

THE WORLD'S PREMIER TABLETOP GAMING MAGAZINE

WARGAMES illustrated®



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DESERT RAID

02 Hundred meets 'SAS Rogue Heroes'



A FIERCE AND HOT DISPUTE

Bloody Miniatures in the Civil War



TOUGH GUT

Bolt Action in Italy 1944

PLUS: HISTORICON 2023, TALKING MINIATURES, ALESIA, THALASSA, AND MUCH MORE!

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FROM THE EDITOR

What a mega mix of topics we've got for you in *Wargames Illustrated* this month!

Every so often we break with our theme tradition and go with what, in-house, we call a smorgasbord of articles. This approach means we get to take in the widest possible sweep of what our hobby can offer.

We begin our feature articles in North Africa, with a look at the *Desert Raid* expansion to *02 Hundred Hours* - the World War Two night raiding game. Over the next 80 pages, we take you on a journey from Alessia in ancient Gaul, to the recent Historicon convention in Pennsylvania, via 1066, the English Civil War, terrain building, fantastical Greek triremes, and more. As I say, a real smorgasbord of subjects.

I hope you enjoy this month's tasty topics.

Dan Faulconbridge
Editor and Owner

Our cover artwork this month is by Neil Roberts and features a Noble Onna Bugeisha riding into battle. See more action from Sengoku period Japan in the Test of Honour battle report starting on page 32.

Below: Figures from the new Desert Raid set from Grey For Now games.



CREDITS

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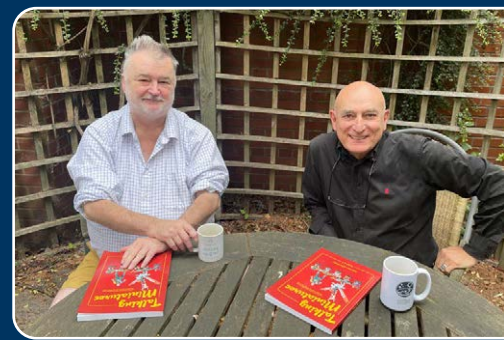
Ricard Fortun revisits *Thalassa*'s ancient naval battles with rules for a new ship class that brings the divine powers to the tabletop.

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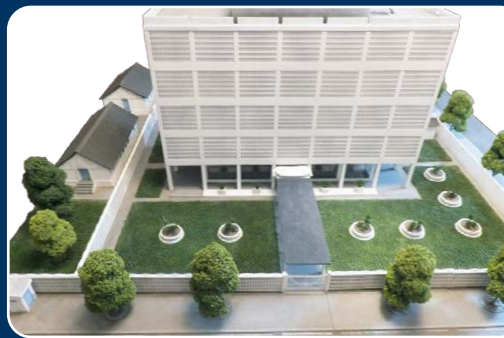
Our man in Pennsylvania, Dave Taylor, joins the throng at Historicon, and reports from this massive US convention.



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OBSERVATION POST

New and forthcoming wargames
stuff you need to know about

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

PARTIZAN PRESS: THE SENUSSI'S LITTLE MINIATURE WAR 1915-1917

The Senussi's Little Miniature War is as an expansion for Steve Langan's *Setting the East Ablaze!* ruleset, but it's also a labour of love from author Robert Giglio; his opportunity to research and present a lesser-known conflict of the Great War. The Senussi Campaign is covered in full here and, while it may be more obscure than some of the famous battles in the Western theatre, this 'back of beyond' conflict offers many different wargaming possibilities.

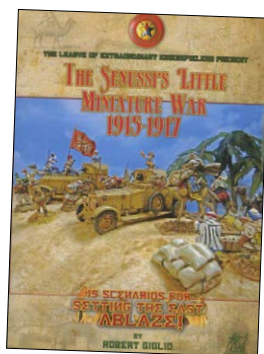
After introductions there's a brief history of the conflict - a primer for the uninitiated - before the book heads into scenarios. These take up most of the contents - pages 23 to 146 - and 15 varied encounters of differing scales bring diverse gaming potential. Each scenario begins with a well-written account of historical events and their aftermath, which adds to the history content. Each takes up just a few pages, but the reader progressively discovers more about the British Western Frontier Force in Egypt and the troubles they faced against Senussi and Bedouin tribesmen.

After history comes 'The Game' section where additional rules are described, then the orbats are presented along with well rendered tabletop maps and terrain details. These scenarios vary greatly in the number and type of troops involved; some games are small skirmishes with just a few units and others are far grander battles. Photos of inspirational figures pepper the pages along with a scattering of historical photos and maps.

SYSTEM ADAPTABLE

Although they are designed for the *Setting the East Ablaze!* rules, the author provides suggestions for other rulesets and is keen to point out that everything is easily adaptable to your system of choice. There's such a wealth of information, intriguing forces, and special rules for each battle here that you'll probably be eager to dive in, whatever system you play.

The opening scenario presents the British's first encounter with the Senussi in Sidi Barrani and this is one of the game's smaller clashes. The British forces tend to require less miniatures than their opponents as they will often field more specialised options



DETAILS

- SCALE: Assorted
- PERIOD: World War One
- PRICE: £35
- FORMAT: 190-page large-format, full-colour, softback book
- AVAILABLE FROM: caliverbooks.com and onmilitarymatters.com

- in this case a Rolls Royce Armoured Car and a Ford Model T Light Patrol Car. These vehicles make regular appearances and are certainly a big draw of playing in this theatre. Scenario three sees tribesmen ambush cavalry, artillery, and armoured cars, and shows the force disparity you'll often encounter. The Senussi must use feints and draw the British into a hidden steep sided riverbed to immobilise them. Scenario seven - The Christmas Day Fight - is one of the larger clashes and a rotten way to spend the festive season for the men involved! The orbats include field ambulances for the British and, with their casualties in this battle subtracted from future scenarios (if you choose to play the games sequentially), you'll want to make use of those.

The scenarios continue until this 'little miniature war' has been thoroughly explored. With that done there's space for eight appendices, the first of which provides some insight into why the author made the decisions he did in translating the history to the wargames table. We always like this sort of thing and an in-book 'designer's notes' is all too rare with rulesets. British forces, Armoured Cars and Light Patrol Cars, and Senussi forces get deep dives. This extremely thorough gamer's guide to the Senussi Campaign finishes with a guide to figure ratios and the maximum number of minis you'll need for each scenario, historical maps, unit ratings, and a bibliography.



UNDER THE
MICROSCOPE

FROM THE
VAULT

GET A TASTER

The book's author supplied us with articles for *Wi424* and *Wi425* [WiPrime members will find those issues in the Vault - Ed] that give a taste of what you'll discover in *The Senussi's Little Miniature War*. In 424 Bob showcases WWI's armoured cars as a gamechanging moment in warfare, and in 425 he previews this book's final scenario. This quirky 'race' across the desert in those previously explored 'steel chariots' includes a full ruleset.

DICE HEADS: ZOONTALIS: BATTLE ROYALE STARTER SET

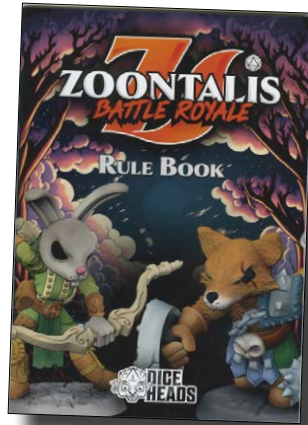
Zoontalis: Battle Royale, never tries to hide that it's an intentionally accessible and simple ruleset. 'Getting the little goblins in your life to start enjoying our hobby' is the goal listed in the book's very first paragraph. This is a ruleset and world designed to appeal to children and be played by families.

That could cause instant disinterest in more seasoned gamers, and cute anthropomorphised figures certainly don't offer the grit and realism historical armies bring to the tabletop either, but as more gamers become parents and grandparents perhaps Dice Heads are onto something with their RPG adjacent/skirmish game. What could be more rewarding than watching the next generation of wargamers discover the fun of rolling dice, moving minis around, and making their first tactical decisions?

There's nothing inherently bad in simple rules either, of course; overcomplication has been the bane of many a historical wargame through the decades. *Zoontalis* isn't lacking in mechanisms and depth either. Rather than create a very basic game the designers seem to have focused on creating a ruleset that has plenty of features that more seasoned players will be able to gradually reveal and explain to younger gamers.

Each of the four-character archetypes (Fighter, Ranger, Rogue, and Wizard) have melee and range options, special abilities, animal abilities, and further features (such as mount and large) so there's plenty to learn there. The game also uses various standard dice rather than a simplified 'non-numerical' option. Cross referencing of a D20 roll (plus or minus modifiers) against a target's defence number is the choice for combat; younger players will need to do some wargaming maths here, just like we've always had to. D10s are used for exploration elements (the game is something of a 'dungeon crawl'), while D4s track magic points. These are systems core to many wargames but presented in an easy to digest way. Movement is kept simple by playing on a grid.

Nine scenarios feature and each brings something different, with some also including 'Monsters' as non-player threats. Many of these missions feature naming conventions that younger players might have encountered in video games - Capture the Flag, Protect the President, Domination - and this will hopefully bring some instant understanding as pixel characters switch to resin miniatures.



ANIMAL APPEAL

The main appeal to younger gamers will probably be the figures. These are very nicely sculpted, super-deformed (big head on small body), animalistic combatants and the starter set includes two guilds - the Feisty Foxes and Raging Rabbits - with four figures in each.

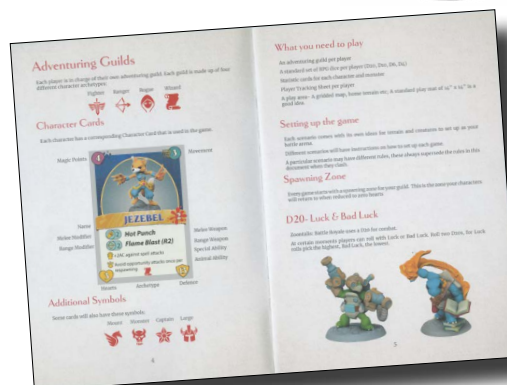
These are 3D printed resin as opposed to traditional casts but that doesn't detract from the quality. There's no obvious stepping on the models and their detail is good, highlighting the charm of these quirky fantasy characters. They certainly look amazing with a high-quality paint job, as you can see from the studio images here. Each of the figures conveys the trapping of their archetype, making them instantly recognisable. The Raging Rabbits are the standout group for us - particularly Liza the Rogue (wearing purple) who is ready to pounce - but if you are after other creatures there are bat, axolotl, and dino Guilds to collect at £24.99 a set, all of which ooze charm and character.



Above: Feisty Foxes.



Below: Raging Rabbits.



DETAILS

- SCALE: 28mm super deformed
- PERIOD: Fantasy
- PRICE: £45.99
- MATERIAL: Eight 3D resin figures; 22-page softback, full-colour, small format rulebook; dice; and cards.
- AVAILABLE FROM: dice-heads.com

WARGAMES ATLANTIC: WWI BRITISH INFANTRY

Joining the battle alongside Wargames Atlantic's existing German and French Great War sets is a new British Infantry option. Each box contains six frames to make 30 hard plastic figures and the usual plethora of options you expect is present and correct.



Five combined bodies and legs take up the central part of each frame and they are posed all the way from upright to kneeling. There's not a whole lot to say about the uniforms here. They do a good job of replicating the basic cut and are (correctly) rather unimpressive!

It's once you peek at the options elsewhere that things get more exciting. Varied heads - 28 in total per-frame - cover the Brodie and Pith helmet as well as officers' caps. The Brodie helmets can be used as standard, with trench cloth covers, or with heads wearing small box respirators. Five haversacks are also featured on the frame to complete that look.

The addition of the Pith helmets will let you take your battles from the trenches of the Western Front to the Middle East and Africa which is a smart extra that will massively up gaming options.

Equipment covers various packs, haversacks, and entrenching tools that can be fixed to the webbing on the torsos. There's also a vicious trench club and some grenades to vary the assault options.

When it comes to guns you can rely on the Lee Enfield rifles to get the job done and eight are included in various states of use - some ready to fire and others at rest. Those being aimed have matched arms on the other side and it's worth noting that they all come with bayonets fixed; it shouldn't be tricky to trim those off if you so desire.

To lay down some heavier fire there's the Lewis gun, and we reckon these LMGs look particularly great in the arms of the man who is crouching. Webley revolvers are also included and will be the perfect sidearm for your officers and range takers. A holstered version features on the frame too.



As always, you'll need to source your own bases for the figures, and the extras that come with this set comprise of 'box'! With Wargames Atlantic continuing to keep their price point below \$1.30/£1 per-figure we'll forgive them the lack of anything more. This set will provide you with a lightweight option to make a big force for WWI, which is going to please anyone who currently risks a back injury every time they prepare for a Great War game. It will allow you to construct characterful individuals and vignettes to add flavour to your big battles or individuals for smaller games. These feel just right for skirmish game *Trench Offensive* [Reviewed in *Wi428* - Ed] or Osprey's upcoming game of Weird World War historical meets the occult, *A War Transformed*.





UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

MORE IN DIGITAL

Atlantic Digital make STL files available for each of Wargames Atlantic's ranges every month. Some of these will eventually transition to plastic production but many of these offerings are a digital only opportunity to explore more unusual or unexpected areas.

There's already some interesting stuff in their Great War selection; how about the all-women unit created by Maria Bochkareva in 1917? Bochkareva had received a special dispensation to join the active army in 1914, and after exhibiting bravery on the frontline Kerensky authorised her to form a 'women's battalion of death'. These women saw little frontline action in WWI but went on to play a part in the Russian Civil War on both sides.

Another option is the Sea Battalion (*Sebataillon*) from the German Navy. The equivalent of Marines, these men saw action in various fronts during the First World War. As with the other Atlantic Digital files they come both supported and unsupported and with, or without, puddle bases.



Above: Russian Women's Battalion of Death.



Above: Sea Battalion.

Many more options are already available, and more are on the way. Armoured raiders are ready to threaten entrenched troops (below), Lawrence and his desert specialists look splendid (right), and there are even intriguing options like a full field hospital set.



