regular - test at 1/2 strength)



- 1: HQ, 2: Recce, 3: AA, 4: Anti-tank, 5: Engineer,
- 6: T62 Tanks, 7: Mech Infantry, 8: Mortar.

THE GAME AT THE JOY OF SIX - WHAT I GOT OUT OF THE EXPERIENCE

I managed to corral enough players to run multiple sessions at the show and even got a very positive review from Dave on YouTube's *Little Wars TV*. I could probably have fit in more sessions, but the day goes by so quickly at The Joy of Six; there is so much to see, and I spoke with so many others, that it was 4.30pm before I knew it.

Players were a little overwhelmed by the 'clutter' of the battlefield and the number of units to deploy when they first sat down. However, with the individual figures organised and labelled into their brigades, and the map quickly getting them into the detail of the objectives, the games were usually underway after five minutes. It also helped that I had a crib sheet to quickly explain the rules and that many of the players had read my brief overview before getting involved.

I generally got a result within 45 minutes of play, but the games could have gone on longer, and I will have to think hard about whether I was being a bit too quick to end some very enjoyable games. As ever with wargames, it's all about finding the balance.

It was amazing how fast players got into the game and generated their own narrative, often making decisions I would never have thought of. In one game, the Iranians pooled their limited amount of armour into a tiny counterattack that got the Iraqi players very concerned about

a flank that was in all reality under very little threat.

I had made it clear in all games that the mosque in the old town of Khorramshahr was respected by both sides during the battle, and so I stated that no firing was allowed into that sector during the game (although the Iranians could use it for movement and deployment). In one of the games, the Iraqi players were desperate for a result, and an airstrike was called in on this sector. There were howls of complaint by the Iraqi players when a win at the end of the game was declared a draw due to international condemnation of this outrage!

All the games played well, and I thoroughly enjoyed other players' interpretations of my game. The Iraqi players, with the advantage of numbers and the initiative of knowing where and how the fighting would commence, generally achieved a narrow victory overall, which was historically accurate. What also followed history, was how expensive it is to seize a city with armoured units, and how effective it is to defend one with inexperienced and under-trained troops; as in the real battle, the Iranian players fought hard and close.

The Joy of Six show goes from strength to strength, and it is a testament to Pete Berry of Baccus Miniatures that this growing show still maintains a very friendly and inclusive atmosphere. I have been attending since it first began and putting on a game since its second outing; for a 6mm enthusiast it's a high point of my wargaming year.

FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE IRAN-IRAQ WAR

The best narrative of the conflict, which also includes an excellent overview of both its military and wider political context, is *The Iran-Iraq War* by Pierre Razoux.

For a more detailed look at what makes this conflict different to others *The Lessons of Modern War Volume II; the Iran Iraq War* by Cordesman and Wagner, and *Armies of Sand* by Kenneth Pollack will have you scrutinising whether your rules properly reflect each army's tactics and doctrine. Checking out the bibliographies of these books has become something of a rabbit hole for me; I have discovered a wide and detailed amount of information on the war that is not initially apparent.

What is really missing is a staff history by the Iranians and Iraqis.

But, with so much to do and see, would I get more from the experience by just showing up and not making all the effort of creating and running a participation game? In my own small way, I feel I am supporting the hobby and sharing the passion I feel for my particular interest. It encourages me to look at each of the games I put on for my friends and wonder whether it would be good enough to show a wider audience, and it makes me reconsider the rules, layout, and systems I use for regular games. I'm always trying to spot ways that I can make them faster and more user friendly.

Yes, I get a lot out of putting on a game at The Joy of Six! See you next year?



Above: Iranian Revolutionary Guards defend the industrial area.

PAINTING MARK'S LITTLE SOLDIERS



Callum grabs some of Mark Copplestone's latest creations and varies up his painting techniques on these neo-retro figures.

Mark Copplestone's intentionally simplified Little Soldiers [See a Q&A about this new range in *Wi418* - Ed] are the first figures in a long time that have captivated pretty much the entire *Wargames Illustrated* crew! There's something special in their bold shapes, retro look, and interwar style. Perhaps their inherent 'simplicity' makes them a less intimidating painting project, maybe we are all nostalgia junkies; whatever the reason, they've rushed to the front of the various staff members' painting queues. As *Wi*'s official painter, I had to have a go at putting some paint on this new range; in this article I share some tips on the different approaches I took.

MODERN MEETS RETRO

I had a lot of fun working with these sculpts because they offer a retro, simplified canvas that provides the opportunity to try out unique styles, fancy freehands, and technical applications. Rather than complete a full unit, I treated each figure as a new challenge and tried to make it look different, pushing myself with new painting approaches or colour choices.

My first three models are a huge departure from the simple style Mark has been using to present his models - I have gone with a modern paint styles to show off what you can achieve on these flatter canvases, tried out a selection of colours, brought in some retro interests of my own, and added more modern WWII styling in places.

HYDRA AGENT

This is my mashup of the 'what if?' scenario presented in the *Wolfenstein* video game series along with a nod to Hydra from the Marvel Cinematic universe. The flat, open spaces of this Berglander Officer allowed me to apply various red stripes; these evoke stylised Nazi uniform details. I painted a little Red Skull on the chest for the Marvel fans out there too. Even though it's a far more modern interpretation, I think the painting still works for the interwar period that Mark has pitched for the range.



As a retro nod, I've added edge highlights to the figure. While some may not consider edge highlighting to be retro, the technique has recently somewhat fallen out of favour at the higher levels of painting. Many competition painters are aiming for realism through accurately placed blooms of light and reflections on surfaces. I still think there's room for a well-placed edge highlight, but I want to emphasise the 'well-placed' part of that statement! Gone are the days where I would pick out pretty much any edge I could; I now consider what parts would most likely catch the light and focus my edge detailing there, making sure even the edging has subtlety. You can see this at the bottom of the trousers and where I have only edged the bottom corners of the collar tips.

HYDRA GUARD

Kev Dallimore painted some Little Soldiers in the official [As official as anything gets in the flexible background Mark created - Ed] Berglander colours, but he applied the paint scheme in his signature style (see below). I wanted to do something similar, and I think it is best showcased on this Hydra guard, who is a companion piece to my agent.



My guard (seen right) is matched to the theme of a post-WWII scenario where Germany won, and he has been painted in a smooth, modern sort of style. The clean-cut uniform is a fantastic space on which to practice feathering - the application of thin paint in many very subtle and refined brush strokes to gradually build up smooth blends. While this is a time-consuming painting style, it is quite forgiving, so don't think it's only for experts. You can work back and forth with your feathering, going between the different tones until you are happy with the result; this is especially easy on the lovely areas offered by the Little Soldiers.

I took the opportunity to work a dark brown into the recesses and apply a light grey on the tops of the shoulders and chest to bring subtle realism while retaining the retro feel.

My figures have moved quite a long way from the 'toy soldier' look the range's creator applies to his own painted figures, but there are still 'neo-retro' elements to their look. When we posted a work in progress image of this figure on the *Wargames Illustrated* Facebook page, I was very pleased to see comments mentioning the art deco movement and propaganda posters. Both styles were in my mind when I was painting, but I wanted the figure to hint at them rather than being too obvious about it; it was a relief folks noticed!



GOBLIN GREEN GOODNESS

What better way to celebrate the personal roots of my tabletop wargaming than with some viciously bright green bases? GW's classic paint Goblin Green is rarer than gold-dust these days, so I mixed up a match as best as I could. Citadel Warpstone Glow and Citadel Averland Sunset in a 3:2 ratio is a very close match, and while other ranges of paints have similar looking options, it feels right going for the GW brand here. Citadel paints are renowned for their vivid colours, so a mix of their saturated current range is a good match for the OG!



OLIVE DRAB

The final model in the 'modern trio' has a more traditional WWII olive drab scheme, with desaturated fatigues and a worn helmet. Although he, like every other model I painted, is a Berglander figure, I embraced the 'do what you please' ethos of the range and imagined this model as a rebel, fighting against the Hydra regime, a remnant of the allied forces.

While much of the painting has been done in a similar way to the Hydra figures, I mixed things up on the rifle. The paint application on its flat sides is incredibly basic, lacking the subtle transitions elsewhere. This stark black weapon, with just the sharp edge highlights boxing it out, hopefully emulates the strong graphical nature of early 20th Century propaganda posters and enhances the visual interest of the figure.



THE TECHNICAL TECHNIQUES TRIO

My other three models are more 'technical' challenges, attempting to reproduce different materials and finishes.

SORTA ENAMEL

The first was the classic enamel-style Berglander, mimicking those from Mark's personal collection. It was entertaining trying to recreate the style of a factory-painted figure, with overspill of the paints to create the sharp line divisions and the final step of several thick coats of gloss varnish through the airbrush for the signature shine. I probably won't paint like this again any time soon, but it made for quite a charming piece that will sit on my desk and remind me of the fun that can be had with toy soldiers!



STATUESQUE

I've seen people use action figures as the basis for making larger-than-life terrain piece statues and decided to do similar with a Little Soldier. The iconic posing in these models reminded me of monuments to the Unknown Soldier, and I decided to make an old statue, its bronze fading and oxidized, with bits of moss and leaves collected in the recesses.

I was pleased with the result, and it proved to be an excellent palette cleanser that shows there's more versatility to this range's uses than may at first be apparent. The striking posing and forms, very reminiscent of that found on iconic propaganda posters, means that each of the poses in this range would make for a fantastic statue.



YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND IN ME!

This model is perhaps my favourite of the lot. I wanted to make this Little Soldier look like a different kind of classic toy, the green army men from the Bucket o' Soldiers as seen in *Toy Story*.

The final look may seem very singular in its application, but you can use this style in other ways on more realistic miniatures. The same colours will make for great looking jade idols; change to black and you'll render modern looking weaponry; or use this as a starting point for learning non-metallic metal painting (see right) where we have changed the hue of the figure in Photoshop to make it look like a rich copper.



TELL YOUR OWN TOY STORY

I started with Citadel Warpstone Glow over a black primer, leaving some black in the recesses, then photographed the model under a bright light. This photograph became my reference point, showing where the light hit the figure and where I should apply my highlighting.

Using this as my guide, I gradually added Citadel Corax White to the Warpstone Glow and accentuated the areas on the figure to match the photograph. This was built up through various glazes while regularly referring to the photo until a final glaze of almost pure Corax White picked out the top spots. I also used visual reference from *Toy Story* to aid me in the placement of light; even with a 'real' reference photo, you can accentuate things further by applying a hint of your own artistry to the figure.

On reflection (see what I did there?), the finished product maybe looks as much like reflective green metal as plastic; this may be because feathering the glazes on applied more texture than was needed. I'm still thrilled with the overall look!



The last step was to freehand my childhood nickname onto the base, just as Andy applied his name to the underside of Woody's foot in *Toy Story*!



“WITH MAN’S BLOOD PAINT THE GROUND GULES!”

Mike Peters adds unique character to his award-winning *Never Mind the Billhooks* army with some custom morale markers.

With the publication of *Billhooks Deluxe* imminent [November 2022! - Ed], I have been reviewing the troops. While I have a near complete force, able to represent either Lancaster or the House of York, one thing that I am seriously deficient in, and something that every Billhooker needs, is markers to indicate when a company must test its morale at the end of the turn.

It was time to remedy this situation, and a quick visit to Perry Miniatures’ website led to the purchase of WR32 ‘Wars of the Roses dead and wounded’ and AO31 and 32 ‘Agincourt wounded’ and ‘wounded Men at Arms’. These codes provided me with more than enough figures to get started building some expressive, storytelling morale markers. The Agincourt boys lend a slightly anachronistic element, but I doubt it will be too obvious when they are face down in the mud!

Below: Mike visited Wi Tower with his glorious Never Mind the Billhooks armies so that we could take photos of his fine figures on the tabletop. We’re saving the full showcase of his magnificent work for a future issue but here’s a little preview!



1. LORD SHINER

The Knight has lost vambrace and pauldron from his left arm; the points hang loose, and blood is seeping through his arming doublet. This is the first time I have used Citadel's Blood for the Blood God Technical paint, and I think the lesson learned is that less is more!

I like the pose and animation of this pair and can imagine that the retainer is trying to encourage his Lord: "Not far now, mate, soon get a steak on that eye!"

1



2. FACE DOWN AND OUT!

Finished in a surcoat of Murrey; painted with Citadel's Khorne Red mixed with Foundry Terracotta.

2



3. SCRAP METAL

I used Army Painter Gun Metal for my armour, washed with a mix of Citadel Nuln Oil and Agrax Earthshade, then highlighted with Plate Metal and a final delicate highlight of Shining Steel.

The soil is Vallejo Flat Earth, washed with Agrax Earthshade, and highlighted with progressively lighter mixes of Khaki Grey. A few stones are picked out in bone and light grey to add variety, and things are finished off with vegetation from Gamers Grass.

3



4. "YOU'LL HAVE SOMEONE'S EYE OUT!"

I am calling this guy Harold. He wears a typical livery for the time, Argent and Azure - white and blue - particoloured in pale; he's probably Somerset's man. The blue is a woady, cheap dye, mixed from Citadel's The Fang and lightened with Fenrisian and Russ Grey, then washed and glazed with blue ink. I never use pure white; this was a built up from Citadel Administratum Grey to Army Painter Golem Grey.

The arrow is an addition, cut from the plentiful supply of arrows that come with the plastic Perry Miniatures Infantry sets.

4



5. FALLEN ON HIS BLADE?

This guy is wearing the typical linen jack of the time. For this, I use a range of different 'bone' paints from various companies as well as various light browns, yellow browns, and cork colours. They all get a wash of Sepia and various glazes to try and introduce variety and create stains, making for a realistic final look.

The weapon is a spare from Claymore Castings.

5



6. "OVER HERE... OH!"

The white and red livery here is suitable for the Yorkist Walter Devereux, the Lancastrian Henry Holland, or at the local level might be used by William Berkely. I have four companies in this livery, so the same livery is featured on multiple markers.

6



7. THE PIN CUSHION

I got a bit carried away with the arrows on this one, but I think he gets the point!

7



8. "I TOLD YOU TO WEAR YOUR HELMET"

This is the only figure I have in the murrey and blue livery of Sir William Hastings.

8



9. A BIG BLOODY CHOPPER!

The white and red livery again! Maybe someone told this guy the poleaxe was sharp enough to shave with and he tried to find out.

9



10. ALL THE WAY THROUGH

I don't know if this would hurt more going in or being pulled out. The application of blood here has been kept to a minimum, and in a strange way, I think that adds to the realism and makes it look more painful.

10



11. "IT JUST SLIPPED THROUGH HIS FINGERS, SIR!"

This figure was slightly miscast and had no fingers on its left hand, but I saw it as an opportunity rather than a problem. His severed digits are made from 0.8 mm plast-rod, sanded into tapers.

11



We'll have more from Mike in next month's *Never Mind the Billhooks Deluxe* themed issue!

COMING NOVEMBER 2022



SHOOTING: RANGE AND HITTING

SHOOT RANGE	TO HIT	LONG RANGE	TO HIT
Under 6"	5 or 6	6" - 12"	6+
6"	5 or 6		
6" - 12"	4		
12" - 18"	3		
18" - 24"	2		
24" - 30"	1		
30" - 36"	0		
36" - 42"	0		
42" - 48"	0		
48" - 54"	0		
54" - 60"	0		



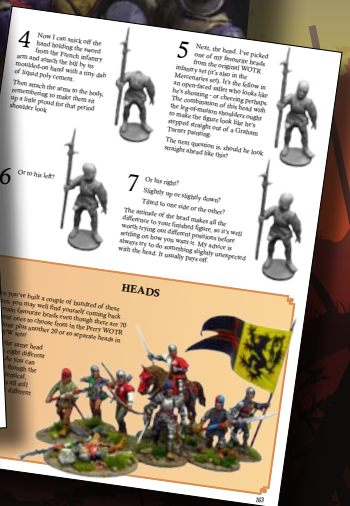
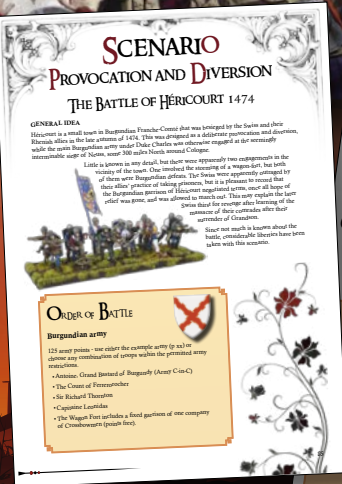
Billhooks is a fast-action game of late medieval European warfare, set at the small battle/big skirmish level - think Nibley Green rather than Towton.

You will need around 100 figures a side, lots of D6, and a 6' x 4' table - everything else you need to play the game is included in this book. A typical game can be played through in around 90 minutes (or rather less if the Dice Goddess wills it!).

Billhooks Deluxe gives you a 'Core' Wars of the Roses ruleset and then expands it to cover six new Theatres & Conflicts from across Western European Christendom c1350-1525. You will find troop stats and special rules for Irish Gallowglass, Hussite War-Wagons, and Landsknecht Pikemen along with all the other troop types found on battlefields of the period, from 100 Years' War France to Renaissance Italy.

The game uses a card-driven turn sequence and many tried and tested combat mechanisms to produce battles that are full of period flavour but always unpredictable.

Play one game of *Billhooks* and you'll want to play another!



PULP! Q&A



Artwork from *Pulp!* by Dimitris Martinos.

As a part of our Twisted History theme, we talk to Marco Arnaudo about his forthcoming Osprey skirmish game *Pulp!* He discusses his game's development, mechanics, and the benefits and challenges of gaming in the pulp genre.

Wargames Illustrated: Congratulations on your new game, Marco. Can you tell us a bit about *Pulp!*'s development as well as your broader interest and work within gaming and game design?

Marco Arnaudo: The game comes from my own peculiar relationship with miniature wargaming. I love this style of play mechanically, especially when it comes to manoeuvring figures in actual, non-gridded space. At the same time, I do not have the talent or the passion for the hobby element. I do not know how to build and paint miniatures and terrain and never cared to learn; my solution is to play with paper miniatures and terrain.

This means that I am not part of any miniature wargaming community or hobby group; I do not go to tournaments,

and I play mainly solo. I guess that always gave me the freedom to mess around freely with ideas and settings. If I want to play a Napoleonic battle today, an alien one tomorrow, and a fantasy one the next day, all I have to do is print some sheets and cut the figures.

A couple of years ago, I was looking at different kinds of paper figures I had (ancient Romans and WWII soldiers), and I started thinking of a setting that could combine them. The pulp setting came naturally to mind: a lost Roman colony in the jungle, so easy! I had also downloaded some one-page free rulesets for wargaming, and as you can imagine, having only one page of rules means that you had to make free form decisions and add your own detail all the time.

Wi: So that was where your *Pulp!* game development really kicked in?

MA: Yes, starting from that, I began playing solo battles set in pulp situations, using a basic framework of moving and attacking, then adding details and procedures as they seemed necessary to fit the theme and create a sense of adventure.

After a while, I was enjoying the system so much that I decided to show it to others, and since they liked it too, I shared it online for free, on Board Game Geek (BGG). A couple of years later, I realized that a professional publication would have brought a lot more visibility to the design; therefore, I approached Osprey who had a proven record of producing excellent skirmish wargames (big fan of *Frostgrave* here).

PLAYING PULP!

Wi: We are too! Is *Pulp!* aimed at the same folks who enjoy a game of *Frostgrave*?

MA: It's for anyone who likes tactical games of action and adventure. Also, anyone who wants a framework that is defined enough to allow for consistent gameplay and yet flexible enough to support endless personal innovations.

It offers tactical flexibility and interesting decisions. It covers a huge variety of situations without a great deal of fiddly rules. It presents a framework with a lot of content already built-in and yet also offers endless opportunities for customization. The resulting action is fast, fluid, and tense. Did I also mention it has a very humble designer?

Wi: Haha! Indeed. Each turn starts with combat/withdrawal; this is a little unusual compared to the more frequently seen turn sequence in skirmish games.

MA: In adventure and action fiction, some fights are deservedly bigger than others. Sometimes the hero knocks out a secondary enemy without breaking a sweat, but other times the fight becomes the heart of a longer, more complicated, and exciting sequence. In serial fiction, a fight may even spill over multiple episodes, providing cliff-hangers between issues. And if an episode of your comic book ends in the middle of a fight, the next issue should better start from there, or the reader will feel cheated! Having a continuing melee phase at the beginning of a turn allowed me to reproduce that aspect of action-based and serial fiction. One turn may end in a cliff-hanger, and you sure want to see the rest of the fight next turn!

There are always options though; during that phase, the players can choose to withdraw rather than stay in melee. There are pluses and minuses in each option, so that first phase involves important decisions and sets up certain aspects of the turn.



Wi: Another slightly unusual element for a skirmish game is that you have a mixture of individual and unit activations.

MA: This is for both story and gameplay reasons, and it was a key idea of the design from the very beginning. Again, I looked at adventure fiction, and I saw there is always a hierarchy between quasi-divine heroes, reliable helpers, and run-of-the-mill secondary characters. Some heroes you will remember forever, and some characters are not even named. The mix of groups and individuals in *Pulp!* is meant to capture the feel of action fiction. In gameplay terms, the activation system allows the heroes to have a lot more agency than the secondary characters, while keeping the former fallible and the latter useful and fun to play.

Wi: Speaking of that, you have full and partial activations. Can you talk a bit

about these and the different things that can be done within them?

MA: With the hierarchy between heroes and helpers in mind, I wanted a system that brought interesting tactical decisions to the players. I wanted players to be able to perform simple manoeuvres without much of a hindrance and complicated manoeuvres at a cost... and at the risk of seeing them fail. The activation system took care of all that in a simple and intuitive way.