DETAILS

- SCALE: 28mm
- PERIOD: Great War
- PRICE: \$34.95/£25
- MATERIAL: Hard plastic
- AVAILABLE FROM: wargamesatlantic.com

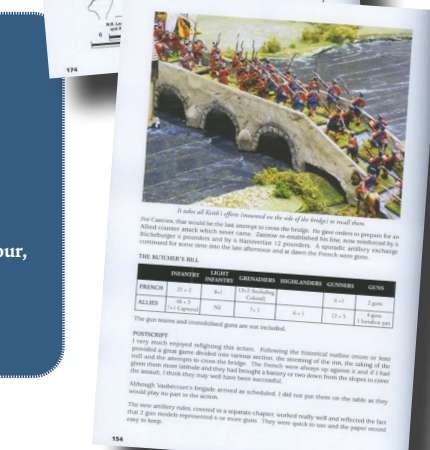
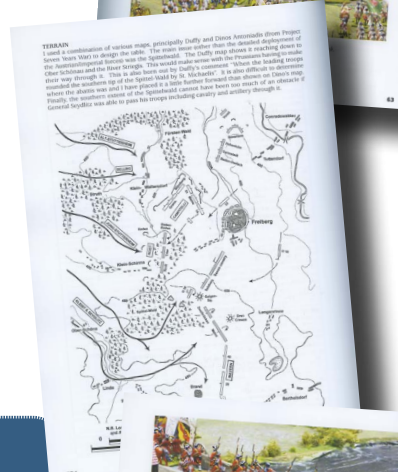
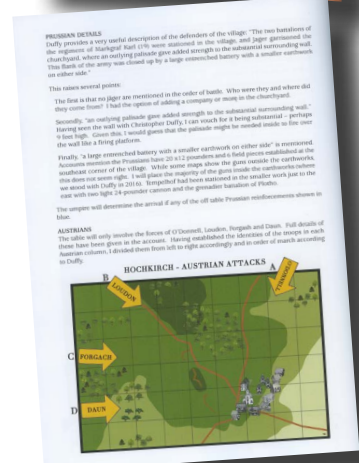
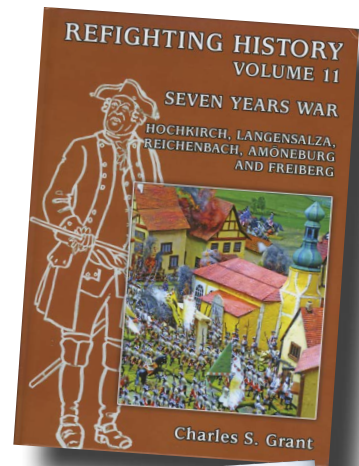
PARTIZAN PRESS - REFIGHTING HISTORY: VOLUME 11

Just when you thought there were no more battles of the Seven Years' War left to be wargamed, along comes *Refighting History: Volume 11* to prove the doubters wrong. Those of you familiar with the series from Charles S. Grant will know what to expect, but for the uninitiated, this series of books discusses various battles of the Seven Years' War, both large and small, and how best to wargame them. This one touches on Hochkirch, Langensalza, Reichkenbach, Amoneburg, and Freiberg.

It's a hefty book with just over 200 pages, and each of the battles discussed comes with historical maps showing how the opposing forces were arrayed, along with maps and suggestions as to how to lay out the wargames table. Most of the maps are in colour and are accompanied by colour plates showing some of the uniforms worn by the regiments who were there. Alongside these are colour photographs of the games being played using miniatures from the author's collection. With contemporary black-and-white prints of the battles scattered through the text, this volume is a treat just to flick through and enjoy as a coffee table book.

The first battle tackled is Hochkirch - a rather large encounter between the Austrian and Prussian armies in 1758. As well as providing the historical background to the battle, the author provides full orders of battle for both sides, even though the epic scale of the encounter may be beyond most gamers. The author accounts for this and provides one section of the battle, the encounter around Hochkirch village itself, with OOB for both sides provided alongside suggestions for initial deployments and locations for the various Austrian brigades to arrive. The author's suggestions for a 'map game' in the run up to this battle, to simulate the fog of war as each army manoeuvres brigades and divisions to outfox the other, is a good one. A series of random events is provided to simulate some of the historical confusion that existed, which is a clever idea that the *Wi* team will consider borrowing for future 'big battle' encounters.

The next game is the Battle of Langensalza, a much smaller affair fought in 1761 between a force of Hanoverians and Prussians against a Franco-Saxon force. With only ten or so units a side, this is a much more manageable battle for a Friday night club meeting, and involves some interesting units. Next up is the Battle of Reichenbach, another large-scale punch-up between the Austrians and Prussians. Again, the author presents just a section of the encounter as a wargame, which he plays through twice with differing outcomes. The Battle of Amoneburg, fought in 1762 between the British and the French, and the Battle of Freiberg (another Austro-Prussian affair) are given the same treatment, with full historical overview, orders of battle, maps, and colour plates. Elements such as the authors photos of the battlefield at Amoneburg will help players better visualise the terrain.



In the final chapter of the book, the author discusses some rules for Seven Years' War artillery, particularly how to deal with counter-battery fire and, how to represent 'off table' batteries in your games. Using these in full may get a little overcomplicated, but there are some good ideas in this section to pick at.

Nitpick time: some of the photography of the games in progress could have been better (page 92 has a blurred image, for example), and the continued use of the author's collection for every battle made the photos a little repetitive. It would be great to see other collections of miniatures for the period in the mix. More of a focus on campaign information, perhaps linking the battles presented into a 'mini-campaign', would make the scenarios feel more coherent too.

These are very minor complaints about a book that is a great example of how wargames supplements should be. Overall, this is another useful book for anyone with a Seven Years' War collection in need of some new scenarios and ideas for their club games. The author promises that Volume 12 will feature battles from the Russian theatre, which will give those of you with eastern armies something to look forward to. Roll on the dozen!

DETAILS

- SCALE: Assorted
- PERIOD: Seven Years' War
- PRICE: £42.50
- FORMAT: 202-page large-format, full-colour, hardback book
- AVAILABLE FROM: caliverbooks.com

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RELEASE RADAR

Dom Sore's here to show off the more esoteric new releases in the wargaming world.

CASTLES UNDER SIEGE AND ROMAN LEGIONS

Do you play any games set during the Crusades in the Middle East? Something like *Barons' War: Outremer* perhaps? Then *Empires at War* (empiresatwar.co.uk) have got a new release for you - an MDF, modular, Western Crusaders Castle in 28mm (below). You can buy sections separately with parts like long and short walls, towers, gatehouse, and stairs all available for a piece-by-piece accumulation, or you could choose to go 'all in' with their Small Castle bundle. Be aware that 'small' is a matter of perspective and to my eyes this looks quite the opposite. It will make an imposing centrepiece for any game set in the Middle East and, if you give your paint scheme some consideration, it will fit nicely in other theatres too.

If you are going to attack a castle you need some kind of artillery. The devices and methods have differed over the centuries but in Roman times one option was the Onager. V&V Miniatures (vminiatures.com) have reproduced their existing 40mm Roman Onager in 28mm (below) translating the detailed model to a more versatile gaming scale and maintaining superb resin-cast detail. The Onager is in the process of being loaded with two artillerymen manning the winches to prepare the arm while a third carries the projectile. A commander completes the set of figures doing the usual commandery thing of watching others do the real work!



A very mixed bag from me this month; so eclectic that I struggled to put them into sections. I am going to try and check some of these in my summer trip to Bovington, see if you can tell which ones!

Sticking with Romans, ResinWarfare (myminifactory.com/users/ResinWarfare) have a huge collection of STL files available in a 'Frontiers' crowdfunding campaign. The Sons of Mars Ultimate Roman Collection may sound like a rather hyperbolic name, but the contents are extensive - Republican, Imperial, and Late Romans are combined



2. Republican Centurio and Optio.
3. Legatus on horse.
4. Late Aurelian Equites.
5. Cohors Praetoriae.
6. Late Draconarius.
7. Late Aurelian Equites.

in a collection over 300 models strong. The campaign will be over by the time this article is in print but there will be a legion's worth of Roman STLs on their store soon, I imagine. There are some small details that are not quite right, like beards on Republican Romans, but nothing a little judicious painting or chopping won't hide, and the price of these files seems extremely competitive.



TRANSPORT FROM THE DAYS OF YORE

You wait years for a Stagecoach to come along and then suddenly there are two in hard plastic. After the Great Escape Games Old West version [See next issue where James paints one as a storytelling scenic piece - Ed] comes a 28mm fantasy version from Dungeons and Lasers (dungeonsandlasers.com). This looks more like a European medieval traveller's home as opposed to the kind of stagecoach that might come to mind. I've come to expect well produced detail and variety from Dungeons and Lasers kits and this one doesn't disappoint. It is, maybe, a bit too fantasy for historical purposes but that does not take away from its charm and with many of the additional bits and bobs free to be left off the build you may be able to do some conversion work to make it a better historical fit.

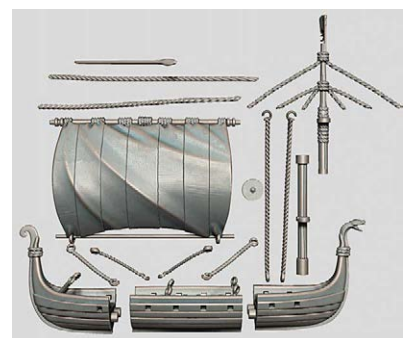


1st Corps (1stcorps.co.uk) have a far less comfortable ride with their Porus in Heavy Chariot with Standard and Musician (left).



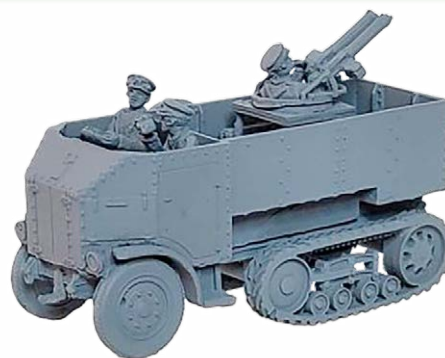
This is a 28mm scale four-horse heavy chariot from ancient India, designed to transport people around the battlefield but not necessarily directly into combat. This one is used to transport Porus around, even though we often associate him with elephants.

The final transport is an iconic one: the Norse longship. This one is from Wargames Atlantic via their Atlantic Digital STL producing spinoff (myminifactory.com/users/WargamesAtlantic). This is a multi-part 28mm scale longship (right), and it comes in supported or unsupported versions. The finished build is appealingly detailed with lots of projecting or slender parts; the oars look great, and the sail surrounded by full rigging is splendid. Sadly, no sailors, but I am sure they will be along soon enough. Unusually, the prow of the ship is a serpent head, rather than the more common dragon.



'MODERN' TIMES

We're only relatively modern with the first vehicle here, which comes from Early War Miniatures (earlywarminiatures.com) - the Birch Gun is 20mm scale and produced in resin. This was the first self-propelled gun produced for the British Army although it never really saw service other than with the Experimental Mechanised Force. Along with the Birch Gun is the Burford Kegresse Armoured personnel carrier, another interwar product that didn't see much in the way of service. The final rarely used vehicle in this trio is the Vickers Medium Mark III tank. A grand total of three units were produced historically so, if you take one onto the tabletop, do look after it! These are all detailed models that will be very useful for things like *A Very British Civil War*.

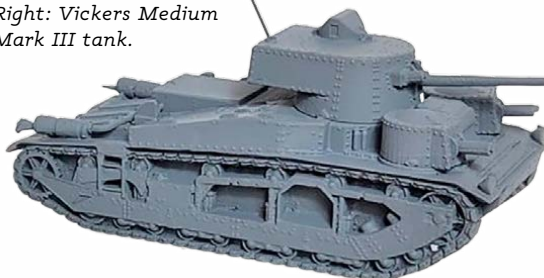


Above: Burford Kegresse Armoured personnel carrier and three crew.

Right: Birch Gun with driver and four seated crew.



Right: Vickers Medium Mark III tank.



Mardav Miniatures (mdminis.co.uk) have released vast swathes of WWII options lately. They've now launched an 'army builder' to pick a whole army from one simple webpage for the Soviets or Japanese (right). You first choose your scale - 20mm or 28mm - then pick from an assortment of command options - an officer plus another HQ choice. You next select three infantry squads, four support teams, an artillery piece, an armoured car, and finally a Tank/SPG. These will be 3D printed and shipped to you for a very reasonable price - £90 for 20mm or £105 for 28mm. There are loads of interesting options to choose from too, including dog teams, snipers, flamethrowers, and 'suicide' infantry for the Japanese.

JAPANESE

ARMY BUILDER

Japanese Army Builder

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SCALE

OFFICER

ADDITIONAL HQ

SQUAD 1

SQUAD 2

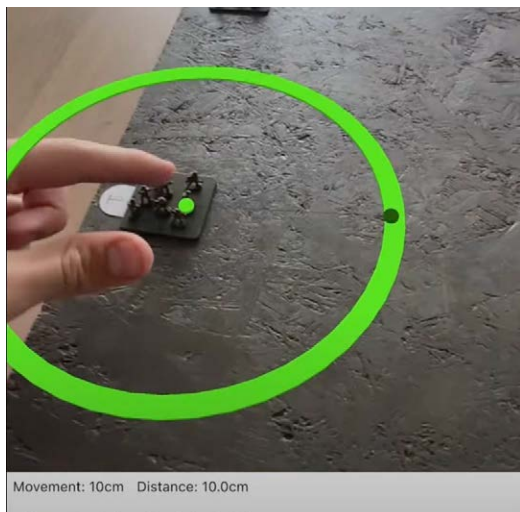
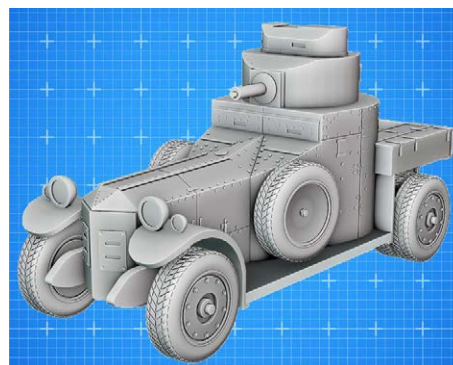
SQUAD 3

SUPPORT 1

SUPPORT 2

SUPPORT 3

Mardav also has a Kickstarter lined up for British and Commonwealth Armoured Cars of World War Two. These will be sent out as STL files or physical prints, depending on your preference. There are nine vehicles in the initial wave including the amazing Rolls Royce Armoured Car 1924 MkI (right). Stretch goals promise to cover further options too.



Movement: 10cm Distance: 10.0cm

Getting extremely modern now, how about bringing technology into your wargaming? *WWII Company Commander* from Digital Wargaming (digitalwargaming.com) is designed to do just that with a full digital rules system that does all the calculation for you. It stores army lists and tracks game turns, but it goes deeper - the app can measure distances and track damage with augmented reality overlays above your on-table figures. You can download the app for free so why not see if this type of gaming helps you focus your brainpower on tactical mastery?

ODDS AND BOOKENDS

I end with some very different products that come together under the 'miscellany' tag. Scatter from Oshiro Terrain (oshiromodels.co.uk) kicks things off and it is the most 'normal' of the lot. It comes in 28mm scale resin and there's a Fuel Distributor with three options (one, two, or three tanks), and two Generic Gubbins (that's the actual name) pieces which have hatches, tanks, vents, and other sundries across them.



The Oshiro Gubbins could work well with some of the myriad ranges from Crooked Dice (crooked-dice.co.uk) although I'm not sure they fit too well with new 28mm resin Toad King, Boss Toad, Giant Toads, Shamblers, and Shambler Warden figures. The Toads all look extremely grumpy and will be useful in various fantasy games as random encounters, as will the Shamblers who are large humanoid plant types. There are three adults and one youngling amongst them, and the adults come in at 50mm tall, ready to dominate any unwary swamp travellers.