When you activate a unit, you determine with a D6 roll whether it will receive a full or partial activation. Heroes and main helpers always have the best chance of activating fully because they are self-reliant. Secondary helpers are part of multi-model units, and they have the best chances of activating fully when their models are near one another. There is strength in numbers and courage in numbers. Multi-model units of helpers will be more efficient when the members stay together. But then a situation may arise where you want to split the group; maybe you want to leave someone behind to guard a narrow passage while the rest pushes forward; maybe someone runs through open terrain while the rest stay hidden behind rocks and lay down covering fire; maybe you want to split the group to outflank an enemy. In *Pulp!*, you can do all these things with multi-model units (which gives them great tactical flexibility) but always at the risk that someone may panic, freeze, get confused, misunderstand the plan, and so on.

Rolling for full or partial activation, and giving multi-model units a penalty for splitting, allowed me to create all these



interesting tactical situations that also felt right thematically. Give a unit the simple order of charging forward, or give them a more complicated plan to follow, and you will see they will tend to act as you'd expect them to in each context.

Wi: Why did you choose reaction fire, defensive stance, or pass as the only partial options?

MA: I wanted a model that fails to activate to face some significant penalty, or all that I just said would make no sense. At the same time, I do not want models to skip turns as I do not want my players to lose agency. When you play a game, you should be playing it. This has not always been obvious in the history of game design, but it has become a key concept in modern gaming. Giving models that fail to activate the option of being in defensive stance or reaction fire allows them to adjust their position in the battlefield and possibly perform important actions. If you leave someone behind to guard your retreat, reaction fire may be exactly what you need. I found this mechanism to be an effective compromise, which made failing an activation check a meaningful penalty but did not make models useless for the current turn.

THEMATIC FUN AND SIMPLE SYSTEMS

Wi: You have included special points that are used to purchase benefits - can you talk a bit more about these?

MA: That comes from the idea that a compelling adventure story is punctuated



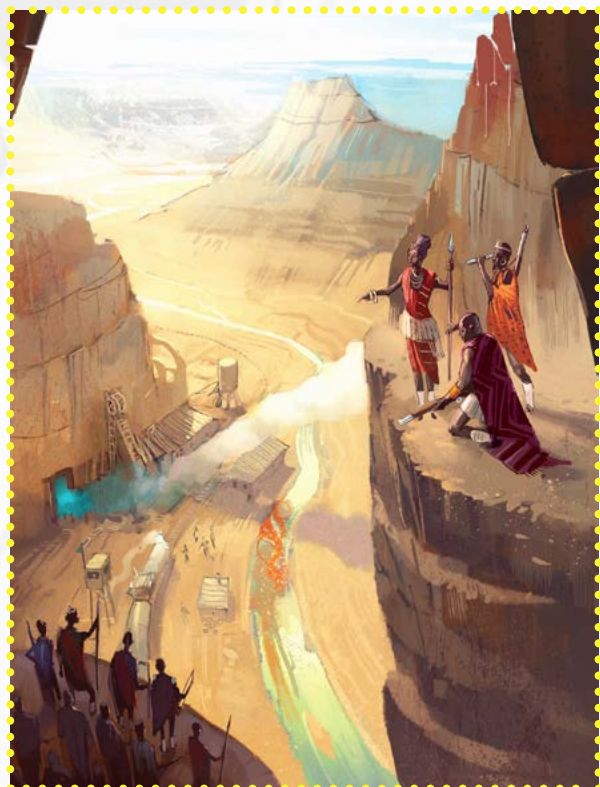
by moments of particularly spectacular action. That action needs to be amazing, and it needs to be rare. If you swing from the chandelier too often, it just becomes an annoying mode of transportation. Of course, if you have that skill and you find enough chandeliers, you should be able to do it all the time, but that's not how fiction works. Fiction has a lot of action that is cool and good enough to keep you watching or reading, and then the truly special moment that only comes once in a while.

B) the whole thing should feel like an action movie. From there, I started playing with the mechanics in A and adding details to make them go toward B. When I felt I had enough detail, I stopped adding. The only significant change Osprey asked of me was to add roleplaying aspects, not to remove any rule.

I see miniature wargaming as a place for creativity and personal innovation. When I play a board game, everything must be clear and accounted for, and there can be no ambiguity. But in miniature wargaming, situations will always arise where judgement calls are needed, and things happen that the rules had not foreseen. I wanted my game about mad scientists and daring archaeologists to be tactically rich but also direct and fun. I wanted it to be a framework for players to create their own stories and variants. The fact that my rules cover all the bases and leave out many minutiae is not a bug, but a feature. If I give you the lion with the jetpack, that is not because that is the limit of the system; that idea is your jumping off point as players! But again, the framework is complete enough that you can play it as written if that is your preference.

Wi: Getting wounded goes through an interesting progression, and it seems to make melee more dangerous. Was that intentional?

MA: Do you remember that action movie where the final confrontation only took one second, because the hero immediately shot the villain dead? No, me neither!



Special points reproduce that tension in *Pulp!* You have regular activations turn after turn, and then the occasional special moment, which maybe only happens two or three times per game but also can really be crucial (and compelling in story terms).

Wi: The rules are quite simple overall; did you reduce the complexity of anything that was in the initial design?

MA: I didn't remove anything because the game was built around very simple concepts. Its original idea really was as simple as; A) minis should move, fire, and fight in melee;

TRENDING NOSTALGIA

Wi: Nostalgia seems to be huge right now; perhaps more so than ever. Fashion's looking back to 1990s styles, *Stranger Things* helped a 1980s tune hit number one in the charts, video games are striving to emulate the visual styles of earlier console generations, miniature ranges are making all manner of film/TV/fiction characters in 28mm, etc. Are you intrigued by all of this, or is it mostly the earlier pulp works that click?

MA: I began creating *Pulp!* in 2016. It was the year the first season of *Stranger Things* came out, but that had no influence on me. The full 1980s revival (with *Cobra Kai*, a new *Ghostbusters* movie, etc.) had not started yet. Since I was not around in the 1920s and 1930s, my interest for the pulps does come from a 1980s source: the *Indiana Jones* movies. It was those three movies that made me curious about the pulps initially and led me to investigate them later in life.

I also like other forms of action fiction, like superhero comics, and saw no reason not to use superheroes as a source of inspiration too. As chance would have it, superhero comics of the late 1970s and 1980s also happen to be the ones I always preferred. So, my own interest for the pulps includes an element of 1980s culture and nostalgia because I like things like *Indiana Jones*, Marvels' *Secret Wars*, and DC's *Batman: Year One*. The game developed in parallel and separately from the current revival of 1980s culture; that my ideas from 2016 happen to match the current taste for nostalgia is very fortunate, of course!



Firearms are very deadly in real life, but they rarely do much in action stories other than making a lot of noise, or pinning down the heroes before something more interesting happens. Killing enemies with ranged weapons would be necessary in an historical wargame but is not always interesting in fiction; in my opinion, it does not have to be integral in an action game. There also would be very little incentive to close in and fight by hand if ranged weapons were just as effective as melee combat. The tactical space would therefore be impoverished as a result.

In *Pulp!* ranged combat can still be very effective and can still KO models, but it isn't so deadly that it deprives players of a reason to engage in melee. Most firearm hits in the game represent not bullet holes, but loss of tactical awareness. They represent the target rolling on the ground, hiding behind a crate, or facing some similar situation; unless, of course, you follow up quickly with further hits or send in an ally to pummel the person that was just pinned down! Do that and you will see that loss of tactical awareness turns into a serious wound indeed.

This is also why the game talks about 'KO' instead of death. It is not because I am trying to get an E rating. It is that when you look at the action, you realize that most skirmishes only last a couple of minutes of in-story time, and I know from experience (being a martial artist) that a well-placed punch or a kick may make one pretty much useless for that period of time. In that sense, being dead, passed out, frozen in panic, or groaning on the ground, are all equivalent.

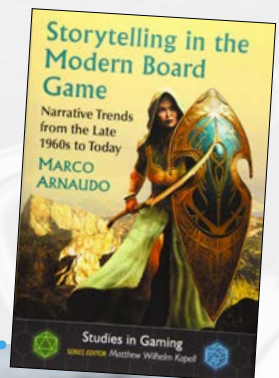
Wi: You've created various special weapons and special benefits, but how do you know where to stop with something like this?

MA: I never went for completeness, and I wouldn't know what that may look like in a game like this. My idea was, again, to offer guidance and examples. When you see how my rifles work, you can adjust those values to how you think yours should work. Or you can create an anti-matter rifle... or you can give a rhino a rifle and see what happens. This is particularly evident with armour, which I divided into purposefully broad categories so that players can easily fit any kind of protection they may come up with.

FROM DOWNLOADABLE RULES TO BLUE BOOK

Wi: You said Osprey encouraged you to add roleplay elements. How did you go about that, and what's your experience with roleplay and freeform gaming?

MA: The original conception of the game focused on tactical battles and intense action, but I had been thinking about how games can tell stories for a long time, so those elements were easy to add. I just had to remember what I had written in my book *Storytelling in the Modern Board Game!*



Pulp! now involves a system to give characters fictional backgrounds, directly resulting in changes in gameplay. Players can choose to define the psychology of their characters and give them fears to confront and exorcise. There is also character progression in the form of achievements and advancements.

As for freeform gaming, I think that miniature wargaming already has that element, intrinsically. While I know that people go to tournaments and certainly want rules to be crystal clear in that context, I prefer my miniature wargaming to be about the flow of the story and the events with players who are more interested in the spirit of the game than in micromanaging rules. If I direct my characters in the way they would act to win, while not personally caring about who wins, then really interesting narratives are likely to emerge. For this reason, I am totally cool if players play the game in any variation and format they see fit.

Wi: Scenario creation seems to be a place that you could have written another 64-page book!

MA: The base manual offers several ready-made scenarios and many suggestions on how to create further ones. My manuscript also included a three-scenario campaign in which Roberta ‘Bobbie’ Carter and her Crimefighters were attempting to thwart the evil plans of a supercriminal known as the Hermit. This campaign was removed from the base manual for reasons of length and will hopefully be released separately.

Wi: How was it working with Osprey, and how much did you get involved with the book’s look and art direction?

MA: It was very easy. I had playtested the game extensively before submitting the manuscript, and they didn’t have major corrections about the game engine. The things they asked for were additions, like the roleplaying elements, or more detail about terrain, or similar things to flesh out the world. Those were things that made sense, felt easy to add, and developed organically.

As for the art, they asked me if I had an artist in mind, and since I didn’t, they showed me the portfolios of some of theirs. I selected one who seemed to capture the spirit of fun and adventure I had in mind. I just asked for a variety of subjects and for a large, diverse, inclusive cast of heroes and heroines. A couple of months later,



PULP MINUS THE GROTTY BITS

Wi: There is much in the older pulp works that has aged rather poorly when viewed through modern lenses. How do you approach and consider the less nuanced/more offensive elements in the works?