Above: Boss Toad.



Above: Standing (left), young (centre) and attacking Shamblers.



Above: Toad King (centre), Boss Toad (right and left), and Giant Toads.

Bookending this Release Radar, quite literally, are book props from Wargamer's Whims (wargamerswhims.mabisy.com). These are made from clear acrylic, have a wide base, and end piece to hold your books up. So far so standard, but what makes these interesting is you can send a picture and they will create personalised bookends. A perfect gift for the wargamer in your life!

I am off to work out what picture I want in my bookends and get ready for a visit to Bovington tank museum, where I will see some of the real life armoured cars Mardav are planning on producing. Until next time, fare thee well, and happy gaming!



Each *Bolt Action* starter set gives you everything you need to quickly get stuck into the action of the award-winning tabletop game of WWII combat!

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Band of Brothers contains a *Bolt Action* rulebook, quick start theatre booklet, pin markers, templates, tokens and dice along with the following hard plastic models: 24 US Airborne, 12 German grenadiers, Sd.Kfz 251/10 Ausf D 3.7cm PaK halftrack, and a ruined farmhouse.

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JOIN THE FIGHT!



Fought across the parched and dusty campaign in the Western Desert during World War II, this Bolt Action starter set pits the forces of the British Desert Rats against their Axis foes, the German Afrika Korps. Although the fighting in this theatre was intense it tended to lack the fanaticism and atrocities seen in other theatres of the war and became known as a gentleman's war.

A Gentleman's War contains a *Bolt Action* rulebook, quick start theatre booklet, pin markers, templates, tokens and dice along with the following hard plastic models: 24 British 8th Army infantry, Humber Mk II/IV armoured car, 24 Afrika Korps infantry, and Sd.Kfz 222/223 armoured car.

£89.00 €107.00 \$142.00

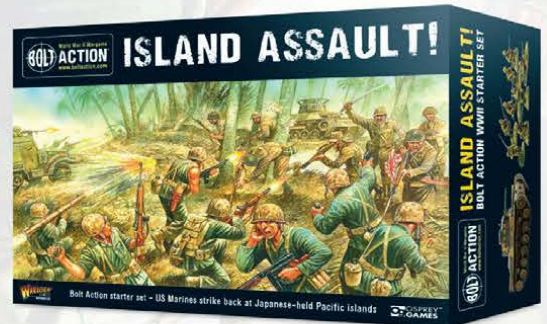


Island Assault! focuses on the bitter, no-quarter-asked-or-given fighting in the Pacific theatre, pitting the United States Marine Corps against Japanese island defenders in some of the most brutal and hard-fought battles of WWII. Reflecting the island-hopping campaigns enacted by the US to reclaim Japanese advances, this conflict was fought mostly on a series of relatively small islands, densely packed with jungles and protected by the sea. Each island had to be landed on, fought for, and the defenders rooted out.

Island Assault! contains a *Bolt Action* rulebook, quick start theatre booklet, pin markers, templates, tokens, and dice along with the following hard plastic models: 24 US Marines, M3A1 halftrack, 24 Japanese Army infantry, and a Type 97 Chi-Ha medium tank.

Island Assault! also contains resin spiderhole and pillbox scenery pieces exclusive to this set.

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QUICK FIRE!

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

ANOTHER STRING TO HIS BOW!

By Paul Mackay

I was lucky enough to be sent some pre-production samples of Ragged Staff Minis' beautiful Wars of the Roses figures (they are available on Etsy). This was doubly fortunate for me, as I had recently embarked on building an army for this period. It is a long time since I have painted miniatures equipped with bows, and, inspired by images I occasionally come across in which hobbyists have decided to string their troops' bows, that was what I decided to do on the archer captain.

I used thin thread, then spent ages deliberating whether I liked the finished result. Eventually, I decided it appeared out of scale and sought a different solution, which was supplied by my wife. She has long hair, and her locks seemed far more in scale, so I persuaded her to donate a couple of strands to augment my 15th Century bowmen!



Above: The captain before with chunky bowstring (left), and after, with fine hair improving the look (right).

The method I used was the same for both the thread and hair. A loose knot is tied in one end and inserted over the bow. This is then tightened at the tip, and a small dot of superglue is applied. The other end of the hair is done in the same way, but make sure you carefully pull the bow string tight before fixing it in place with superglue. I found tweezers were a helpful tool. After leaving things to dry, cut away the excess hair and paint the bowstring with thinned ivory paint.

Human hair is trickier to work with than thread as it is not as malleable, but the result speaks for itself. Having finished one archer using this method, I gained confidence to use it on all my Perry Miniatures bow units, and I think it's worth the extra effort.



FREE KITBASHING

By Mat Lindsay

I've always loved the allure of a free sprue, and it's one of the things that first drew me into reading *Wargames Illustrated*. Although the theme tends to be historical, I've often found they make great fodder for kitbashing in sci-fi and post-apocalyptic settings.

I've used WWII Germans in greatcoats as the basis for my Chaos mutated renegade troopers (seen below and right), discovering that their 20th Century arms and equipment go well with a certain grimdark aesthetic.



Mounted troops are useful, too (right), as their torsos can be swapped out for more Mad Max-esque ones to make wasteland rough riders. The guy with the red mohawk has a head from a WWII US Marines frame.

Head-swapping is one of the easiest ways to convert models in this fashion, like my sci-fi civilians (below), which include an alien farmer, and even a sci-fi Scotsman in a tam o'shanter bonnet.



More outlandish *Stargrave* heads on the bodies of *Bolt Action* colonial troops help to make my alien holidaymakers (below) look like they're kicking around in Hawaiian shirts and Bermuda shorts.

I even managed to make an entire ground-crew (below) out of WWII troop bodies and sci-fi heads, unifying them by using an orange colour scheme to make their uniforms resemble overalls.



You can guarantee that the first thing I check out in every issue of *Wi* is what's coming in the next one, in the hope that it'll be some new and interesting sprue with great kitbashing potential.

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; that's painting or modelling projects, rules, wargaming notes, and observations.

Send your emails to: wi@wargamesillustrated.net

Use the subject title 'Quick Fire!'.

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DESERT RAIDS IN THE DARK



02 Hundred Hours' next expansion - *Desert Raid* - takes the game to previously unexplored territory with night raids in the desert. James interviewed the game's designer, Grey for Now's owner Graham Davey, to find out all about it.

Wargames Illustrated: Graham, thanks so much for showing us this new set. Can you tell us more about taking *02 Hundred Hours* into the world of *Desert Raids*?

Graham Davey: This is the first time we've moved away from Western Europe and into the deserts of North Africa. It's inspired in part by the BBC/Epix TV show *SAS Rogue Heroes*, which is all about this theatre and the SAS working in the desert. This was in the formative time for the SAS and these are the guys who essentially invented it. They worked together with the LRDG - the Long Range Desert Group - who were specialists at finding their way across hundreds of miles of desert to launch raids and ambushes far behind German lines. Those two units worked closely together so that's what's featured in the new book.

Wi: It is perfect fodder for wargaming! The vehicles manned by the LRDG don't fully feature in this expansion, but they show their influence, don't they?

GD: Yes, there are rules included for the LRDG to get the men into action faster, and more efficiently, with their vehicles. You can have an LRDG transport that allows you to get all your remaining guys onto the board at the end of turn one, if they haven't yet managed to arrive. That represents their expertise somewhat.

You can bring the LRDG to the tabletop and, while they're not quite as 'fighty' as the SAS, they are a bit better at dealing with the conditions. If your commander is LRDG he gets the transport for free, and the sergeant will have checked the weather; they'll allow you to use conditions in the desert to your advantage.



WHAT YOU GET

Wi: What does the new expansion set contain?

GD: It includes an SAS officer (The Ghost), a commando with SMG, two SAS saboteurs, four DAK sentries, a DAK with submachine gun, DAK officer, sentry with dog, Luftwaffe Pilot, and Rommel. It also comes with the usual rules extras and cards that you'd expect.

Packs of extra figures that you'll spot in this article are also available to support the set. There are reinforcements for the LRDG (which you can use as SAS if you want), two sets of reinforcements (including another sentry with dog if you want a few running around), and a new set of casualties.

Right: Three brand new miniatures from Artizan Designs sculpted specifically for this expansion.



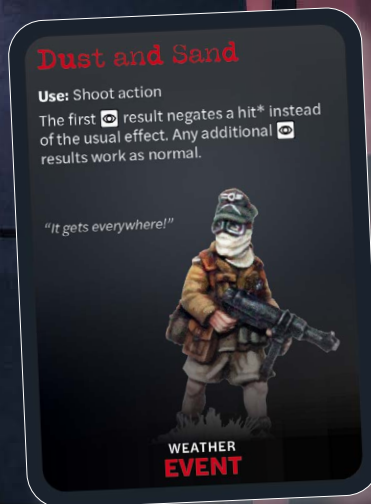
UNDER THE WEATHER

Wi: Yes, you always seem to add one major gameplay tweak with your expansions and in this one it's the way weather impacts raids.

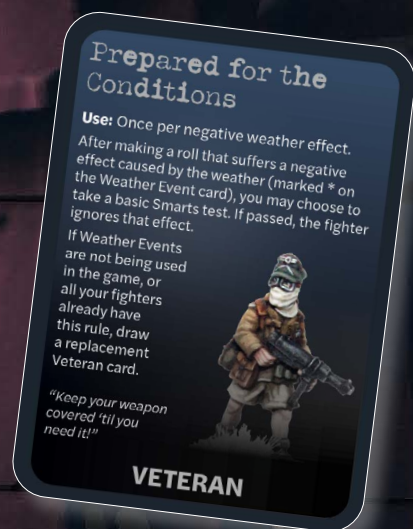
GD: Yes, it's a key thing for desert combat and it means there's a chance you could end up fighting your game in the middle of a dramatic dust storm. Even though the area was baking hot in the day, it would get freezing cold in the night. The targets of the raids were generally on the coast so there were sea mists too.

Weather is tied in with the event cards. At the beginning of the game, you draw a card that determines the weather condition for the start of the battle, but you also draw another card that gets shuffled into the event deck. At some point during the game, the weather's probably going to change into something else with the draw of that card.

Weather keys in with some of the abilities of other troops in this expansion. If you include LRDG troops in your force,



they are a bit more acclimatised to the weather, so you won't need to worry so much about negative effects. Equally, there's a veteran card so you can 'Check the Forecast' and this allows you to throw a weather condition card back and get a different one that might better suit you.



Weather's not all bad, of course. A sandstorm could be useful to the attackers, as it would mask their advance on unsuspecting German defenders.



Wi: Those defenders have had a cosmetic change to suit the theatre, but how do they play in *Desert Raid*?

GD: The basic sentries essentially use standard rules and the recruitment cards from the main set but DAK seasoned troops feature for the Germans as a more elite extra. They're not at the same level as the SAS but they're a bit better than the average sentry and they must start in reserve. They're stationed nearby and will rush in when they hear the commotion of the attack.

ARTIZAN DESIGNS

Wi: Other *02 Hundred Hours* sets have included plastic figures from Wargames Atlantic and sculpts by you but this one's a departure from that format.

GD: Yes, we've done something a bit new. All the figures are from Artizan Designs, who have a fantastic range of World War Two stuff, especially for this theatre, sculpted by Mike Owen. Most of the



Afrika Corps sentries and officer on a cautious patrol.

NEW CHARACTERS: THE GHOST

Wi: Tell us a little about the enigmatically named Ghost.

GD: He is an SAS figure in desert garb who is particularly good at combat knife takedowns. He carries an SMG and grenades but it's up close and personal where he excels.



13 figures in this box set are from their existing range - I got to pick out my favourites for this expansion - but they've also sculpted some new options specifically for *Desert Raid*. These are a sentry with guard dog in the DAK uniform, a Luftwaffe pilot, and The Ghost.

Wi: It all looks great and the games we've got on the go today have brought new challenges to *02 Hundred Hours*. Is there anything else you want to mention before we get back to the tables?

GD: There are plenty of recruitment cards for both sides and, with the new weather events, that's made it a bit of a cram, but I managed to fit in a flare gun. That's quite cool because it lights up the whole battlefield and will expose anyone who isn't close into terrain on both sides for a short period. It lasts until the next token.

Wi: Awesome stuff! Thanks for letting us play with your hard work Graham and hopefully we'll see you soon with more *02 Hundred Hours* extras.

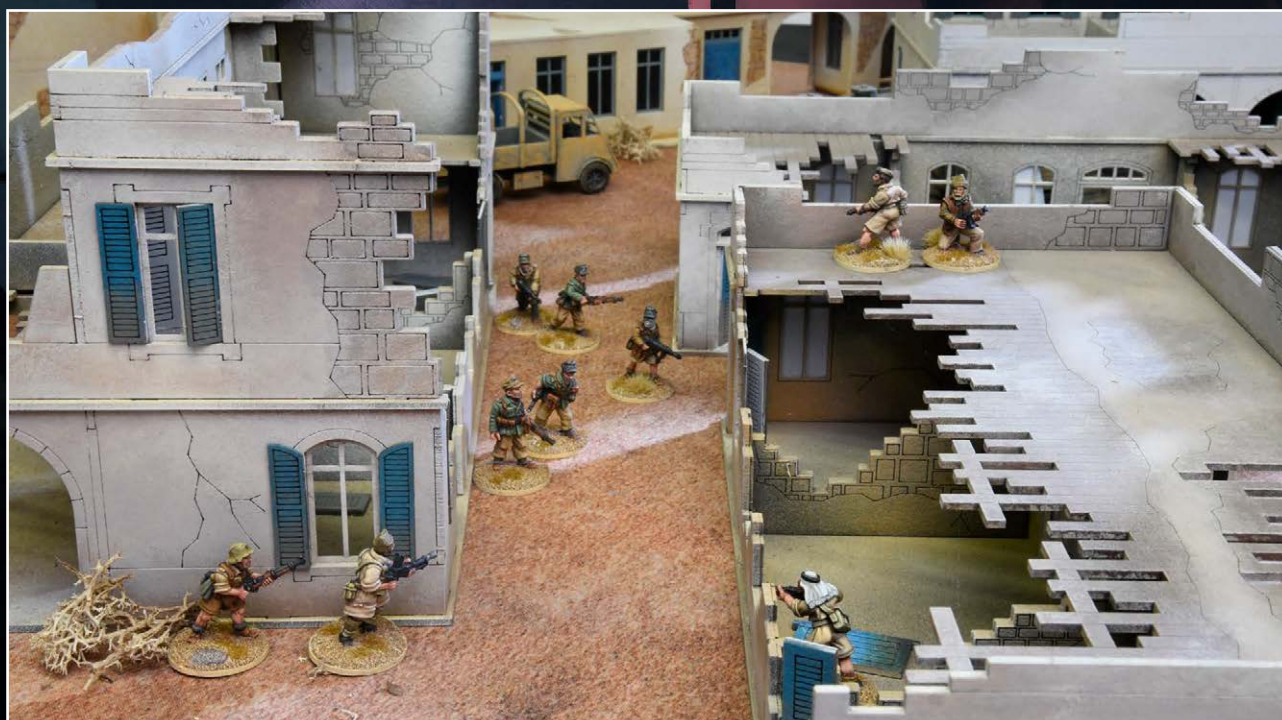
SAS saboteurs and a commander - a special character called The Ghost - steal their way across the terrain.

NEW CHARACTERS: LUFTWAFFE PILOT

Wi: You have added a new pilot to this set too.

GD: The Luftwaffe pilot makes a great objective target. He's cheap to recruit but must start in reserve and, although he's got quite good stats, he counts as two enemies killed if he gets taken out. Use with caution!

The pilot gives Rommel a report as they pace around fortified walls.



NEW CHARACTERS: ROMMEL

Wi: You've included a major character from the war for the first time in this set.

GD: Artizan had a lovely figure of Rommel in their range, and I decided I just had to include him as he's such a classic image of that theatre. I imagine he's doing a field visit, checking things are in place at a location that happens to be raided.

He's a valuable target, so counts as two if he's taken out, and you can use him as your commander. If you do that, he gets to choose three defensive event cards at the start of the game, except for the 'It's a trap!' card. You can literally look through and take what you want; he's a master tactician. You can play with his figure as a more standard German commander too of course.

Wi: Is this famed historical character a sign of things ahead for the game?

GD: It worked fine here, and I certainly don't have any qualms about including more special characters in the future.



Above: Erwin Rommel surveys the landscape with his troops, before night falls.

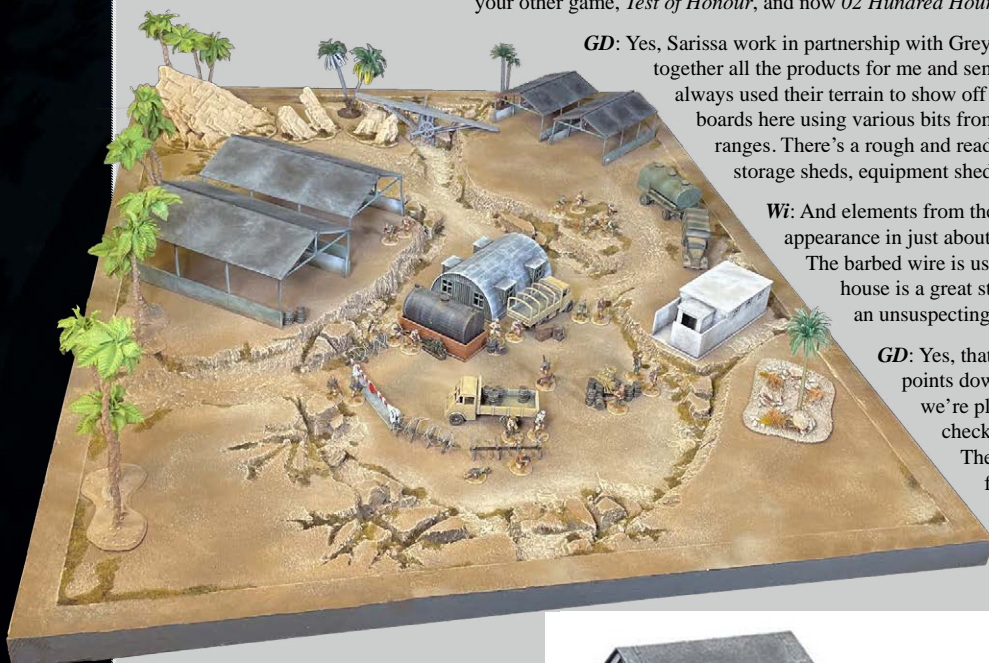
THE SARISSA CONNECTION

Wi: We're at Sarissa headquarters for our chat today. You've become quite connected to them through your other game, *Test of Honour*, and now *02 Hundred Hours*.

GD: Yes, Sarissa work in partnership with Grey for Now quite extensively. They put together all the products for me and send out parcels to companies, plus I've always used their terrain to show off my games. We've set up a couple of boards here using various bits from their WWII collection as well as broader ranges. There's a rough and ready airfield made from some covered storage sheds, equipment sheds, static oil tanks, and other outbuildings.

Wi: And elements from their border checkpoint set seem to make an appearance in just about every *02 Hundred* table and photoshoot! The barbed wire is useful as an obstacle and the little guard house is a great structure to make a sneak attack around on an unsuspecting patrol.

GD: Yes, that's a versatile one. I've created choke points down narrow roads in the urban combat board we're playing with today and used bits from that checkpoint set to add more drama to them. Their Desert Fort walls surround buildings from their North African/Colonial set.



The airfield setup. Note that we have used the 20mm versions of the storage sheds in the background (which won't be gamed on, as the standard *02 Hundred* board is 3x3) to give a sense of perspective in our photos.



The Border Checkpoint set.

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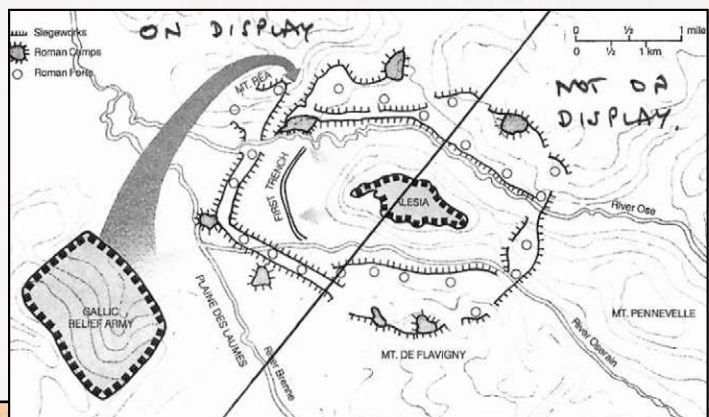
CAESAR'S GREATEST VICTORY - A WARGAMES MODEL MASTERPIECE



A photo-heavy look at a *Swordpoint* game featuring an impressive model of the Alesia siegeworks. With thanks to Neil Kenneally and Piotr Stolarski for the photographs.

“Two lines of circumvallation/contravallation, each five metres long, including eight towers and three fortified cavalry camps”. That was the overall project specification for this spectacular tabletop representation of part of the Roman siegeworks at Alesia. Ninety-one 3D printed and pre-painted fortifications were made by Baueda Wargames in Italy and shipped over to complete this impressive project, commissioned by the Newbury Historical Study Association (NHSA) as part of their recent ‘Alesia: Caesar’s Greatest Victory’ event.

A charitable organisation, the NHSA, based in Newbury, England, is dedicated to the promotion of education in military history. The association hosts several events throughout the year, with expert speakers addressing members and guests on a variety of subjects. As several of the members are also avid wargamers the group is always keen to complement the lectures with gaming and modelling content.



The table represented the western half of the Alesia fortifications and battlefield.

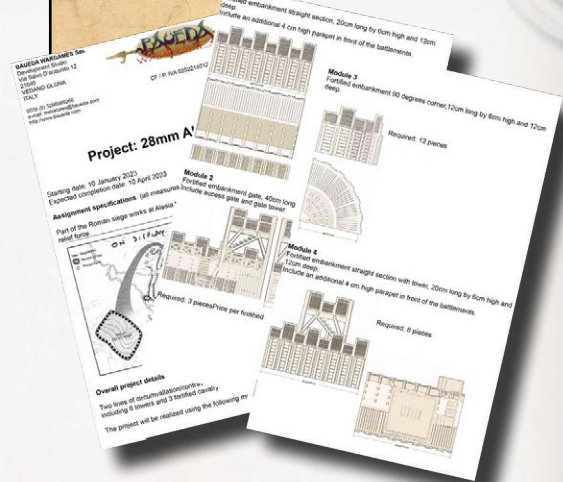
For more on wargaming in and around Alesia - check out *Wi262* - our Caesar in Gaul Special, which includes a How To... Guide for making your own Roman Ramparts.





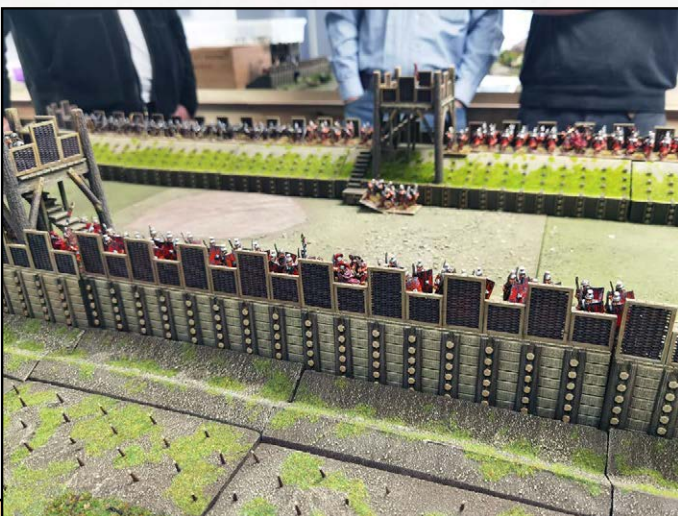
The Roman defences around Alesia stretched for about 28 miles. The NHSA version was divided between two rows of tables to allow for access between the inner and outer works.

Baueda provided a full spec of what was required for the job.



Baueda Wargames from Italy were commissioned to make the fortifications. They carried out the work over a three-month period.

As well as printing the fortifications, Baueda Wargames also applied the paintwork.



The fortifications were 3D printed using Fused Deposition Modelling (FDM).

There were around 3,000 28mm Gallic figures and 1,500 Romans (including auxiliary infantry and German cavalry), representing eight Gallic tribes and four Roman legions with supporting troops.





Neil Kenneally of Reinforcements by Post was commissioned to do most of the figure painting. Miniatures were mainly by Old Glory or Warlord Games.

On the Saturday, in spite of a Gallic breakout attempt, the Romans sallied out of their lines and tried to escort supplies to safety, but were prevented from doing so by a Gallic relief force which routed them. This represented the loss of the Roman baggage train, affecting the status of Roman troops on day two.



On the Sunday, the Gauls attempted to breach the Roman lines at various points, and managed to do so in four locations. None of these successes was decisive, and Caesar counterattacked, putting paid to one of the more serious Gallic attacks; even though Roman commander Labienus was killed. Vercingetorix's attack on the contravallations was also repulsed.



The speaker on the day, delivering a talk on 'Alesia: Caesar's Greatest Victory', was Gregory Coates who is engaged in doctorate research on the subject. There was a small display of replica weapons, armour, and some ancient coins, including an extremely rare Gallic gold stater, used by Vercingetorix to pay mercenary horsemen.



The game ended with Vercingetorix still trapped near Alesia, with no clear path for his army to escape the Roman encirclement.



The game was played over two days using the Swordpoint rules by Gripping Beast. Most players were new to the rules but received expert guidance from the umpires.



AND THERE'S MORE...
Take a look at loads more photos from the event via Piotr's blog coverage at: hestonandealingwargamers.org.uk/blog



GEEK NATION TOURS



Venture to feudal Japan...

...To walk the same paths as the samurai and ninja? Well here is your best chance at that happening...

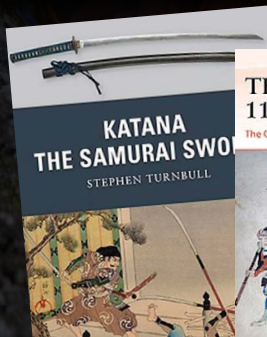
Not only will we explore the battlefield of Sekigahara extensively and see samurai walking the same streets as us (well re-enactors anyway), but also see sword making demonstrations, visit a multitude of castles, walk the very same cobblestones as samurai of old did via the Nakasendo highway, take in an onsen or two (hopefully the snow monkeys will respect our wa), and have some incredible food...

We will even have you dressed up as a samurai and swinging a sword...

Oh did we mention that we will be seeing Kanazawa and the battlefields of Kawanakajima for the first time too... In our quest to make the very best of experiences, GNT has enlisted the aid of **Osprey Publishing** and guest host **Stephen Turnbull**... If you have read about Samurai history, ethics or religion you most likely were reading a Stephen Turnbull Osprey Publishing book.

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HOW DID I MISS...

Test of Honour

THE SAMURAI MINIATURES GAME



James takes on *Test of Honour*'s designer Graham Davey in his semi-regular 'How did I miss...' series.

Grey for Now owner Graham Davey recently ventured to *Wi Tower* with beautiful miniatures and terrain in his arms, lured by the promise of a gaming session and a free Tesco Meal Deal! We'd play the ruleset he designed - *Test of Honour (ToH)* - and he'd guide me through my first battle in this skirmish game. Set in Japan's fascinating Sengoku period, *ToH* had been on my 'to play' list for some time, but more modern projects had taken priority. One of these was Grey for Now's more recent WWII night raids ruleset - *02 Hundred Hours* - so I felt duty-bound to have a go at Graham's previous offering, too.

THE OPPOSING FORCES

Graham chose a mission to locate a spy who had posed as a hostess, listened in on important information, then escaped my clutches after being spotted. It was Graham's job to locate and rescue her from the local area and mine to find her, bring her back, and make an example of her. Thankfully, he had also pre-picked forces from the vast range of options, presenting two balanced groups.

HOW IT WORKS - CHOOSING A FORCE

The game includes Heroes, Companions, and Followers, and some of the warriors come as groups of three, getting bonuses to their abilities while they remain at full strength.

Different recruitment costs are a good indication of the overall strength or utility that the cards will provide. Three of my Ashigaru Experienced Bowmen cost just three points - that's half of the hefty six points Graham's single mounted Onna Bugeisha weighed in at, and sure enough, she would prove pivotal in the game's events.

GRAHAM'S FORCE

- 1) Ashigaru Scouts
- 2) Armoured Samurai Hero - leader
- 3) Noble Onna Bugeisha
- 4) Samurai Champion
- 5) Ashigaru Experienced Spearmen

By including a couple of figures from the game's new Takeda's Court set, Graham had some versatile options. His mounted Noble Onna Bugeisha looked like a major threat with her large move, two actions, and the Galloping Charge skill at the start of the game. This would boost her attack if she charged in from a distance, and that seemed quite likely with a 9" move or charge versus the standard 6" by foot. The heavy sword-wielding Champion looked imposing, too, as he started with a Cleave skill, which would greatly increase his deadliness.



JAMES' FORCE

- 1) Ashigaru Experienced Bowmen
- 2) Travelling Samurai
- 3) Armoured Samurai Hero - leader
- 4) Battleworn Samurai
- 5) Priest
- 6) Ashigaru Loyal Spearmen

Not every character starts the game with a skill card, and my force was simpler, gaining a Priest as an extra rather than any starting skills. My Bowmen would give me some ranged utility, which I'd use to try and slow Graham's advance, but I figured that my Priest could make the difference. He was an extra figure to activate and get to the board's different locations to find the Spy.