MA: We must remember that the pulps were created by and for white Americans at a time when American society was entirely segregated by law and through violence. Someone may have picked up a copy of *Doc Savage*’s first issue (1933) literally on their way home from a lynching and then stopped to read it in a whites-only diner. This kind of readership shaped the production of mass culture at the time, including the pulps. These are unpleasant truths that we must never forget. On the other hand, that does not mean that a game inspired by those sources is forced to also borrow that hateful ideology. The *Indiana Jones* movies have already showed that. They took the fun and excitement of the pulps and dropped their toxic elements. In the *Indiana Jones* movies, the Nazis are the bad guys, while in 1930s America, there was considerable support for them.



Recent board games about Lovecraftian lore have taken a similar path. They borrowed the cosmic dread and sense of impending doom of the original sources and applied a more diverse and inclusive perspective to them. Think of *Stella Clark*, a heroine from *Arkham Horror The Card Game*, who happens to be a black trans woman. Her presence as a positive force in the Mythos would have given Lovecraft a heart attack! Authors from more reactionary times are somehow excused by saying that they were just products of their own period. By the same token, we are products of our culture too. If you accept that principle, then contemporary creators have every right to act like Lovecraft and pulp writers did: meaning, we can take any ideas we like and align them with the values of the early 21st Century. When Lovecraft wrote about ancient Egyptian culture, he adapted it to what he needed for his stories. *Pulp!* follows this same idea. It takes old and dated sources and unapologetically turns them into a reflection of today’s more inclusive culture.



“But aren’t you erasing history?” some may ask. Of course not, because *Arkham Horror The Card Game*, *Indiana Jones*, and *Pulp!* are not documentaries. I am not erasing the history of the early 20th Century. You can still learn about that in plenty of history books. I am doing something creative, which future historians may consider as indicative of early 21st Century history.

AN ACADEMIC APPROACH

Wi: You're an academic by trade, and although you are a Professor of Italian Studies, you have written about games as well as designing them; in what ways do you think game design can benefit from deeper academic study?

MA: As an academic who also loves and designs games, I believe in the synergy between the two fields. Academia, after all, is simply the pursuit of systematic, fact-based knowledge, and looking at reality and describing it as accurately as possible benefits everyone, in every field. When academics study games and share their findings, game designers may find guidance to incorporate in their creations. In my book *Storytelling in the Modern Board Game* I looked at games of the last decades that have strong narratives and tried to identify what gives them that story feel. My findings can be used by designers trying to tell stories through games. James Ryan, for example, shared that he was inspired in part by my book in the design of his game *Roll Player Adventures*. Or think of the book *Achievement Relocked* by Engelstein. It studies loss aversion in psychology and game design, and there is a lot in it that can and should be taken as practical advice.

Wi: Can the study of tabletop games offer academics something in return?

MA: Of course! A variety of topics (maybe every topic?) can be taught more effectively by the inclusion of gaming activities. It is a self-evident fact that students learn better when they are engaged, and analogue games work very well in that regard. Those dice don't roll themselves; those cardboard bits don't move without help. Every time someone makes a legal move in analogue game, they must be paying attention, at least to some degree. And if the game describes the topic of the class or trains the skills targeted by the class, then the student is learning.

some amazing pieces of art showed up in my mailbox. When I asked for some minor changes to some pieces of art, they promptly agreed. I have been very happy with the collaboration with the editor and the artist. It looks like we all happened to share the same vision from the beginning, so it was all smooth sailing.

Wi: The art seems like the game itself; it alludes to possibilities rather than clearly defining things. Was this intentional?

MA: Very much so. I wanted the book to be about possibilities. It is not a game that comes out of the box complete and ready to go. You are going to choose the minis, and the terrain, and the tokens, and the dice. In most cases, you are going to create the scenario. When you play it, it is going to be your creation too in a very real and physical way. I want to make sure that you don't feel that my book limits your creativity in any way. It is a book with which you will do things, and those things will be amazing because they are yours.

Wi: Do you have any design rules or a game design ethos that you try and apply to the games you make?

MA: Game design is my hobby, not my profession, so I have the immense privilege of being allowed to play with ideas, do what seems fun, see what sticks, and drop what doesn't. If my designs don't work, I can still pay my mortgage and provide for my kids. That means I do not have a strict philosophy of game design. I want to create games that I want to play, and I know that my taste is in line with the general trends of today's hobby culture. As I said, *Pulp!* came together by chance from rules I was creating for my own amusement. I mainly use my own feelings and reactions to guide my design choices.

My board game *Four Against the Great Old Ones* came to be because I loved the system of *Four Against Darkness*, and I thought it could work to tell stories set

in the universe of H. P. Lovecraft (with the ideological corrections I mentioned earlier). I've also designed very simple, semi-abstract dice games, and an experimental game (*Kobayashi Maru: A Test of Character*), all released for free through BGG. There really isn't one major trend or principle.

I would love to keep expanding *Four against the Great Ones and Pulp!*, but other than that, I have no idea of what I will design next, or if I will design new games at all.

Wi: Thanks very much Marco. We look forward to getting pulped up!



PAINTING TEMPLARS

WITH WARM WHITES AND BOLD FREEHAND



Callum paints speedy, worryless white with the help of 'dirty glazes' and uses the spare time he saves to add punchy freehand shield designs.

White is notorious for befuddling even the most confident miniature painter; this project was an opportunity to show off an approach that gets great results without much need for

refinement. I've applied a warm, creamy white to the clothes of these Templars from Footsore Miniatures, then completed most of the painting with 'dirty glazes' of increasingly brown tones to represent years of zealous crusading. You can apply this technique to any miniatures in dirty, worn, or sweat-stained white cloth. All of the paints I've used are from Citadel, but you can, of course, use your own preferred brand in similar colours.

PAINTING DIRTY WHITE



1. Basecoat

A mix of Ionrach Skin and Corax White. A couple of thin coats should do the trick, and the subtle flesh tone in the Ionrach Skin will make for a warmer undertone than pure white.



2. Dirty glaze one

Slap on several heavily thinned coats of Ionrach Skin toward the bottom half of the cloth. Run the thinned mixture into the recesses on areas such as the cloaks to bring depth and add more underlying warmth to areas of shadow.



3. Dirty glaze two

Mix Ionrach Skin with Baneblade Brown and apply as a thin and controlled glaze on lower areas, leaving some of the previous glaze showing above. Ensure your brush isn't overloaded and don't let paint pool on the flat surfaces as you'll notice tide marks forming; only let it pool in the cloth folds. Try to be neat but don't worry if you slip onto other areas.



4. Dirty glaze three

Heavily thin Baneblade Brown and focus it on the very bottom of the cloth areas, and in the deepest recesses. This may seem like a lot of stages, but because the paint is very thin and the application unrefined, it will take no time at all, especially when batch painting.



5. Clean glaze one

Return to your basecoat mix and glaze up the cloth, applying the thinned paint to the higher areas as highlights and neatening any messy parts around the creases and folds. Make sure you leave the grime at the bottom of the clothing and cloak as this simulates grime and dirt picked up from the ground.



6. Clean glaze two

Add more Corax White to the basecoat mix and glaze it on the higher points of the cloth. Several thin glazes will ensure smooth transitions. Speed things up on the cloak by using the edge of your brush to catch just the top of the folds.



7. Clean glaze three

Paint the top of the cloth areas - the top of the hooded heads, the highest points of creases and folds, etc. - with pure Corax White. As before, several glazes will make transitions smooth and 'buttery'. Be sparing, too much white will take away from the cream tones we've already put down; and by using fewer spot highlights, we will add more 'pop' because the contrast is greater.

That's the basic creamy white completed; things could stop there, but we can do more with very little extra time needed.

WEATHERING THE CLOTH



Take a piece of sponge (I use some of the old foam inserts from an army carry case!) and ball it up. Put this sponge into a small amount of a dark brown - I used Rhinox Hide - and dab off as much excess as you can onto a piece of kitchen roll. You want just a few random specks of paint to be applied as you make contact. Once properly loaded, dab the sponge very lightly against the bottom of the white cloth, where it would pick up dirt. Repeat until you are happy but keep checking as you go. You can always add more but it's a lot harder to take away.



To finish, it's back to the brush; thin the Rhinox Hide to a glaze, load your brush with paint and dab off most onto kitchen roll, then apply it to the very bottom of the model, below the starting line of your sponge applied weathering dots.

The result is a striking (and easy) bit of weathering on your Templars.

TIME FOR FREEHAND



By using such a quick approach on the clothing, which covers most of these Templar figures, it gave me time to focus on the fine details. I decided to make the shields really pop by adding some refined freehand - a St George's Cross - and battle chipping and weathering to tie the shield design in with the 'on Crusade' look of the figures.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF SOLID FREEHAND

BRUSH SIZE

The smallest-sized brush is not necessary, but a sharp well pointed tip is. A proper Kolinsky Sable brush will give you a tip that produces razor sharp lines, but you may want to increase the size of the brush anywhere up to a Size 3. This is because freehand work is slow and methodical; the more paint your brush can hold in the top part of the bristles, the longer you can continue to focus and paint without having to return to your palette. You will find that paint on a small brush dries much faster and you'll rapidly have a drying ball of paint at the tip of your brush; that's far from ideal!

USE A WET PALETTE

For most painting work, but particularly freehand, wet palettes are an incredibly useful and versatile tool. A wet palette is made up of a semi-permeable membrane on top of a hydrated sponge or towel. You can make your own or purchase them from various companies.

The wet palette keeps your paint hydrated over a lengthy painting session and beyond but does so in a controlled way that doesn't over dilute the paint. This level of control means that paint at a perfectly thinned consistency (for maximum brush control when painting our freehand patterns) stays that way. There's a lot of back and forth between mixes and colours when freehanding, to tidy up any slips, and a wet palette means your previous mixes and tones are ready to go.

BREATH CONTROL

Think of your painting stages with a military mindset. Splash basecoats around like a conscript unloading an AK, refine things to Luger-like accuracy for highlights, then approach freehand as if you're an elite sniper. It may sound a bit silly, but it really works!

Before starting your freehand, get comfortable (you might be in this spot for some time!) and brace - lock in your elbows or place them on your desk, then rest your brush hand on top of the one holding the figure for maximum control. This will ensure you have the best possible 'aim' and stabilise your paint brush.

You're ready and in position, now it's time to focus on your breathing. Take slow controlled inhales and exhales and find a calm place, 'load' your brush with paint, line it up as you take a slow inhale, then let out a controlled exhale and 'take your shot' by putting the brush onto the figure!



1. Basecoat

Start with a clean basecoat. You'll need to come back to this colour if you make a mistake in your freehand for tidy up; so, a mix is only really advised if you use a wet palette (see the basic principles boxout), otherwise you might find yourself struggling to match it later. For my shields, I used a mix of Ionrach Skin and Corax White (on my ever-present wet palette) to harmonise with the cloth I'd already painted.



2. Begin the freehand

I started with Khorne Red - a less intense mid-to-dark red - thinned to just above a glaze consistency. Think good quality full fat milk and you're probably in the right area of viscosity. It's important to dab excess paint onto a piece of tissue or kitchen roll if you pick up too much but don't remove your brush's point when doing this. You can test the point of your brush and the consistency of the paint by applying several straight, thin lines on your thumb nail. If the paint comes off the brush too quickly, the paint is either too thin or you have too much paint in the bristles. Once you are confident in your paint consistency, you can sketch out the rough shape of the cross with two lines, one horizontal and the other vertical. As you can see, this stage doesn't have to be perfect but try to keep the lines as central as possible as they will guide us later.