Cards show different abilities across their bottom row, and the numbers below indicate the amount of dice rolled for associated tests. From left to right they are Aim (trying to hit an enemy in melee or at range), Agility (dodging attacks and other similar tests), Strength (determining damage caused on an enemy), Wits (tests such as targeting an enemy who is not the closest target), and Honour (holding ground under pressure). The final symbol represents the number of actions that can be performed in a single turn.

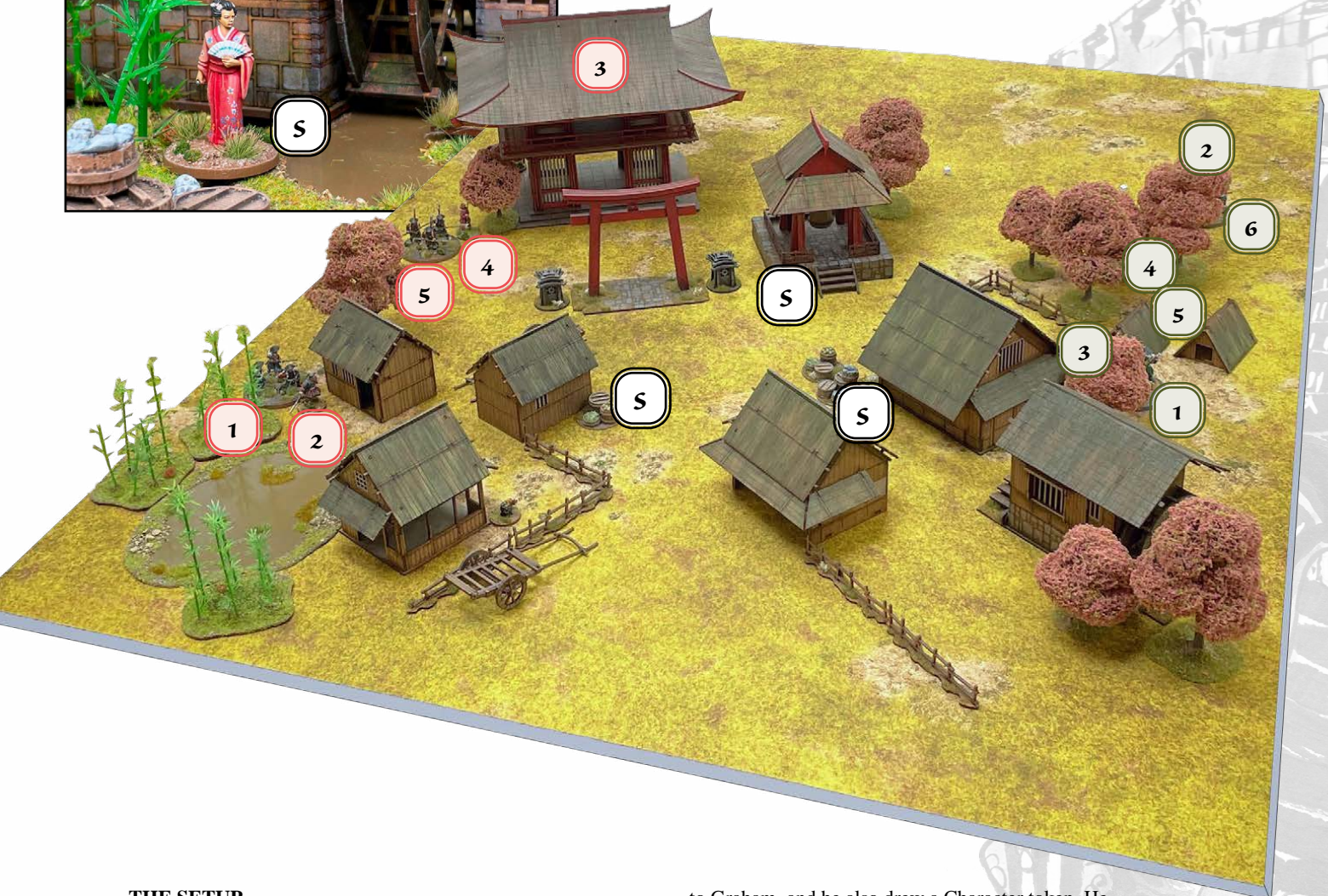


As Graham explained the basics of the rules, I felt somewhat at home; there are quite a few similarities between *ToH* and *02 Hundred Hours*, such as the way profiles are presented, and the skill/fate cards. More similarities emerged the more we played, and if you like one of these games, chances are you'll easily pick up and enjoy the other one!



Left: Neither of us knew exactly where the Spy was hiding. After setting up terrain we placed three possible locations for her - one by the bell tower, and the other two in the different groups of buildings.

Below: Map showing the positions of the player's characters and units, and possible location of the spy.



THE SETUP

ToH is best played on a 3' x 3' board, and we created a serene, beautiful-looking environment that would soon echo with the sound of clashing swords. With the board ready and the three Spy tokens placed in a central triangle, we took turns deploying our figures, and prepared for the first turn. I aimed my leader and bowmen toward the centre token, with everyone else moving towards the bell token on the right. Graham spread his force a little more, and had his Onna Bugeisha poised to make a flanking gallop around the temple.

Skill cards were shuffled into Fate Decks for each player, ready to be drawn from during the game, and Action tokens were placed into a bag to determine activations. These are split into two types: Character tokens and Follower tokens. You'll usually have plenty of the former depicting the individuals' many independent actions, and far fewer of the latter restricting your groups of followers. Three Fate tokens get added in, and with that done, it's time to play.

EARLY ACTION AND RANDOM ACTIVATION

I started the game by reaching into the token bag and drawing a Character token, choosing to activate and move my leader up the centre of the battlefield. With that done, the bag was passed

to Graham, and he also drew a Character token. He galloped his horse up the flank in the direction of the same bell toward which I was directing much of my force. I hoped Graham wouldn't get to make a successful search before I got there. The speed of the mount was a concern.

As the activations passed back and forth, I enjoyed the opportunity to prioritise characters and consider the 'cinematic actions' they'd make later. They were soon boldly leading the line, as were Graham's, with his leader dashing in the direction of the closest Spy token, supported by his unit of scouts and heavily armoured Samurai Champion.

I drew two Fate tokens, and peeled a card from the top of my Fate Deck each time. Defensive Drills would improve the Avoid roll of a character near to a spear-armed group, so I gave it to my Battleworn Samurai (who was next to my Ashigaru Spearmen). I gave the Local Guide skill to my Travelling Samurai. This would allow up to three Warriors who were more than 9" away from any enemies to make a free Move. I considered using it straight away to advance, but decided to hold it back as an unexpected 'catch up' option if Graham was close to escaping with the rescued Spy.

After more characters and followers had moved up the board, the first turn ended with the draw of the third Fate token.

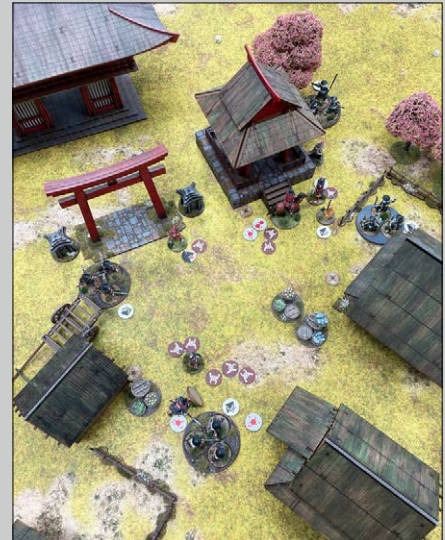
HOW IT WORKS - ACTIVATION



Above: Graham ponders whom to activate as the game progresses.

The token activation mechanic in *02 Hundred Hours* is one of my favourite things about that game, and it was cool to play its precursor and experience the same system in a more traditional skirmish battlegame. Fate tokens in *ToH* replace *02 Hundred's* Time tokens, and with their associated drawing of Fate cards, you can modify and tune your force on the fly, building options to spring on your opponent later.

The third Fate token, which acts as a turn-ending reset point, can result in certain figures not activating. You'll always have to consider that risk when prioritising your activations.



Above: Tokens build up to show which figures have activated, along with other statuses, once the game is in full swing.

THINGS HEAT UP

Turn two saw me once again hitting the Fate deck jackpot and drawing two more cards. All these bonuses would help me once we engaged, but Graham had more board control in the early game, as I wasn't getting to activate as many figures (see 'Watching').

I had committed quite a lot of my force to the right, and did manage to get my Battleworn Samurai to the bell's Spy token, but he needed to pull a second activation token to search there. While I awaited that opportunity, Graham's Onna Bugeisha moved closer.



My characters arrive at the spy token by the bell tower but Graham makes a rapid approach with his mounted warrior.

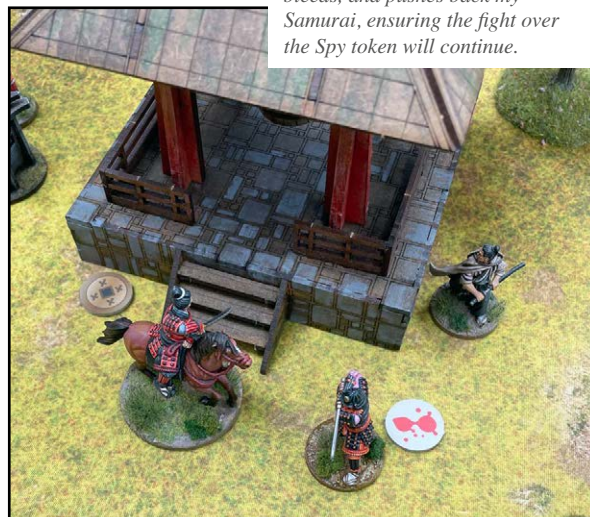
My attention soon flipped to the other board edge. Graham gradually moved his leader and spearmen behind a hut (1), rushed the leader towards the Spy token (2), and successfully passed his test to locate her with the Hero's third and final activation token of the turn (3).



I'd need somehow to intervene, but most of my force were a good distance from the uncovered Spy. Oh dear! There was a chance to get at Graham though - my own leader, who had been peering over at the developments around the bell, could turn his attention to the other side of the battle. He stepped out and advanced boldly in the direction of the new objective. He had a Map Fate card now, too, which would help me get to Graham far faster than he'd expect, if I could just get an early activation next turn.

Before turn two came to an end, Graham charged my Battleworn Samurai with his Onna Bugeisha and her Galloping Charge. I braced for trouble as she rolled five dice (her standard four and an extra one for the long-distance charge), and sure enough, she rolled four swords. I failed my Avoid roll, but Graham failed his Test of Strength, too, so I only suffered a light wound rather than getting cut down. I was pushed back and reached into the bag, drawing the third Fate token (seemingly drawn to me by some mystical force), and the turn ended.

The Onna Bugeisha rides in, bleeds, and pushes back my Samurai, ensuring the fight over the Spy token will continue.



HOW IT WORKS - DICE ROLLS

The dice mechanic itself is simple, but there are engaging extras that modify things and increase the risk in each duel. You roll as many dice as are listed on the relevant part of your profile, and will succeed if you score three or more swords on the game's special D6s, though you will always fail if you roll more crosses than swords.

If you roll five or more swords, you'll activate a bonus; these vary depending whether the roll is to Strike, Avoid, or Damage. Different weapons will bring different results, too. A bonus with a Katana or Heavy Sword Strike, for example, will cause a Deep Cut and inflict more blood drops on the target. The Heavy Sword will also cause all enemies within 6" to take a Test of Nerve.

Models can only make Avoid rolls if they have an action spare. They must take their token from the bag and use it to

try and duck away to safety. As with Strikes, a five-sword success will bring bonuses on Avoid rolls, with most weapons making a Quick Jab. This potentially reverses fortunes and bleeds the attacker. The long Naganita, however, will push back the attacker and allow the defender to make an instant charge, while a staff will knock the attacker to the ground.

Should the attack get through, the attacker will make a Damage roll. Success will slay the opponent, and if the roll is five or more swords, the attacker gets to make a follow up charge or move.

This system keeps both players engaged at every stage of combat encounters, and creates some great 'oooooh!' moments as attacks are turned away and defenders become attackers, thanks to fortuitous rolls.

WATCHING

Due to the random activations and the third Fate counter ending turns prematurely, there's always the chance that a few of your characters, or more likely your followers, remain inactive during the turn.

While this can feel frustrating, the skill is in spreading activations wisely to ensure your force all play a part in the full game. I hadn't quite mastered this balancing act in my first game, and somehow managed to leave my Spearmen utterly immobile throughout. They missed out on advancing in the first turn, and from that point on, they never seemed as important as other options.

I've still not worked out if I was correct to ignore them, or would have benefitted from getting them involved!



Locked in position, my spearmen watched the action from afar throughout the battle.

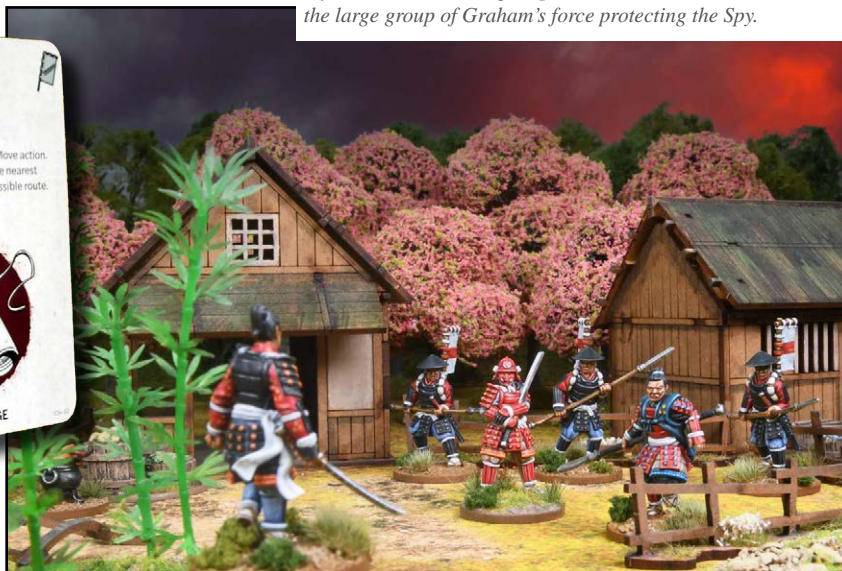
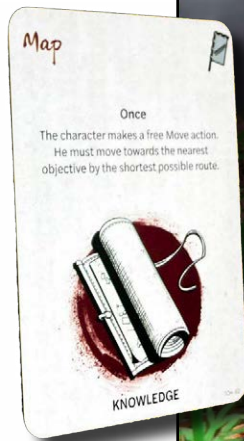
THE ACTION BUILDS

As the game progressed into a new turn I was praying for the first activation, and, with great relief, I got it. I drew a Character token, activated my leader, moved him away from the objective area nearby, and ended up closer to the token by Graham's own leader. I revealed my Map Fate Card, and it allowed me to make a free move action towards the nearest objective by the shortest route possible. That was Graham's leader and the Spy hiding nearby! It was also in the direction of his scouts and Champion; I knew there was huge risk in this bold move, but my Hero was ready to fight to the death, if necessary, to persecute the traitorous Spy.