3. Repeat the previous step, widening the lines until you are happy. Try to paint in straight lines rather than filling the general shape, as this may make the cross look uneven. Lots of thin layers look better than a few thick ones and are much easier to apply, so take your time.

4. Refine the design and add damage

Once you have established the freehand thickness you'd like, you may notice a few slips and mistakes along the way. Return to the basecoat mix, thin it to the same consistency as the red, then gradually cut back into the cross, sharpening up the lines as you go.

Once satisfied, it's time to add some damage with the same basecoat mix. Paint small lines cutting into and across the red. These emulate chips and scratches. Work in from the edges of the cross, keeping things subtle, and occasionally dot some paint in the more central areas for bigger chips.



5. Now we'll add some deep scratches caused by swords and axes! Rhinox Hide (a dark brown) contrasts nicely against the bright off-white, and as before it is thinned and painted in several straight scratches. Less is more with weathering, so don't cover the shield with a flurry of blows!



6. The next step is to emulate depth in the scratches. Light would catch the bottom of the groove, so pure Corax White is thinned and painted carefully under the brown in a fine line.





7. Finish with some grime

I mixed Steel Legion Drab down to a thin glaze and applied several coats to unify the freehand and shield area, allowing the previous coat to dry fully each time. If you don't give these glazes adequate time to dry, you might tear the 'skin' of the previous layer away and ruin the effect. Start at the top of where you want the dirt to begin, then drag your brush down, pulling the excess off the edge of the shield. Repeat until happy with the opacity.



8. Rhinox Hide is added to the Steel Legion Drab and glazed on, starting further down the shield.



9. Pure Rhinox Hide is glazed onto the very bottom of the shield to finish the job.

10. Ready for the battlefield!



Nick Eyre's
NORTH STAR
Military Figures
Presents

North Star Military Figures Ltd.
Unit W41, Lenton Business Centre,
Lenton Boulevard, Nottingham,
NG7 2BY, UK
Mail Order: 0115 9704107
Trade Sales: 0115 9786656
Email: mailorder@northstarfigures.com
Web: www.northstarfigures.com

Mark Coplestone's **LITTLE SOLDIERS**



30mm
easy-to-paint
stylised, sturdy
with integral bases

www.northstarfigures.com

JOIN **NORTH STAR**
Nick Eyre's *Newsletter*



Mark Coplestone's Little Soldiers are 30mm sized, made of metal and supplied unpainted. They are not recommended for Children under the age of 14.

WARFARE 2022



Traders, Bring & Buy,
Demo & Participation games, Tournaments

Entry fee per day

Day entry: £10

(under 16 free accompanied by paying adult)

www.wargamesreading.co.uk/product-category/warfare-tickets/

www.wargamesreading.co.uk/warfare-2022

www.facebook.com/WargamesReading

Tournaments: £45 (includes entry for both days)

www.wargamesreading.co.uk/warfare-2022-tournaments

12-13 November

New venue for 2022

**Farnborough International
Exhibition & Conference Centre**

Farnborough

Hampshire

Gate F: GU14 6TQ



Wargames
Association of
Reading



OLD DOG:

Twisting 1980s history to create a Cold War gone hot is a popular pastime for wargamers. Here David Bickley talks us through the trials and tribulations of gathering forces together for a 'what if?' British Army of the Rhine versus the Soviet Army tabletop encounter.



1. Rapier Anti-aircraft missile defence system from Butlers' Printed Models. The full set comprises the deployed missile system, three towing vehicles, and one trailer. No figures are included, so I added a spare from the Mortar Carrier FV432's. These 3D prints are wonderful little wargames models.



2. Chieftains - the Main Battle Tank (MBT) of the BAOR - supported by a Harrier VTOL Fighter-Bomber and a TOW-Lynx, moving in to counter the Soviet T72s.



3. Livestock; to give a rural feel to the farm. North German Black Angus cattle and pigs from Pendraken. The pigs are actually 20mm size, the 15mm ones being too small.

NEW TRICKS

6. The modern look of Bikelheim with a factory complex assembled from Sarissa Precision kits and Apartment blocks for the workforce by LaserArtCraft. It seems the Soviet HW has made the factory it's base.



6.6' x 6'



5. A soviet SU-17 Fitter Fighter-Bomber overflies a column of Soviet tanks as they move through Bikelberg towards Bikelheim. The MDF buildings are from LaserCraftArt, the resin Rathaus from Architectural Heritage by Dave Paddock.



4. The BAOR on the attack by the light of an early dawn: TOW-Lynx, Chieftain MBTs, and a Harrier. All models by Battlefront.

Being both more than a tad long in the tooth and also not overly inclined to readily dispose of completed projects, it's inevitable that I should have to label myself more than a bit of a butterfly wargamer, flitting as I do from project to project, army to army. For longer than I care to dwell on, I've been collecting and painting mostly 28mm armies, many of which have featured previously in the pages of this illustrious publication. There has been a diversion over the years into 20mm WWII gaming but nothing smaller since I can't remember when! It might come as a surprise to the reader then, as it certainly did to me, that the latest project here at GHQ [See David's 'wargames space' in *Wi373* - Ed] has been in 15mm; and even more surprising, it's mostly been in plastic! Even more so when as a dedicated *Black Powder* period gamer I chose a post-war 1983 Cold War gone hot setting!

If you saw my earlier offering on this subject under the Quick Fire label in *Wi413*, you may recall that I began this project in response to my son Matt challenging me to tackle something outside my comfort zone. Plastic figures and 15mm scale definitely fit that bill! I set about sourcing vehicles and figures at the two Partizan shows in 2019 and at the last Hammerhead show before the first Lockdown in March 2020. For the vehicles, I got a good deal on several boxes of Battlefront's Team Yankee range at Caliver Books. This kick-started the collection, and I then picked up the Russian Infantry box from Plastic Soldier Company. To date, there doesn't appear to be any BAOR British Infantry in plastic from either of those companies, so I have the metals from Battlefront. Even with the bones of the project safely boxed in GHQ, I still hesitated to get stuck in until December last year when I assembled one or two tanks; then before I knew it, all the vehicles I'd acquired. Assembling them was one thing, painting another much more daunting prospect. To my rescue came my lifetime friend and regular opponent Phil Robinson, who painted all the vehicles. I doubt I'd have got beyond assembling them without him!

THE FORCES

Being a Brit, I chose to model Mechanised Infantry elements of the British Army of the Rhine (BAOR), a choice reinforced by memories of our family visit in the late 1980's to see a relative stationed in Celle, Germany, with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME), during which we enjoyed the hospitality of the Mess and a tour of the vehicle park. Quite a treat even for big boy like me. The BAOR vehicles and Infantry in my collection are (so far) all from Battlefront's Team Yankee range: the former in plastic kit form, the latter in metal.

At this stage, I'd only looked in passing at the rules we might use and had acquired a copy of Great Escape Games' *Seven Days to the Rhine* [Available free to *WiPrime* members for our website! - Ed] and the free download derived from *Rapid Fire*, *Abel Archer*. I'm no devotee of army lists, preferring to play with what we have; so in the early stages of the project, I paid no attention to organisation at all! Heresy, I know, and I've since made an effort to address this both in grouping/basing the collection and subsequently acquiring extra vehicles and capability! The pictures accompanying this article will hopefully reinforce this. For the Soviet Force,

the vehicles again are plastic from the same Battlefront range, but the Infantry are from the Plastic Soldier Company (as are the box of T55s I recently added to the Plastic Pimple - next to the Lead Pimple under my painting desk for the curious!) Again, as I acquired more idea of the organisation of the force, I added further vehicles to the collection in the shape of more BMPs to transport the Soviet Mechanised Infantry and additional T72s to augment the Soviet armour along with the aforementioned T55s.

RULES

I was still poking around, considering options in this department, and turned my attention to *NORTHAG* by Battlegroup. Having acquired a copy, and being familiar with the WWII iteration, these rules have moved into pole position; and as this magazine went to press, myself and Phil had a *NORTHAG* game planned for the following weekend. By now, you will be able to check out the after action report on my Tales From GHQ blog. That doesn't preclude our using either *Seven Days to the Rhine* or *Abel Archer* of course, its merely a matter of feeling our way forward at this stage. The bottom line though, is that there doesn't seem to be a whole raft of suitable rules clamouring for our attention, so needs must seems to direct us in our choice as writing our own from scratch is simply not a sensible course of action.



DRESSING THE BATTLEFIELD

As this was brand new period for me, I had no dedicated or suitable buildings or roads to game on/around. So, as the project has progressed, I've been collecting and painting (mostly) MDF kits. Having said that, my first building was an old Architectural Heritage resin house; a Rathaus, mastered by my long time friend Dave Paddock. Despite extensive web searches, I failed to source any other buildings from his range, hence the move to MDF. My favourite MDF manufacturer, Warbases, have only recently released their German buildings in 15mm, and I will certainly be checking those out; but in the meantime, I was able to obtain quite a selection from Lasercraftart, a firm new to me. Again their buildings can be seen in the accompanying photographs.

For the basemat, I settled on one from Geek Villain dressed with 'self cut out modern roads 10cm wide', again by Geek Villain - I must say cutting these out was an unwelcome chore. The general tabletop layout that I envisaged would allow for the outskirts of the town Grös Bikelberg, a village of two or three homes, and Bikelheim, a couple of farm complexes. Speaking of farms, in order to 'populate' them, I acquired two bags of livestock from Pendraken: some cows and pigs. I must say though, that the 15mm pigs just didn't look big enough for me, so I opted for the 20mm version. I would



9. Soviet infantry (from Plastic Soldier Company) hurry past the Rathaus (from Architectural Heritage) en route to support the armoured attack.



10. Chieftain MBTs and infantry of the BAOR take up position on the edge of a forest. Tanks and infantry from Battlefront. The BAOR infantry are the only metal figures/vehicles in the collection.

have liked them to be a slightly more interesting colour/paint job, but Google images refused to show me anything other than 'pink' German pigs!

In addition, I have two factory/industrial building bases, each with two buildings fixed down. These bases can be free standing or combined into one bigger complex. They are from the 15mm Sarissa Precision range. I'm on the lookout for a suitable fuel storage tank to add to these as it would make a good game objective for a Soviet thrust.

PRACTICAL MATTERS

As any reader of my blog Tales From GHQ will testify, from time to time I bang on about hand and eye issues; so you could be forgiven for wondering how I tackled painting such small figures. I can satisfy your curiosity if you'll bear with me. Firstly, of course, I cut the figures carefully from the sprues with a sharp craft knife and gently filed off any superfluous pieces left on the helmets. The figures could then be assembled where necessary, fixed with Whitetack to my trusty MDF board, and sprayed with my usual double acrylic matt white paint. The spray needs to be very light to avoid obscuring details. When it came to painting the figures, I fixed them with Whitetack to 60mm MDF hexagonal bases from Warbases, usually in 4s or 3s - a base at a time - and I washed them with Games Workshop's Agrax Earthshade. These two preliminary steps ensured I could comfortably hold figure groups and see the detail I was trying to paint! Experience has shown me that hexagons are easier to hold and rotate pretty much as well as circular bases, for painting. The 60mm size means it's easy to get at the inner facing aspect of each figure.

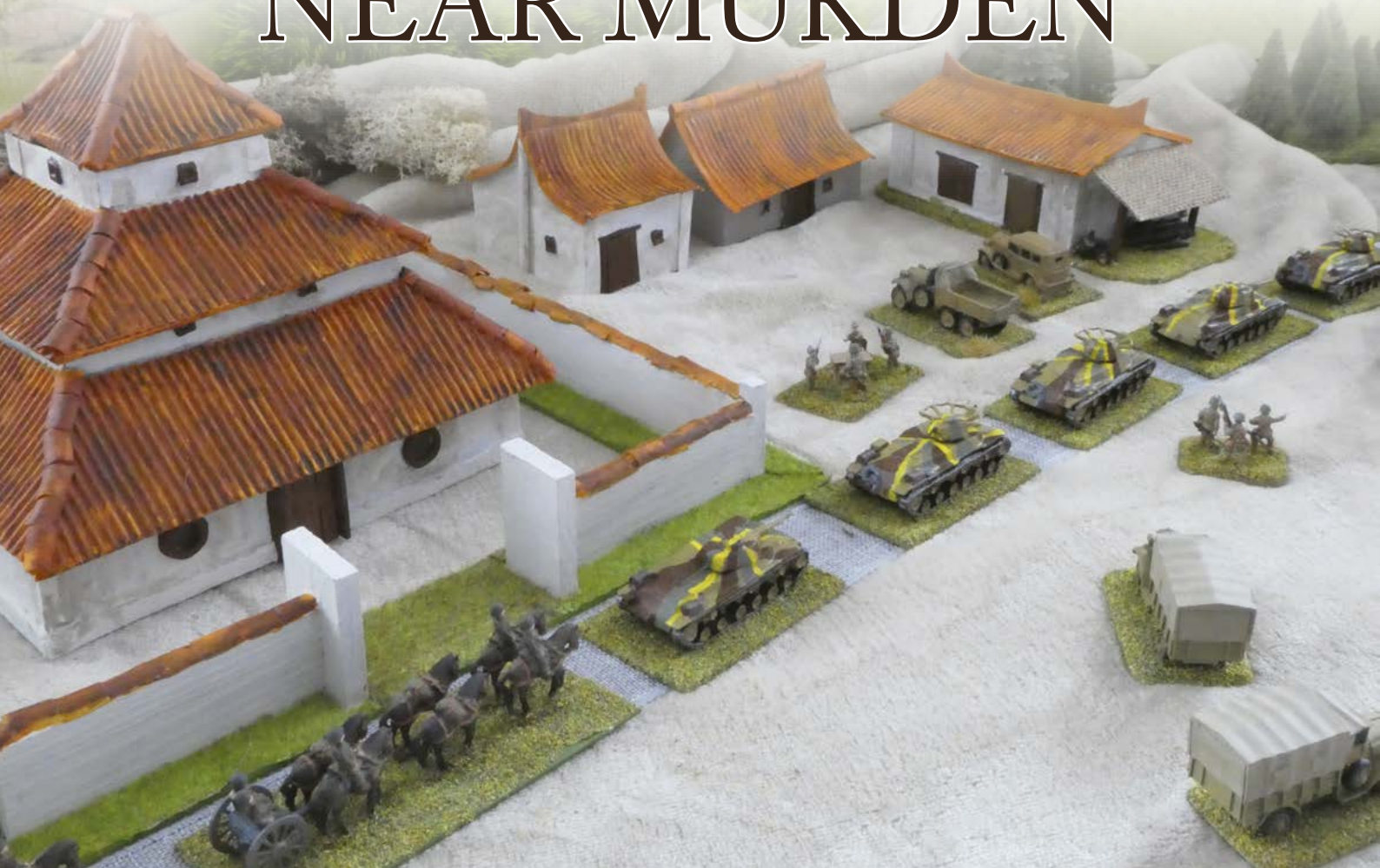
I painted the figures with my usual Size 0 ProArt 40 Sable brush from ABC Brushes - ridiculously cheap and keep the point far longer than any other makes I've ever used. The uniform colour came from Great Escape Games - AFB Series AK11370 Russian Sand. All the other colours are my trusty Foundry paints bar the bases which are GW Steel Legion Drab (formerly Graveyard Earth).

AFTERWORD

Are we finished then, you can reasonably ask? Well, not really. As I write, I've still two HINDS and two Lynx helicopters from the original purchases [Now seen in the photos - Ed] as well as the box of recently acquired Plastic Soldier Company's T55s, a SU-17 Fitter Fighter-Bomber from Battlefront's Team Yankee range, a Ural lorry, and a Soviet All Terrain vehicle for their HQ from Butlers' 3D Prints. The latter I acquired together with some BAOR anti-aircraft capability in the form of a Rapier Towed battery, an additional Long base Land Rover, a Land Rover ambulance, and a Radio truck for the HQ, also all from Butlers' 3D Prints. A Harrier VTOL aircraft has also been acquired (and swiftly pressed into service for the photo session) for the British.

Of course, 'as any fool know' it's hardly likely that the new expansion will stop there... well, I am a wargamer after all!

MUCKING ABOUT NEAR MUKDEN



THE JAPANESE INVASION OF MANCHURIA

Glenn Clarke heads to the 'back of beyond' and finds a new setting to game with his Japanese WWII army.

Serendipity is a good word, describing a happy coincidence or an accidental but fortunate discovery. It is exactly what I encountered when I was putting the finishing touches to this article and issue 413 of *Wargames Illustrated* dropped through my letterbox. The happy coincidence I refer to was the review of Chris Swan's new ruleset, *Beyond the Empire*, that featured in the issue's Observation Post. Chris' rules are subtitled: 'wargames rules for engagements with small forces in the back of beyond and other places, 1918 to 1939', and this seemed to be a perfect accompaniment for my latest project.

Some time ago, I built a Japanese army for World War Two battles and began to wonder what else I might use it for; these thoughts eventually sparked an interest in the Japanese invasion of Manchuria, very definitely a spot in the 'back of beyond'. The Japanese invasion of 1931 followed

the Mukden Incident, a deliberate sabotage of railway lines engineered by Japanese troops. This first incursion by the Japanese resulted in the establishment of a puppet state known as Manchukuo, a prelude to the full-blown invasion of Manchuria from 1937 onwards.

The region is intriguing as it represents the convergence of several very different cultures; the countries of China, Russia, Mongolia, and Korea all meet here and produce a rich tapestry of architectural styles and landscapes. Before you rush to a modern atlas to see where Mukden is, let me point out that Mukden is the Manchu name for the provincial capital of Liaoning Province, and its modern name, which you will find in your atlas, is Shenyang.

Some of my fellow wargamers saw this as an ill-founded project that might produce, at best, a game based upon the Japanese and Russian clash at Khalkin

Gol in 1938. Anything further, involving Chinese Nationalists and their Japanese opponents, was doomed to be a non-starter... or so said the naysayers. I was undeterred; this appeared to me to be a chance to field quirky armies using a variety of equipment that could not be used in any other theatre, and I therefore pressed ahead.

There seemed to be three main stumbling blocks: the lack of suitable terrain, the lack of a suitable Chinese force, and the lack of suitable rules. Let's consider each of these points.

MANCHURIA'S TERRAIN

The wild countryside of Manchuria features rough scrubland, which can be easily represented with a simple coloured gaming mat or cloth and a scattering of reindeer moss; there are vast swathes of open grassland that can also be easily represented in the same manner, and

there are forests of both deciduous and coniferous trees. These trees will hopefully not be a problem to most gamers, who should have a wood or two in their collection.

Towns and villages are a little more challenging to represent, but if you are eager to get gaming, you do not need to be a slave to authenticity to play a perfectly acceptable game. For myself, the architecture cried out for some inventive model making, a challenge that taxed my abilities but one that was also very rewarding. The buildings shown in the photographs here are my own scratch-built models; I would have liked to explain how they were made, but there was too much trial and error (fettling, as we say up here in the north of England) to make a presentable article. If you shy away from terrain building, fear not and take a shopping trip to the aquatics department of pet stores and larger garden centres. There you will find buildings designed to add interest to fish tanks, vivaria, and the like that can live an alternate life as buildings in the region of Manchuria. The main problem will be finding something in an appropriate scale; but once you have the name of a manufacturer you like, it is easy enough to check out their website for suitable offerings. Bonsai trees and accessories also offer interesting possibilities, and you can find plenty of artificial bonsai trees online that are perfect for adding an exotic touch to any landscape in the Far East. Terrain, therefore, is not such an insurmountable problem as it might seem at first, especially if you are prepared to undertake a little scratch building.



The variety of possible buildings from large temples (above) to humble rural cottages (below).



Below: A monastery created from simple individual terrain pieces and a large centrepiece model.



Below: Chinese armour on the road - Crossley armoured car, Panzer 1, Vickers 6 ton, and BT10 armoured car.



THE COMBATANTS

With terrain sorted, I needed to raise the various armies that saw action in Manchuria. These include Japanese and Russian forces, and they are easy enough to obtain in several different scales, including 15mm, which I favoured. The Chinese are a little more difficult to deal with, but Irregular Miniatures do produce 15mm figures for the Chinese Civil War and for the Chinese Warlord period, both ranges being perfectly acceptable.

If you prefer 28mm, then Warlord Games have useable Chinese figures in their *Bolt Action* range with their Korean War offerings. Similarly, many of the *Bolt Action* German figures can be easily adapted. Several other

manufacturers produce 28mm Russian, Japanese, and German figures and vehicles, which can be used with little or no modification.

For my own Chinese units, I used a batch of leftover 15mm Japanese figures as the mainstay of my force. You can use early war German figures to represent elements of Chiang Kai-shek's forces; he himself referred to the core of his command as his 'Germanised Army'. They wore the distinctive German 'coal scuttle' helmet and were trained by German officers.

Artillery and armour present no problems as there were no home-grown Chinese weapons; everything was purchased abroad and imported. Sources of supply for armour and artillery, as well as small arms, included Great Britain, France, Italy, Germany, and Russia. Although it is outside the scope of this article, it is worth noting that China also bought and imported a selection of aircraft and even naval vessels. Imported armour was generally not organized into large armoured divisions as you would expect in Western European armies. On the contrary, most of the equipment was scattered haphazardly throughout the various forces. Nonetheless, a small unit of perhaps 15 to 20 tanks and armoured cars would be perfectly acceptable, particularly if you were aiming to represent an element of Chiang Kai-shek's force.



Above: Chinese artillery - Howitzers, Type 94 37mm, and Putilov 76mm.

Below: A Japanese column led by Ha Go type 95 light tanks.



Below: Chinese anti tank guns, Crossley armoured car, and Vickers 6 ton.



IMPORTED ARMOUR

The relevant types and their countries of origin are listed here, and most are readily available in a variety of scales.