As combat started and blades clashed between the two leaders, the Spy made a run for it, ducking back into hiding. She could once again be discovered by any figures that could make a successful uncontested search at any of the three points. I quickly got the chance to search for her with my Bowmen, who were right on top of the token on my side of the board, but they failed miserably. This poor roll (below) seemed to spark a phase of erratic rolling from both of us, leading to unpredictable, prolonged, and bloody combat across the table.



The tension built at the bell fight, with more of my characters joining the combat. Despite the efforts of various master swordsmen, it was my humble Priest who finally felled the brave Onna Bugeisha with his Naginata. His three-sword roll was unspectacular, but the enemy had no activation points left to defend herself, and with two blood tokens on her, my Damage blow was rolled on six dice (strength of four and a dice for each token), which killed her and allowed my Priest to make a follow-up move. He headed in the direction of his friendly bowmen.



My Leader uses his map to get an extra move and rush over to the large group of Graham's force protecting the Spy.

Rather than let the leaders fight an honourable duel, Graham quite wisely advanced his Samurai Champion and Scouts into the melee. My Hero was vastly outnumbered, but held his own into the next turn, smashing away attacks and turning killing blows to minor cuts with his defensive skills.

Attrition became a factor, though, and with Blood tokens building up, I could tell that he was in trouble. Even with two extra Fate cards (Evasion gave me an extra Avoid dice, and Exceptional Armour offered a chance that blows would not cause a Blood token), he couldn't last much longer.

A DISHONOURABLE END

Into the next turn, and Graham piled more blows onto my leader, starting out with his Heavy Sword-armed Champion. I was holding on - just - until I made a spectacularly awful Avoid roll that scored more crosses than swords (right).

This resulted in an unfortunate fumble, causing my Hero to lose his footing and fall prone. Even though I survived the Champion's blow, I was even easier to hit, and Graham didn't miss his chance. He activated his Leader and finished me off with a dishonourable attack.



My own Hero was no more, but he had bought the rest of my force valuable time. They did not waste it, and my Bowmen finally discovered the Spy hiding nearby. This gave me a chance to escape and grab what had earlier looked like a highly improbable win.

HOW IT WORKS - HONOUR AND DISHONOUR

As defenders run out of actions, they become more vulnerable. With no actions remaining, they cannot effectively dodge, and the attacker is presented with a choice: continue as normal, act with honour, or act with dishonour. Taking the honour approach reduces their Strike dice by one, while dishonour ups the dice by one. In choosing either path you will draw a positive or negative Honour card in addition to the actions you perform. These will either boost or negate your ability to perform Tests of Honour as the game progresses.



STAGGERING TO VICTORY

With the Spy now in my clutches I needed to escort her off the board. The game was in the balance, and we turned to our Fate cards for an edge. The Local Guide card that I had drawn in the first turn allowed my characters near the bell to rush to the Spy all at once. With a grin at ex-Games Workshopper Graham, I quipped "I've played a lot of *Blood Bowl* as Orcs; I know how to make a cage formation and protect 'the ball'". I encircled the nervous Spy with my figures.

In response, Graham played the That's an Order card (right), shunted his Scouts ahead, then marched his Leader and Champion towards my defensive line. At this point activation order became increasingly important, and I did my best to get the Spy to the edge of the table without leaving her open. Figures must test to bypass the closest target, so I knew I had a good chance of stalling Graham if I staggered my rear-guard. Things got increasingly tense when his bold Hero cut down my Battleworn Samurai with seemingly no effort.



I spread out my rearguard to defend the Spy as I back her off the board.



In the last action before Graham drew the turn's third and final Fate counter, my Priest, apparently thirsty for more blood, doubled his kill tally for the day by finally taking down the pursuing Leader. I was so close to victory, but there was still a chance for Graham if he could get his Champion or Ashigaru activated first next turn...

It was not to be! I whooped excitedly as I drew a Follower token at the start of the next turn and marched the Spy off the table edge under the watchful eye of my Bowmen.



Joy as I draw a humble Follower token to win the game!

OVERALL IMPRESSIONS

I feel like I've played Graham's rules backwards, and wish I'd gotten in some games of *Test of Honour* before I dived into *02 Hundred Hours*. Both games are similar in design, but *ToH* feels more instantly accessible. It has similar quirks and standout features - the Fate cards, the depth (though through different workings) of a great dice system, and unpredictable but somewhat controllable activations - but it diverges less from 'standard' wargaming than *02 Hundred*. The patrols, alarm systems, and night fighting of the WWII follow-on are great, but they do make for a tricky first few games. *ToH* feels more instinctive to play, and I don't think that's just because of my knowledge of Graham's other game.

A MORE CAUTIONARY APPROACH

I've focused on the drama and spectacle of the game in this report, but stealthier, more considered approaches are available. Graham made a cautious move with his spearmen as they progressed up the centre of the board because they were facing my archers. This halved their movement allowance but granted them a free action to avoid one incoming attack if they passed a roll. I also, eventually, opted for some cautious moves in my retreat from the board, with my rear-guard taking things slower so they had a better chance of survival. Each cautious move is represented by a token, and this is removed after the figure or figures have attempted to Avoid.



ToH is a ruleset packed with as much fun as it is with tactical potential. By focusing on cinematic moments rather than pure history, the systems feel incredibly impactful, rewarding a bold strategy or punishing a slip-up. That alone is enough to spark my interest and bring me back for more.

The evolving potential of your characters within the game (or in campaigns) is a great addition, making the Fate deck a standout element, and in just one game I got to see how impactful those cards could be. Graham should be applauded for the various systems he's built into the game, which all intersect rather perfectly. It must be said, he was a generous opponent, too, and played a part in his own demise with some of the suggestions he threw my way!

With a vibrant and inspirational range of models to collect, and a ruleset that makes for highly interactive and fast-paced games, I suspect I'll be building up a force for *Test of Honour* soon.

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“A VERY FIERCE AND HOT DISPUTE”



THE BATTLE OF MAIDSTONE, 1648 - PART ONE

The man behind Bloody Miniatures, Richard Lloyd, presents the first part of a two-part article about a little known English Civil War battle. Having extensively researched the battle - which gets very little attention in any history books - Richard provides the compelling history and (next month) the wargaming angle on this battle that was “a fierce and hot dispute”. All the figures seen in the photos are from the expanding Bloody Miniatures English Civil War range.

INTRODUCTION

I've lived within 25 miles of Maidstone for most of my life, but until recently had only visited on a couple of occasions. The 'county town', or administrative headquarters of Kent, Maidstone sits in the lee of the North Downs, on the beautiful River Medway in the centre of the Garden of England.

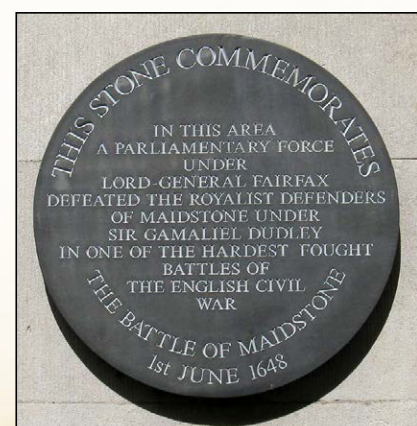
The town itself, alas, is at first sight an unlovely place. Like many large English towns, Maidstone's historic core has been smothered under unforgiving layers of modern development. Expanding rapidly after World War Two, Maidstone is now a fully-fledged urban sprawl - surrounding villages swallowed up, and encircled by a creeping effusion of industrial estates, retail parks, and housing developments. Traffic roars along a multi-lane highway

right through the town centre and along the beautiful riverside. There's tremendous history here, but you have to look hard to find it.

On a rare visit a while back, I spotted an unobtrusive plaque on a wall in Bank Street in the lower part of the town. It commemorates the Battle of Maidstone, 1648 as 'one of the hardest fought battles of the English Civil War'. I was surprised. I've been a military history nut for 40 years, I own a shelf full of books on the English Civil War, and I'd never even heard of the Battle of Maidstone. Curiosity piqued, I started digging and unearthed a dramatic story that barely gets a mention in the history books.

We can probably all name some major battles of the English Civil War, from Edgehill to Worcester and various

encounters in between. But it's always been my sense that the big pike and shot battles that wargamers love to play, with their neatly ranked up firing lines, massed pike blocks, and regiments of



Above: The commemorative plaque in Bank Street, Maidstone.

cavalry wheeling in drillbook formations, are probably not representative of most of the fighting that took place during this long conflict.

Naseby, Marston Moor, and a dozen other fields may have hosted the big set piece battles which provided the key turning points in the war, but they're not typical of much of the fighting, which took place on a smaller, localised scale and rarely on open battlefields. Historian Brian Lyndon states that "The quarrel of the King and Parliament in London was used to indulge local passions and personal feuds. Numerous small wars were waged with fierce intensity, remote from the operations of the major marching armies".

Encounters involving a few hundred men disputing control of a village, great house, or river crossing were the bread and butter engagements of the Civil Wars, along with (often lengthy) sieges, great and small. The succession of actions at Maidstone on 1 June 1648, is much more typical of the desperate, gritty, day-to-day warfare that took place the length and breadth of the country during ten years of on-off civil war.

This fits with my own range of figures, Bloody Miniatures, which are designed not for big set piece battles, but for down and dirty skirmishes, sallies, sieges, ambushes, and escalades.

So, I set out to recreate the Battle of Maidstone as a wargame. Timely too, since 2023 is the 375th anniversary of the battle.

The Battle of Maidstone, long forgotten, encapsulates why the English Civil War is so irresistibly fascinating. It's local history, but seething with incredible drama, fire, and fury, yet all so peculiarly British and parochial. These are our not-so-distant ancestors in the early modern period, waging murderous war against their fellow countrymen in the improbable surroundings of our very own chocolate box villages, pastoral landscapes, and pleasant county towns. It's all too incongruous. Yet it really happened here - and not that long ago in the great span of time. You can still discern the scars on our countryside and high streets: the buried outlines of defensive earthworks; the bullet marks around church doorways, on stone bridges, and on venerable buildings that still stand in bustling English market towns. It's just deeply weird - horribly unfamiliar, yet so familiar.

This article is a summary of the battle itself, and the wargaming details are to come in part two. I hope these will offer enough information that you can play it yourself if you want to.



Above: Parliamentarian shot attack across Mill Street Bridge.

BACKGROUND TO THE BATTLE

The so-called 'First Civil War' (the main phase of which saw all the well-known big battles of the conflict) began in 1642 and ended in 1646 with Charles I held captive, first by Parliament's Scottish allies, the Covenanters, and later by the Parliamentarians.

In the ensuing two years, Parliament tightened its grip over England and Wales. But significant pockets of Royalist sympathisers remained, and hostilities re-ignited in early Summer 1648 (the 'Second Civil War'), with Royalist risings in South Wales, Cornwall, Essex, Kent, and parts of the North. The Scots switched sides and came out for the King, who promised to impose their preferred form of Presbyterianism on both Kingdoms in return for their help in restoring him to his English throne.

The South-East had generally been for Parliament during the First Civil War, but Kent had always harboured a strong Royalist minority, and fresh grievances had been building since late 1647. In part, these were in reaction to puritan structures imposed by Parliament (the banning of traditional Christmas festivities in Canterbury, for instance, which led to rioting), but also in opposition to Parliament's oppressive military rule. War taxation was still in force, and so was the hated policy of free quarter for unpaid soldiers. Petitions by the Kent gentry for the disbandment of Parliament's feared New Model Army, and for the return of the King to power, were dismissed or ignored.

On 21 May 1648, with Wales in revolt, the Scots marching south, and insurrections breaking out across



Above: Fairfax watches his cavalry attack over Little Bridge.



England, Kent rose and declared for the King. Within days, 20,000 men were in arms across the county. The Second Civil War had begun.

Rochester, Faversham, and Sittingbourne on the north Kent coast fell to the rebels immediately, and the Parliamentary fleet mutinied and went over to the Royalists. Threatened by its guns, the Tudor artillery forts of Walmer, Deal, and Sandown on the Channel coast promptly came out for the King, and the Parliamentary stronghold of Dover Castle was put to siege.

On 26 May, Dartford and Deptford, Kent towns on the Thames, lying perilously close to Parliament's London power base, fell to the rebels.

Oliver Cromwell had taken the greater part of the New Model Army to South Wales to deal with the rebellion there. Now Parliament's other pre-eminent commander, Sir Thomas Fairfax, faced a sudden threat to London itself, and the imminent reinforcement of the Kentish rebels by their fellow Royalists in Essex. Fairfax had been readying his 8,000 men to march north to suppress the Lancashire risings. Now, with characteristic decisiveness, on Wednesday 27 May, Fairfax turned south.

An extract from the record of Parliamentary proceedings for 1 June, 1648, notes: "On Wednesday in May last, His Excellency (Fairfax) with four regiments of horse and three of foot, with some loose companies of Colonel Ingoldsby's regiment, marched from Eltham."

PRELUDE TO BATTLE

Leaving Eltham near Greenwich, and bypassing the fortified Royalist towns of Rochester and Aylesford, Fairfax headed straight for Maidstone, some 35 miles south-east of London.



Above: Sir William Brockman, by Cornelius Johnson, 1642.

To defend the approaches to the north Kent shore and the Medway ports, George Goring, Earl of Norwich, had mustered a Royalist army of 7,000 men on Penenden Heath, between Maidstone and Rochester.

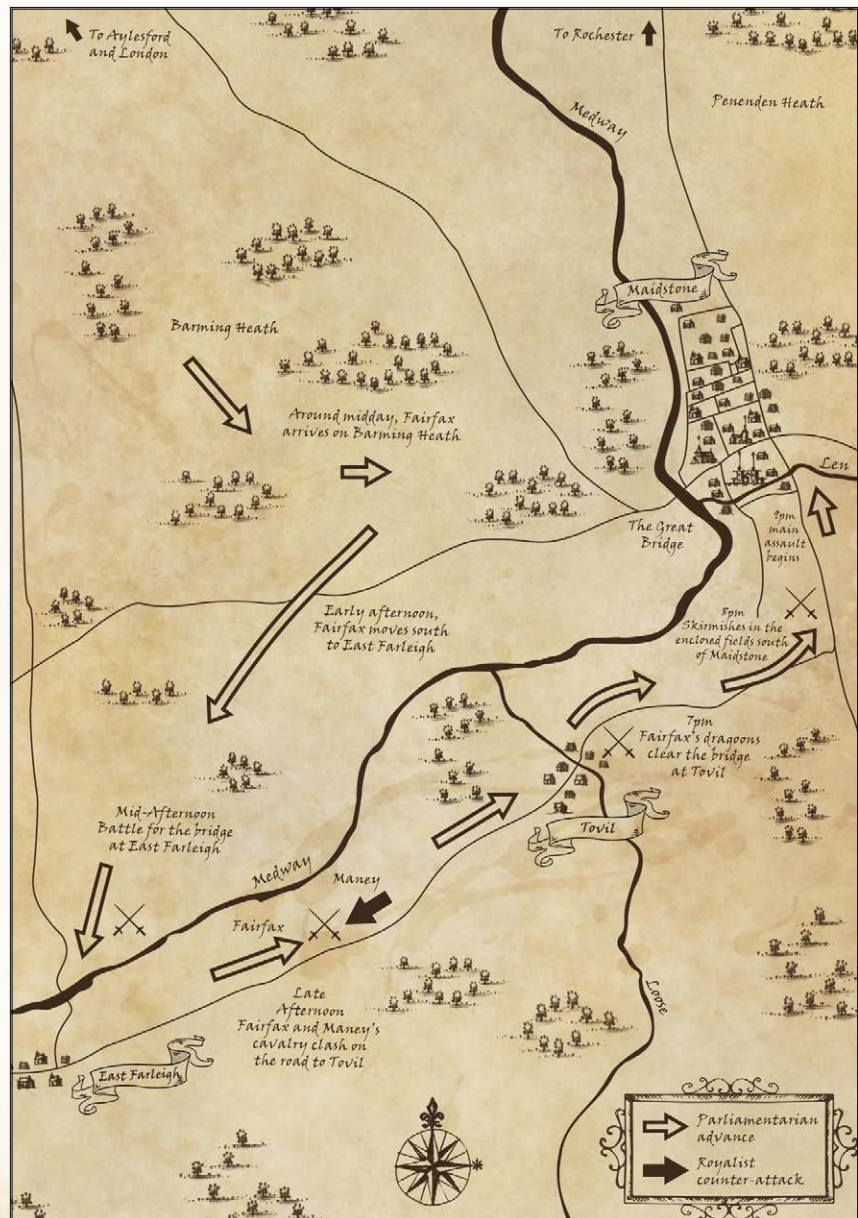
A further detached force (variously given as between 1,800 and 3,000 men) was billeted within Maidstone itself. Fairfax reported afterwards that "the choicest of their forces (as we understand it) were appointed for this service."

Maidstone's civilian population at the time numbered some 3,000 inhabitants. With 2,000 or more Royalist troops also in the town, it must have been bursting at the seams. Overall command was vested in the town's military governor, the splendidly named Sir Gamaliel Dudley - a veteran cavalry colonel who had fought with his own regiment of horse across the north of England throughout the First Civil War, including at Marston Moor and Naseby.

Dudley's small army included Sir William Brockman's Regiment of Foot and Sir John Manney's Regiment of Horse - although quite how well formed, equipped, and experienced these 'regiments' were, we don't know.



Above: Sir Thomas Fairfax, by Edward Bower, 1646.



Mayney (sometimes 'Maney'), a Kentish baronet, had originally raised his regiment in Yorkshire in 1643. It too had fought with some distinction across much of the north throughout the First Civil War, so Mayney and Dudley would have known each other well. Whether Mayney's regiment at Maidstone bore any resemblance to this earlier formation is not known, although Fairfax reported after the battle that 'some 400 horse' had been taken, which would suggest a Royalist cavalry arm of around regimental strength. Brockman meanwhile, reportedly brought 800 men to the defence of the town.

The defenders included large numbers of volunteers: seamen, London apprentices, 'cavaliers', and watermen. These men may have constituted Brockman's hastily assembled 'regiment of foot'.

Most of this ragbag army was deployed within the town, with a small force sent to guard the next crossing point on the Medway - at East Farleigh, three miles upstream towards Tonbridge.

The Royalists also had eight heavy guns which they sited at the top of Gabriel's Hill, near the market cross in the town centre. These were positioned facing west down the High Street to cover the Great Bridge across the Medway. To fortify the southern approaches to the town, earthworks were thrown up along the River Len - a tributary of the Medway enlarged by a string of millponds serving several watermills.

During the afternoon of 1 June, after a march of several days, Fairfax's leading cavalry arrived on Barming Heath west of Maidstone. They found the town's Great Bridge across the Medway well defended and covered by the daunting battery of guns, sited on Gabriel's Hill in the town centre.

Rather than attempting to carry the bridge in a costly head-on assault, Fairfax decided on a flanking manoeuvre. He diverted the greater part of his force south, to cross the Medway by the lightly defended bridge at East Farleigh, south-west of Maidstone - a march of several miles.



BATTLE JOINED

The narrow 14th Century stone bridge at East Farleigh is still in use today, often described as the finest surviving medieval bridge in the south of England. Barely wide enough for two horsemen to ride abreast, the bridge lies in the bottom of a deep valley. Fighting their way across that long, narrow, and eminently defensible bridge, then uphill past the church, must have seemed a daunting prospect to Fairfax's troops. And yet in the first encounter of the day, his veteran New Model horse swept the Royalist defenders before them, carried the bridge, and swung east to advance along the lane (now the B2010) towards Maidstone. But some way along this road they were met by Mayney's Royalist horse, who had sallied out of Maidstone to repel them. A short but furious cavalry battle saw the surprised Parliamentarian horse driven back onto East Farleigh by Mayney's charge.

After a brief pause, and with his infantry coming up, Fairfax counter-attacked with his cavalry. This time, the New Model's troopers drove off Mayney's Horse, who fell back on Maidstone through the village of Tovil, where another bridge (over the Loose stream, another tributary of the Medway) was defended by a further party of Royalist foot.

At around 7pm, having marshalled his forces, Fairfax ordered his Dragoons forward to clear the bridge at Tovil. The Dragoons drove off the Royalist defenders and the Parliamentarian army crossed the Loose stream to reach the old Roman



Above: East Farleigh bridge looking north - the direction from which Fairfax's troops crossed.

road, Stone Street. Here, they swung north to approach Maidstone from the south, fighting running skirmishes through the enclosed fields and hop gardens south of the River Len.

While the fights for the bridges at East Farleigh and Tovil are recorded, the crossing of the bridges over the Len is not remarked on in any report that I've found. Attacking from the south provided Fairfax with a much wider front to assault along than an attack across the Great Bridge from the west. Crossing the Len by the Mill Street bridge, the 'Little Bridge' from Lower Stone Street, and possibly other footbridges, his troops could attack in several places at once. But we have no details of how this crucial part of the battle unfolded, nor how the Royalists' earthworks north of the Len were overcome.

In any event, finally crossing the Len with his forlorn hope, Fairfax entered the outskirts of the town proper at around 9pm. Daylight was fading and it had begun to pour with rain. The Royalists had thrown up a succession of barricades through the streets, and turned some of their guns on Gabriel's Hill to face the new threat from the south.

STORM AND ASSAULT

With night coming on, a thunderstorm breaking, and his own train of artillery several miles behind him, Fairfax decided to hold off his assault until first light. But his forlorn hope were already skirmishing with the defenders in the lower part of the town, and as darkness fell and more Parliamentary units came up, the action took on a



Above: Royalist defences along the River Len at Little Bridge.

momentum of its own. More and more attackers were sucked into the fighting until it turned into a full-blown night assault - at which point Fairfax decided to push on and try to settle the matter there and then.

It's not difficult to imagine the intensity and horror of the hours of vicious house-to-house fighting that ensued - the darkness illuminated with hellish firelight from timber-framed buildings, set alight by close quarters gunnery despite the driving rain of a violent summer thunderstorm. With large numbers of men and horses struggling for their lives in the downpour, disputing every darkened street, alleyway and building, it must have been confusing and terrifying. We know it was bloody.

Colonel George Thompson, member of Parliament for Southwark and a veteran of the First Civil War (in which he lost a leg), was an observer with the Parliamentary forces that night:

"This Army struggled with so much difficulty to overcome a strong and resolute enemy. The fight began at seven at night about a mile from Maidstone, and before we could beat them from hedge to hedge and get at the barracadoes it was past 9 o'clock. After we had entered the town we disputed every street and turning. The enemy had eight



Above: Parliamentary Dragoons advance on the Royalist last stand at St Faith's Chapel.

pieces of ordinance which they discharged about 20 times when our men came into the streets. And by God's mighty help and assistance we overcame them between twelve and one, being every minute of the time firing upon them, and they upon us, it being extreme wet weather during all that time.

"Captain Price, a gallant honest man, and Colonel Hewson's Captain-Lieutenant, was also slain, and of ours, about 30 men, most of them fell at the cannon's mouth with case shot. We took eight pieces of ordinance, six iron and two brass."

The detail that the Royalist guns were firing case shot (explosive canisters of shrapnel) at close range, adds a brutal dimension to the tale of the night's fighting. It's surprising Parliamentary casualties were so (relatively) light - although we may suppose that in addition to the reported dead (around 80 in the final tally), hundreds more must have been maimed or wounded.

Another eyewitness, thought to be Captain John Topping, an officer in Hewson's Regiment of Foot, which led the charges up the streets towards the barricades, writes with masterly understatement of the guns' terrifying case shot, laconically observing: "They did us some mischief before we could get under their shot." In other words, too close for the artillery fire to be effective.

The same writer reported, "I cannot but observe unto you the gallantry of a party of about sixty of our horse, which charged."

Another report claimed both sides "disputed the loss of every foot of ground, from street to street, porch to porch, often falling upon the enemy's horse with only their swords, in such a gallant manner."

It's intriguing to note from these reports that mounted troops on both sides were in the thick of this desperate street fighting - presumably making cavalry charges in attempts to clear particular streets. If you've ever seen mounted police clattering into action at an inner city riot, you perhaps start to get some sense of what this may have been like.

The defenders put up a heroic resistance, but eventually sheer weight of numbers and the New Model's experience began to tell. Barricade by barricade, the Royalists were gradually forced back up Gabriel's Hill and then along Week Street.



Above: Royalist defences at Mill Street Bridge.



Above: Royalist Kentish gentry defend a barricade in the High Street with Parliamentarians attacking up Mill Street.

From the crossroads at the top of Gabriel's Hill, it's 300 yards along Week Street to where the Royalist defenders made their last stand in the churchyard of St Faith's Chapel. Even with the remodelling inflicted on large parts of the town centre over recent decades, you can still see many of the narrow alleys, yards, and passageways that spill off this main thoroughfare. Small wonder it took the Parliamentarians several hours to gradually drive the defenders back through this warren. It must have been hard-fought indeed.

The Royalists kept up their resistance until the early hours of the morning before conceding that the night was lost. Fairfax was said to be astonished when around a thousand Royalists emerged from inside St Faith's to offer their surrender. He later reported that the Royalists lost "neare 300 slaine, and about 1,300 prisoners, many being taken the next morning early in the woods, hop-yards, and fields whither they fled."

When the butcher's bill was reckoned, Fairfax had lost just 80 killed - testament perhaps to the experience and fighting prowess of the New Model Army. Their final assault, according to local legend (perhaps based on Topping's observation about 'getting under their shot') was an expertly timed charge, made immediately after the Royalist guns had fired - storming the position before another cannonade could be made.

Fairfax's subsequent report to Parliament confirms many of the details:

"The engagement with them began the last night, about seven of the clock, near Maidstone, and continued a very fierce and hot dispute until after twelve, before we could be masters of the town. The enemy, by reason of the continued supplies which they received from their forces by the passage over Aylesford, were enabled to dispute every street and passage."

The defeated Royalists were disarmed, marched back down through the town they had so resolutely defended, and imprisoned in All Saints College Church. That remains today much as it would have been in 1648 - part of an imposing and well-preserved medieval riverside complex, comprising ecclesiastical college, Archbishop's palace, college church, tithe barn, and a number of other houses and towers.

Deemed to have acquitted themselves with some credit in their obdurate defence of the town against a much greater force of battle-hardened troops, Fairfax allowed most of his rank and file prisoners to swear their parole and return home over the following days.

REFLECTIONS

Although we have a reasonably detailed account of the way the battle unfolded, drawn from several contemporary or near-contemporary eyewitnesses and reports, there are also some 'known unknowns' which we should take into account when considering the events of that bloody day.

For instance, when Fairfax decided to make his flanking sweep to assault Maidstone from the south, what part of his force did he leave on Barming Heath, facing east across the Medway? It seems inconceivable that he wouldn't have left some part of his army there, both to screen his march south, and to keep the defenders bottled up. But we also know that

on his march from Eltham, Fairfax had detached various companies and troops for specific missions along the way. So it seems unlikely that he had anything like his full starting strength of 8,000 men with him by the time he reached Maidstone.

Once the battle for the town proper was underway, with Parliamentary troops fighting their way up through the streets from the River Len (and the Royalist guns on Gabriel's Hill turned to face them), it also seems probable that whatever troops Fairfax had left on Barming Heath would surely have joined the fight, crossing the Great Bridge over the Medway to simultaneously attack from the west, up High Street and Bank Street. But how the Parliamentary forces were divided, we don't know.

A reasonable assumption would be that from his overall force of some 8,000 troops - or perhaps 6,000 by the time he reached Maidstone - Fairfax would have taken at least 4,000 men to make his main assault from the south, giving him likely odds of at least two to one over the defenders. But we can't say for sure. He may have taken a much smaller force with him, relying on the superior training, morale, and experience of his soldiers.

AFTERMATH

Having taken Maidstone, Fairfax despatched Colonel Nathaniel Rich to subdue East Kent, lift the siege of Dover Castle, and retake the forts of Walmer, Deal and Sandown. Fairfax himself marched north in pursuit of the retreating Earl of Norwich, clearing Royalist rebels from the Medway towns along the way,



Above: Cavalry meet in the High Street.

before crossing the Thames at Gravesend on 11th June to put down the burgeoning rebellion in Essex.

The Essex Royalists, led by Sir Charles Lucas and Sir George Lisle, were swiftly driven back by Fairfax onto Colchester. Buoyed by his success at Maidstone, Fairfax attempted to storm it. But Colchester, a much larger town, proved an altogether tougher nut to crack, and after a bloody, costly, and unsuccessful assault, Fairfax settled in to besiege and starve out the defenders.

Meanwhile, having crushed the rebellion in Wales, Cromwell turned north. On 18 August he defeated a combined army of Royalists and Scots at the battle of

Preston. When the news reached the besieged Royalists at Colchester, this death-blow to Royalist hopes helped precipitate a collapse in morale. After an eleven week siege, with supplies exhausted and Royalist hopes crumbling around the country, Colchester surrendered on 28 August.

Fairfax was less forgiving in victory here. The men of the defeated garrison were taken to Bristol and sold en-masse into slavery in Barbados. Lucas and Lisle, having broken their parole to never again raise arms against Parliament, were summarily shot. Other Royalist ringleaders were later tried and hanged. Norwich only narrowly escaped the death penalty thanks to the casting vote of the Speaker in Parliament.