TANKS	
Renault FT	France
Renault ZB	France
V-C-L Amphibious Tanks (Vickers Carden Loyd)	Great Britain
Vickers Mark E Type B	Great Britain
Panzer 1	Germany
T26	Russia
BT5	Russia
TANKETTES	
V-C-L Tankette Mark VI (Vickers Carden Loyd)	Great Britain
Renault UE (unarmed universal carrier)	France
CV35	Italy
ARMoured CARS	
Leichter Panzerspähwagen Sdkfz 222	Germany
Leichter Panzerspähwagen Sdkfz 221	Germany
Leichter Panzerspähwagen Sdkfz 260	Germany
BA10	Russia
ARTILLERY	
Anti-Tank Guns	A variety from all the above countries
Field Guns and Howitzers	
Anti-Aircraft Guns	

HOW TO PLAY?

Finding a suitable set of rules to do battle in this theatre of war was my final challenge, as it is unashamedly niche! Engaging in a little lateral thinking here led me to conclude that the fighting in Manchuria was very similar to that which was to take place in Western Europe during the early part of World War Two. Consequently, if you have rules that cover that timescale, you can use them for Manchuria since they will include data for most or all the armoured vehicles and artillery that I have listed above. I already had a suitable Japanese force in 15mm scale, and a Russian force if I decided to explore that area of the conflict.

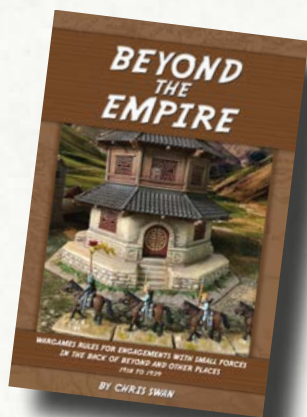


Above: A Chinese column moves through the custom terrain.

My next step, therefore, was to set about putting together a Chinese Nationalist force; this eventually had such a varied mixture of equipment that the question of requirements more or less dictated that I use *Rapid Fire* since there are freely available data sheets for this eclectic mixture of armaments. I downloaded and printed off the relevant data sheets from the excellent *Rapid Fire* website then pressed ahead. I had no sooner finished one game when my copy of the updated rules, *Rapid Fire Reloaded*, arrived. Both games, and subsequent ones, worked perfectly well with the original and updated data sheets and proved to be very enjoyable.

I have used the *Flames of War* ruleset several times for different theatres of war, and I think that they would work equally well for this scenario. The downside would be collecting together all of the relevant data cards since they come from so many different nations. Obtaining them all could be tiresome and quite expensive.

Which brings us neatly back to the new ruleset *Beyond the Empire* with which I opened this piece. If you prefer to game with 28mm figures and equipment, then you are in for a treat with a rulebook designed specifically for that scale, and a rulebook that includes many tables for some of the varied weaponry I have mentioned previously. See more about the rules in issue 413 of *Wargames Illustrated* or visit caliverbooks.com for a brief description of the volume.



Right: Japanese supply column.

CONCLUSIONS

As a final word about this theatre of war, I wanted to point out that the unusual mix of equipment could not be fielded in any other locality, and it therefore allows you to use different and interesting forces that are far removed from the usual World War Two scenarios. The era is also extremely flexible in so far as one can pitch Nationalist Chinese against Russian or Japanese forces; the Japanese Army can also be pitched against the Russians in the spate of border clashes that occurred throughout the seven years between 1932 and 1939.

If you care to develop things further, then a Communist Chinese Army can be used to fight both the Japanese and later the Nationalist Chinese.

Finally, taking a step backwards, your Nationalist Chinese forces could easily be adapted and used in the chaotic Warlord Era; an era when armoured trains were preferred to wheeled transport and many unusual vehicles were imported from Europe. It is a rich, largely ignored theatre of war that would certainly repay your investigation and will certainly elicit cries of "What is that?" when a Citroën Kégresse half-track bristling with machine guns trundles across the field!



Above: Ragged Chinese defence with FT17s, Schneider, Crossley, Panzer 1s, Vickers 6 ton, and BT 10.

Blastwall

Buildings and Terrain



Commissions

Many of my models have been developed at the request of gamers looking to bring their ideas of life. If you have a special project you would like help in creating please drop me a line and I will be happy to help.

www.Blastwall.co



"In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war"

Abraham Lincoln

Dixon

miniatures

*Superbly detailed & realistically animated
Historical Wargaming figures*

28mm:

Vikings

Samurai

ECW

Grand Alliance

Pirates

Wild West

ACW

WWII

And much more!



www.dixon-minis.com

dixonminis@aol.com

Unit 24, Queens Square Business Park,
Huddersfield Road, Honley, Holmfirth, HD9 6QZ
Telephone: (+44) 01484 660246



Colonel Bills

www.colonelbills.com

Will someone please tell this chap that there is no shame in buying his wargames goodies second hand, from Colonel Bills



The Colonel has all his Preloved stock carefully checked, to make sure that it is in tip top condition; and it is priced as cheaply as possible.

So don't be ashamed Old Boy.....

Everyone is buying from the Colonel these days. It makes so much sense!

Colonel Bills finds new Generals for Old Soldiers
colonelbill@colonelbills.com or 01833 627241

CLUB FOCUS

THE FRIENDS OF GENERAL HAIG



Regular readers will recall our photo session from *Wi417* that featured the rather splendid World War Two Desert War collection of Dave James. The photos for that article were taken during a gathering of The Friends of General Haig - the affectionate name given to the Worcester

Wargames Club. Whilst shooting Dave's Desert War collection, it would have been remiss of us to ignore the other games being played around the clubhouse; so here we present a 'club focus' on several of the other eye-catching games on display.

THE BATTLE OF GINGINDLOVU, APRIL 1897 - FORM SQUARE'CATION

By Phil Heath

After the Battle of Khambula on 29 March 1879, it should have been clear to King Cetshwayo that he could not defeat the British in the field. Nevertheless, with 7,000 Zulus and 3,000 local forces, he moved his *Impi* to engage 3,400 Imperial troops and 2,300 Native Auxiliaries; the largest British force seen thus far in the Anglo-Zulu War.

Lord Chelmsford was determined not to repeat the same mistakes made at Isandlwana. His troops formed square, and the Zulus obliged by charging at one point from three sides at the same time. A hail of Gatling gun fire, rockets, and steady volleys stopped the attacking Zulus in their tracks.

The scenario I have devised based on the battle (using tweaked *Black Powder* rules) doesn't require a British player; the winner is the Zulu commander that inflicts the most damage to the British. The chances of a Zulu victory are so slight that the game is all about honour: first to close, first to inflict a British casualty, and so on.





THE BATTLE OF ISSY, JULY 1815 - END OF EMPIRE
 By Andrew Lambert, Tony Smith, and Sean McLaughlin

In our reflight of the last battle of the Napoleonic period, the Prussian infantry held a defensive position with their flanks secured by the small village of Issy and the farmstead of Grand Montronce. A steady advance by two French brigades on the right, supported by two gun batteries and several troops of *Chasseur a Cheval*, put pressure on the Prussian line at the farmstead. Meanwhile, on the

left, there was a skirmish duel between French skirmishers and Prussian Jägers for control of Issy.

The pressure mounted on the Prussians until both flanks broke with the French taking the farm and the village. When all seemed lost for the Prussians, Blücher's Cavalry Ulans, supported by mounted Jägers, arrived to bolster the Germans.

Encouraged by 'Marshal Forward' (Blücher), the Prussians launched a counter-offensive against the village and put pressure on the farmstead. Despite several waves of Prussian infantry attacks on Issy, the French turned the course of history and held on for a narrow victory.

We used the *Black Powder* rules. The Prussian infantry are from Calpe Miniatures; the French, Warlord Games.



SWEDEN AND THE POLISH-LITHUANIAN COMMONWEALTH COLLECTION

By Andy Bartlett

My collection is based around the war between Sweden and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 1620s. This is the conflict in which Gustav II Adolph, King of Sweden, developed his army, strategy, and tactics before entering into the Thirty Years' War in 1630.

Many people already know the story about his famous victory at Breitenfeld in 1631 and tragic death at Lützen in 1632. This lesser known earlier war was fought against his cousin, the Polish King Sigismund III Vasa, leader of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. It intrigues me as the little known prequel/origin story for Gustav Adolph's army.





(Above) Swedish Cuirassiers. Resin figures from Avanpost Figures TYW range. A small range of beautifully sculpted figures with lovely crisp detail to paint.

The Swedes did not have many of these heavy horsemen; just a few from their recently conquered territory in Livonia (eastern shores of the Baltic Sea). Some wore full three-quarter plate armour and some slightly less. There were never enough of these horsemen available to even the odds with the Polish horse.



Swedish 'Light Horsemen'. Metal figures from 1898 Miniatures TYW range. Really dynamic looking figures with bags of character.

These troops were not 'light' cavalry in the later sense of the word but were called this as they were expected to be lighter than the heavy cuirassiers. They were the main battle cavalry of the Swedish forces. They may have been as well armoured as the worst armoured cuirassiers, or just had a cloth riding coat for protection.

These figures have their pistols drawn ready for the charge. Gustav Adolph's instruction for this cavalry was for the front rank to charge into contact, firing their pistols as they contacted the enemy, and the subsequent ranks to have drawn swords and to go in with 'cold steel'.



Royal Field Hetman Stanislaw Koniecpolski. Metal figures from The Assault Group (TAG). TAG have a fabulous Renaissance range and one of the most complete ranges for Eastern Europe. Here we see the Polish Hetman accompanied by a standard bearer and a kettle drummer.

Konieczpolski was one of Poland's greatest generals of the period and a cunning match for the great Gustav Adolph. The two fought cat and mouse campaigns from 1627 through 1629; first, one having the upper hand, then the other. Konieczpolski is accompanied by the 'Hetman's Sign', a personal standard that included many Eastern influences. Their exact design and construction is unclear; so this one was scratch built on a Hussar lance, using a snapped bit of Hussar wing, some green stuff, and paper for the streamers.



Polish (Winged) Hussars. Metal figures from Warlord Games. Real action figures with the horses at the gallop, and the riders carrying the long Hussar lances, silken pennons flowing in the breeze. Lovely sets from Warlord with options for different hussar wings and fabulous details on the Hussars' armour and exotic clothing. Lance pennons from Flags of War.

Surely one of the most iconic troops of all time. These were the main strike force of the Polish-Lithuanian army and the terror of their enemies. Armed with a very long lance with a hollow construction to allow it to be wielded with deadly accuracy, a sabre, pistols, a long sword designed to penetrate armour, and probably a horseman's pick for good measure. Guaranteed to focus the enemy's attention.



Swedish Infantry command. Metal figures from Wargames Foundry (centre and right) and Warlord Games. The Foundry TYW range is one of their oldest, sculpted by the Perrys when they were still in short trousers (probably!). It may be nostalgia, but I think these figures still have bags of character. Flags from Flags of War, who have a superb range of Thirty Years' War flags.

This command base is from the 'Blue' Regiment. Recruited mainly from Germans, this unit would go on to be one of the Swedish army's most solid and dependable foot formations. They are led by Hans Georg aus dem Winckel, seen here sporting a fur lined Hungarian jacket, the height of fashion for the well-dressed officer of the period.



Polish cossack horsemen. Wargames Foundry (left) rider and TAG rider (right) on TAG horses. Carbines and shields from TAG's super useful range of separate weapons. Fancy saddle cloths decorated using 'nail art' stickers!

In this instance, 'cossack' refers to a troop type and not the semi-independent ethnic Cossacks of this period from the Ukraine. Although not as grand or as richly bedecked as the Hussars, the Polish cossack cavalry were still recruited from the Polish nobility and their followers. They were expected to provide mobile fire support for the Hussars and also perform the duties of typical light cavalry, being the eyes and ears of the army.



Swedish Shot. Front rank Warlord Games (metals), second rank Wargames Foundry. Shown here ready to give a devastating, all ranks, 'salvee' to disorder and discourage those terrifying Polish cavalry.

As well as fighting in the classic combination with pikemen, or defending captured towns and fortifications, the Swedish musket armed foot could find themselves in the midst of the cavalry fighting. This was the period when the Swedish King started to experiment with adding small sections of 'commanded shot' in support of the Swedish cavalry squadrons in an attempt to even the odds with the Polish cavalry. This additional firepower was meant to disorder or deter the enemy before the two lines of cavalry met. The experiment was continued on into Germany in subsequent years. It must have been an unsettling place to be for these small sections of infantry amidst the large bodies of horse thundering about. Not for the faint of heart!



Polish Haiduk infantry. Wargames Foundry, front rank, TAG second rank. This rather dashing light blue and dark red combination uniform is taken from one of the rare contemporary illustrations of Polish Haiduks.

The Haiduks were native Polish infantry recruited from the peasant classes and uniformed in a Hungarian style. Armed mostly with a short musket or arquebus, backed up by a sabre and often a hand axe, the Haiduks were doughty opponents for the Swedish infantry. Every tenth man was armed with a halberd and acted as a sort of NCO. Although not usually present in large numbers, no Polish force would look complete without them.

Check out Andy's blog for more Swede-on-Pole action theviaregia.blogspot.com

THE DRAGON IN BURMA 1765

By Charles Huthwaite

The fifth emperor of the Qing Dynasty; Qianlong, known affectionately as 'The Dragon', was a military leader of great determination and distinction. By 1790, he had expanded his Chinese Empire to its greatest ever extent. In the process, he invaded Burma on three occasions between 1765 and 1769. Despite his army's all-conquering nature elsewhere, The Dragon had very little luck against his southern neighbour, being defeated on each occasion.

Our game was based on a possible battle during one of Chinese invasions, in which I am trying to reverse Qianlong's fortunes.

All the figures used are by Tiger Miniatures and we used the *Crouching Tiger* rules - available from the Tiger website.



Thanks very much to The Friends of General Haig for their hospitality.

"We are an informal group who meet every two weeks in Holt Heath, a village just outside of Worcester in the UK. New members always welcome!"

Find out more at fogh.home.blog

SQUADRON COMBAT BOX



• **Tumbling Dice** •

1/600th SCALE AIRCRAFT AND FLIGHT BASES

CLEAR PERSPEX FLIGHT STANDS
(rods and magnets included)

ISF1 STARTER SET £14

12 square flight stands and magnets
6 x 25mm | 3 x 30mm | 3 x 40mm

ISF2 BOMBER 'FLIGHT STAND' £14

3 sets 120mm x 60mm, each to mount 3 aircraft

ISF3 BOMBER SQUADRON 'COMBAT BOX' £14

Single base 180mm x 120mm to mount 9 aircraft in
stepped formation

OVER 500 AIRCRAFT DESIGNS ARE AVAILABLE

- WW1-WW2 and MODERN 1950's to 2000s
 - Standard packs **£2** (6x Spitfires)
 - Large packs **£3** (2x B17)
- Discount packs **£14** over 70 available
(contents based on 8 standard packs)

'Wings at War' 7 different rules sets each
with aircraft **£10**

For details of all other historical models, visit:
www.tumblingdiceuk.com

GUNFIGHTER'S BALL

WILD WEST SHOOTOUTS

OVER 150 GUNFIGHTERS PLUS Terrain, Bystanders, Animals, Rules, Cards, Dice, And Accessories.

fungeed with **KICK STARTER**

GUNFIGHT ROYALE

COMING IN 2022!
THE KNUCKLEDUSTER BOARD GAME!

Distributed exclusively in Europe by Caliver Books
WWW.KNUCKLEDUSTER.COM

WARGAMES illustrated

PAINTS

YOUR COMPLETE GUIDE TO PAINTING WARGAMES MINIATURES

EXCLUSIVELY FROM **BARNES & NOBLE**

Includes: SIMPLE COLORS, BASIC AND ADVANCED OVERLAYS, STUNNING FINISHES.

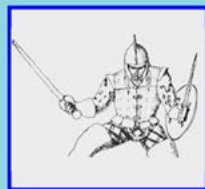
Turn your Lead to Gold!

Is the loft threatening to collapse? Are you ever going to paint those figures? Would you like the cash to start another period or scale?

I buy collections of painted or unpainted figures, any make or scale including Games Workshop and historical figures. Also Board Games, RPGs, model kits, books and terrain.

I will buy your entire collection (not just the good bits), pay in cash, and collect the items from your door. No distance is too far.

Contact me on 07914 609709, email: bigbadwolf@btconnect.com or write to Rob Palmier, 23 Clanfield Avenue, Wolverhampton, West Midlands, WV11 2QU.



Recon 2022 Wargames show

Sat Dec. 3rd Pudsey Civic Hall, Leeds

Bring & Buy, 50+ trade tables

Full details - wdwgamers.weebly.com



Paintingden Miniature Painting Service.

10mm to 32mm
The painting service for the gamer.
Email: paintingden@yahoo.com
Web: www.paintingden.co.uk
Address: Paintingden,
19, Browne Road
Fulwell
Sunderland.
SR6 9HQ

KEELMEN MINIATURES

28mm White metal figurines

Anglo-Scots Wars 1513 -1550
Border Reivers 1550-1620
Jacobite rebellions 1707-1720
Spanish Guerillas 1808-1814

www.keelmenminiatures.co.uk
info@keelmenminiatures.co.uk

Reveille

Sunday, 27th November 2022
10.00am - 4.00pm

At the Downend Folk House,
Lincombe Barn, Overndale Road,
Downend, Bristol, BS16 2RW

Lincombe Barn Wargames Society
presents its friendly annual show
with trade stands; private sellers;
demonstration and participation
games; free car parking, and our
renowned refreshments.

See our web site for more details:
www.bristolwargaming.co.uk
Or contact Nick on 07910 700651;
e-mail: nick@bristolwargaming.co.uk

Please note that there will not
be a Bring & Buy at the show

ABCbrushes
Quality Brushes for Model Painters

For all your brush
painting requirements.
Big choice. Great Value!

www.abcbushes.com
www.facebook.com/Abcbushes
www.ebay.co.uk/sch/abcbushes/m.html

Giants IN Miniature



EACH LIMITED EDITION
FIGURE COMES WITH A
NUMBERED CARD

FIND THE WHOLE GiM
RANGE ON OUR WEBSITE
www.wargamesillustrated.net

LATEST RELEASES



AVAILABLE FROM: www.wargamesillustrated.net and www.northstarfigures.com

Prices from £4 / \$5.50

WARGAMES illustrated® 2022 Awards

AS VOTED FOR BY YOU...

It's that time of the year again. We're asking for your votes for the 2022 Wargames Illustrated Awards. Which companies, rules, accessories, games, and models in our illustrious hobby are worthy of your tick in the box?

Not only will the award winners receive a no expense spared trophy, which (from a distance) looks like it is made from crystal, they will be able to display the coveted *Wi* Award crest on their website and can spend the whole of 2023 walking with their heads held high in the knowledge that they have been voted 'best of the best' by thousands of fellow hobbyists.

Get your thinking caps on and choose your favorite in the following categories:

1. Best Wargames Rules/Game
2. Best Miniature Manufacturer
3. Best Range of Miniatures
4. Best Wargames Terrain, Accessory or Building Manufacturer
5. Best Customer Service (from any business within the hobby)
6. Best New Rules/Game (2022)
7. Best Issue of *Wargames Illustrated* (2022) -
No award for this one - just interested!
8. Best *Wargames Illustrated* Article (2022) -
Award goes to the contributor concerned.



VOTE ONLINE AT

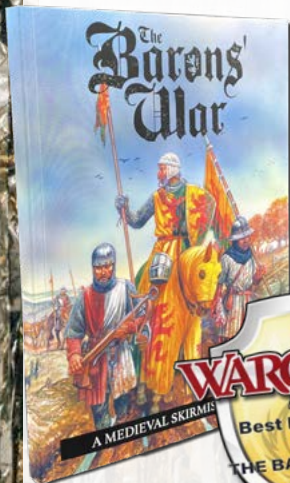
WARGAMESILLUSTRATED.NET

Only one vote allowed per person. You can vote for any or all categories.

Voting closes 1 December 2022.

Here's a reminder of 2021's winners

1. Best Wargames Rules/Game - *Bolt Action*
2. Best Miniature Manufacturer - *Perry Miniatures*
3. Best Range of Miniatures - *Bolt Action*
4. Best Wargames Accessories - *Sarissa Precision*
5. Best Customer Service - *Warlord Games*
6. Best New Rules/Game (2021) - *The Barons' War*
7. Best Issue of *Wargames Illustrated* (2021) - *Wi406 - October*
8. Best *Wargames Illustrated* Article (2021) - *By Rick Priestley*



Complete your quest!

NOBLE KNIGHT

GAMES

We'll pay you cash or credit for your pre-owned games, books, miniatures and more! Contact us at trades@nobleknight.com for a free quote today!



New & Preowned Wargames



Miniatures

Historical, Modern, & Fantasy



Paints, Supplies, & More!



The World's Largest Selection of Tabletop Games

Wargames • Board Games • Roleplaying Games • Magic & CCGs • Miniatures & Paints • Supplies & More!



Shop Online — We Ship Worldwide!
www.nobleknight.com



OUR CLASSIC FANTASY RANGE IS D20 APPROVED!

WARGAMES ATLANTIC

CLASSIC FANTASY



THE NEXT ADDITION TO THE RANGE ARE LANDSKNECHT OGRES COMING THIS AUTUMN!



facebook.com/wargamesatlantic

DESIGNED ON BOTH



SIDES OF THE POND

VISIT US AT WWW.WARGAMESATLANTIC.COM



LATE 17TH CENTURY

Figures suitable for the Monmouth Rebellion 1685, The Irish Wars 1689 to 1691, and The War of the Grand Alliance 1688 to 1697 (aka The Nine Years' War or the War of the League of Augsburg). A large selection of infantry, cavalry, artillery, personalities, and generals all available now from our Front Rank Figurines collection at:

www.GRIPPINGBEAST.com



COMING SOON - SAGA: AGE OF ALEXANDER

Studio Pomahawk