His last throw of the dice having failed, Charles I was tried by Parliament and beheaded in January 1649.

Sir John Mayney was left amongst the dead at Maidstone, but somehow managed to revive and slip away to London with the aim of joining the Essex rebels. He spent the period of the Commonwealth in and out of trouble - and in and out of the country raising money for Charles II. He was imprisoned several times for involvement in various plots and minor risings, but a lifetime of devotion to the Royalist cause seems to have brought scant reward despite the Restoration in 1660. Sir John died in poverty in 1676, aged 68.

Sir William Brockman was amongst the captives held in All Saints, and remained



Above: Fairfax's doublet, worn at Maidstone, in the Leeds Castle museum.

a prisoner until 1651. He was eventually released after being heavily fined as a 'delinquent', and returned to his manor at Beachborough, near Folkestone, where he died in 1654, aged 59.

Sir Gamaliel Dudley was also amongst the prisoners, but I've been unable to find what became of him afterwards.

Thomas, Lord Fairfax, refused to have anything to do with the trial of Charles I, and resigned his command of the army shortly afterwards - leaving the field clear for Cromwell to establish the government of the new Commonwealth, and pursue wars against the Scots and Irish.

Following Cromwell's death, Fairfax returned briefly to military command, helping put down the uprising of his former protégé, John Lambert, against the restoration of Charles II.

For this, along with what was seen as his honourable conduct during the civil war, Fairfax was spared the retribution meted out to many other leading Parliamentarians. Fairfax even provided Charles II with the horse he rode at his coronation.

Perhaps the greatest soldier of his day, 'Black Tom', died at home in Yorkshire in 1671, aged 59.

The buff coat worn by Fairfax at the battle is on display at Leeds Castle near Maidstone.

According to George Thompson, writing from the battlefield in the early hours of the next morning, Fairfax had been in the thick of the action throughout:

"His Excellency, from the first minute to the last, could not be drawn off from his personal and hazardous attendance in this service, and is much in his health."

MAIDSTONE TODAY

Despite the grisly depredations of town planners and developers between the late 20th and early 21st Centuries, plenty of buildings that would have witnessed the battle, survive in Maidstone. Examples include those on Bank Street (No. 78 for instance, is dated 1611), and on St Faith's Street, where the timber-framed, jettied shops at Nos. 12-16 are 16th Century in origin, if not earlier.

The original Huguenot Chapel of St Faith's, in which the Royalists took refuge, was replaced in the 19th Century by a Victorian church. A stone's throw away, just to the west of St Faith's church, stands Chillington Manor - a great Elizabethan mansion built in 1562, now housing the excellent Maidstone Museum.



Above: The tower of All Saints church, where the Royalist prisoners were held, rising behind the medieval Archbishop's palace on the Medway

While the magnificent medieval bridge at East Farleigh still stands proudly, the contested bridge at Tovil is no more - the Loose Stream, where it joins the Medway, having been long since culverted, driven underground and built over.

At the bottom of the town, the River Len has also largely been driven underground where it joins the Medway. But it's well worth seeking out the original medieval Mill Street bridge over the Len. This is one of the bridges across which Fairfax must have attacked. Now overlaid by a modern steel and concrete bridge, the intact C14th medieval stone bridge can be found, lurking like a reproachful ghost in the darkness of its man-made cavern, by descending the stair beside the ruined gatehouse in the Archbishop's Palace gardens. It's an incredibly evocative spot.



Above: The 14th Century stone Mill Street bridge over the River Len, now hidden beneath a modern road bridge



Above: The medieval Archbishop's palace on the Medway, just south of where the River Len (now underground) joins the Medway.

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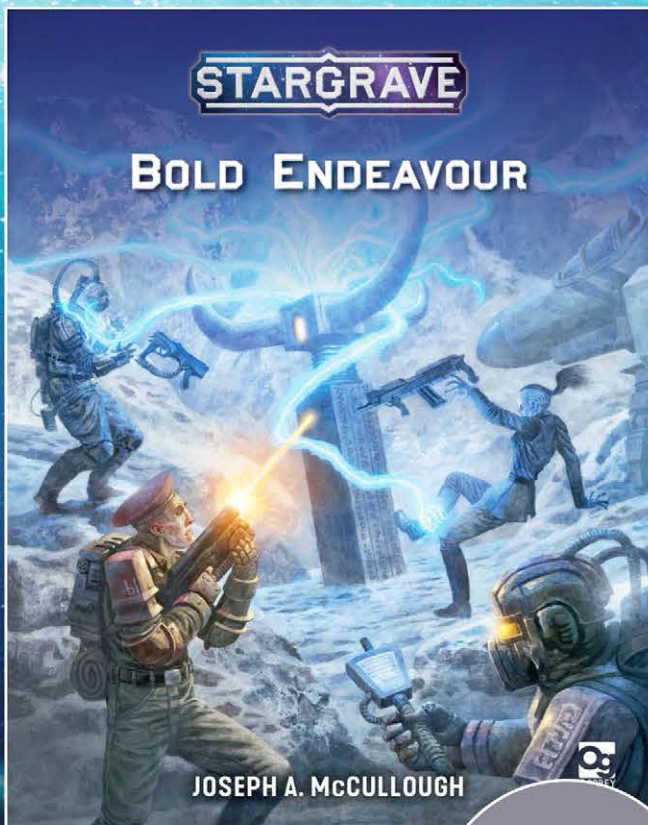
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1066 AND ALL THAT



(WITH APOLOGIES TO SELLAR AND YEATMAN)

Jim Graham looks at how we can wargame the battles of 11th Century England.

HAROLD GODWINSON, THE LAST ANGLO-SAXON KING*

We all know the story of Harold Godwinson. He was the last Anglo Saxon King of England, the end of a line going back to the Romans; in 1066 he won away at Chelsea and then, three weeks later, he took one in the eye at Hastings and William the Bastard was crowned. Thus began the Norman Dynasty...

EXCEPT!

Here is where the qualifier in the title kicks in; Norse and Saxons had been intermarrying and living together for centuries. Harold's name was actually Haraldr, his mother Gytha Thorkelsdottir was Danish, and she was part of the royal house that at various times ruled Denmark and Norway. Harold's brothers were called Tostig, Svein, Gyrth, and Wulfnoth - all good Scandinavian names - and the royal houses of Wessex, Northumbria, Norway, and Denmark were so comixed by the 11th Century that none would have been recognised by their forebearers of a century before. For simplicity, Haraldr Godwinson will be referred to as 'Harold' and Haraldr



Above: Harold surveys the battle.

Hardrada as 'Harald' throughout this article.

According to Orderic Vitalis, a chronicler writing in the 11th Century, Harold "was distinguished by his great size and strength of body, his polished manners, his firmness of mind and command of words, by a ready wit and a variety of excellent qualities." There was a

Most of the photos in this article have been supplied by Bob Murch and feature his collection of painted Pulp Figures in action.

downside, however: "But what availed so many valuable gifts, when good faith, the foundation of all virtues, was wanting?" It's worth keeping in mind that Orderic was writing for William's successors, so perhaps there is a certain bias!

Both Harald Hardrada and Harold Godwinson shared some characteristics: they were Christian, both had Nordic ancestry, and both would win and lose crowns on the battlefield. That said, Harold's army was still largely composed of solidly 'English' stock: yeomen who had farmed the land for generations and would retain an ethnic identity under the Normans, or go into exile after Harold's defeat. Ironically, some would serve Scandinavian kings - the Viking rulers of Man and the Isles, or Orkney - and others would take the long trip to Byzantium where the Varangian Guard always offered employment to a man with an axe and a penchant for violence. Such was

* Terms and conditions apply.

the time when loyalty was to a royal household and the concept of a nation state didn't exist.

HAROLD'S ARMY

Harold's army was based on the old Saxon system of local levies, the fyrd, regional troops, the Great Fyrd, and the royal household - the huscarls. Much is made in wargames rules of the differences in quality but even the fyrd could give the Vikings a bloody nose on a good day; not often, but often enough to make the Vikings wary!

With a Saxon army - and I use the term to cover any English, Wessex, Mercian, or Northumbrian army of the 10th or 11th Centuries - your choice is quality or quantity. How do you balance the hitting power of the heavy axemen with enough spearmen to have a decent frontage? The traditional view is that light infantry is largely incidental; your Saxons will have solid foot, and plenty of it, and your decision is how much of what type you want. The fyrd are often unfairly downgraded but they have surprising staying power; yes, I know that is how *WRG's* Phil Barker once described unshielded Biblical javelinmen too, but in this case it is true!

Forget an abundance of cavalry here; if you want horses then build a Norman or Carolingian army... or Rohirrim, since Tolkien was a devotee of the period in his own way! If you are going to face cavalry, then read the rules carefully and choose which is best between spear and two-handed axes to counter them. Perhaps add your own special rule to represent those large axes - weapons the Danes developed specifically to counter Frankish cavalry. That's not rules lawyering, it is the pragmatism of a hardheaded Dark Ages general; you don't take a spear to an axefight!

Battles of the time were formulaic, and this is where the challenge of playing enjoyable games in this period begins. Historically, armies would meet up somewhere, line up, and have it out. No manoeuvring, no fancy tricks, just good old fashioned toxic masculinity: strength versus strength, huscarls versus fyrd, shieldwall versus shieldwall, etc. I'm all for this kind of simple brawling and bravado if you can make it fun but you're rolling the dice, literally and figuratively, so it's probably worth considering ways that you can add interesting friction to proceedings to create a more strategically challenging battle.



Left: Saxon huscarle of Earl Ralph the Timid, c. 1055. By Gerry Embleton from Anglo-Saxon Thegn AD 449-1066. Copyright Osprey Publishing. ospreypublishing.com

TERRAIN

The orthodoxy is that Vikings do well in broken terrain. That they do, but not as well as light infantry! Start building your Saxon army from the bottom of your troop quality options and those 'cheap and disposable men' can pay dividends. There's nothing on the lower tiers that should be able to stand up to a Viking charge but there's also nothing that should be able to be caught by one either. A larger table with varied terrain will help you here: add in rough ground, hard going, and play with a system that includes fatigue rules for more variety. Suckering a tired or disordered unit onto your shield wall is the Holy Grail.

It might not be historically accurate, but this is wargaming and sometimes we need to bend the truth to recreate battles that are engaging and pleasing to take part in.

SNEAK IN SOME HORSES

This is where you might need to get a little 'funky'. Don't think like a pragmatic hardheaded Dark Ages general, think like a wargamer and consider units you would normally ignore as worthless. Proper cavalry shouldn't be an option, but perhaps you should scare up some mounted infantry or scuzzy light cavalry; check what allies you can have and get creative.

The important thing is to make sure it is cheap and disposable. It doesn't matter how badly it will fight because it isn't supposed to win you a great victory on the battlefield. Your mounted troops are essentially a diversion to draw Viking berserkers or line breakers away from the part of your army that can actually get stuck in and wallop with game changing effect!

Cause your battle-hungry foe to test and charge your light horse, evade, then rinse and repeat. Depending on the rules you might need to fully sacrifice a few horsemen by charging in, losing, routing, and get pursued to the end of the world... or Norwich! The overall strategy here is to sacrifice an expendable unit so that your opponent in turn loses control of an important one. If you can divert an elite unit of huscarls then so much the better. Once a good Viking unit is out of the way, punch through the gap they left, or double-team a Viking unit.



MYSTICISM

The Saxons fought battles in the same places, often near burial mounds and barrows. In a world where nation states didn't exist, the important thing was the soldiers' local area and the symbols of their ancestors, so consider giving Saxons a bonus rule or two for this.

When adding terrain have each player roll a dice with a chance that a Saxon landmark will have to be deployed if they get above a certain total; the Saxon player could have a higher likelihood. Consider giving the Saxons a morale bonus for fighting near standing stones that they've known their whole life, reduce the morale or fighting ability of invaders in combat on barrows as they feel the displeasure of the dead, boost the movement of Saxons as they surge across mist covered hills they know while their opponents need to step with care.



Above: Gripping Beast Saxons defend a local stone circle.

HARALD HALDRADA, THE LAST VIKING KING*

Harald Haldrada - the 'hard ruler' - was the man who brought the Viking Age to an end. He began his military career as a 15-year-old at the Battle of Stiklestad; there his brother attempted to win the crown of Norway from the Danish king but he was defeated and exiled, along with Harald.

Harald headed into the wilds of Russia and fought in the service of the Rus Grand Prince, then spent a spell in the Byzantine Varangian Guard where his leadership skills and talent for violence led to promotions and eventual command of the Guard. This helped him accumulate wealth, enough to return home and claim the throne of Norway for himself.

He made a pact with his nephew, Magnus Olafsson - known as Magnus the Good, he was king of both Norway and Denmark - to jointly rule both countries. When Magnus suddenly died two years later, Harald seized the opportunity and imposed a stable, centralised rule in Norway. The 'hard rule' he was named after raiding and generally 'viking' (yes, it is a verb as well as a gendered noun) were outlawed. Denmark's laws of succession put power in the hands of a different ruler - Sweyn Estridsson - and Harald fought a series of unsuccessful wars with him for their crown as well.

COMPLICATED KINGSHIP

In 1066 the former Earl of Northumbria, Harold's banished brother Tostig Godwinson, invited Harald to England to help him claim the throne from Harold. Such was kingship in the period - the brother of the King of England allied with a Scandinavian king against his



Above: Harald at the Battle of Stamford Bridge, from *The Life of King Edward the Confessor* by Matthew Paris, 13th Century. Though pictured with an axe and in red it is probable he would have had a sword and worn blue.

monarch. It should be noted that in Saxon England the king wasn't hereditary or appointed by his predecessor, he was elected by the nobility; standing at the head of the most powerful army in the land was always a helpful way of gaining votes! Tostig had been banished for a reason. He was a thoroughly unpleasant character who spent more time killing his rivals than defending the Northern Marches.

HARALD'S ARMY

Line the boys up and fight! If you don't want to do that then find a different army... This is all causing some déjà vu, isn't it? Much of what I wrote about the Saxon army applies to the Vikings; you are always balancing the stability of the enemy shield wall against the cutting power of berserkers, line breakers, etc.

You really won't have cavalry and, although some of your huscarls may be mounted, that doesn't really count.

It will increase their mobility, and this is the key differentiating factor between Saxons and Vikings. Those mounted huscarls can offer extra utility by seizing a specific piece of terrain, claiming an objective, or closing down a flank. Just keep in mind that in combat they should not gain huge bonuses. Consider making huscarls immune to the negative effects mentioned in the previous Mysticism section. They could offer a radius of immunity around them to other troops too.

MASTER THE TERRAIN

Your entire army should be more mobile than the basic Saxon troops through broken ground. Use this mobility to outflank, outmanoeuvre, and discomfit

* Terms and conditions apply.

their shieldwall and consider adding in a combat bonus if your Vikings charge troops in difficult terrain.

Make sure that the battlefield isn't all easy-going or you'll have a hard time finding an advantage. Consider adding an option to spend some of your army points on breaking up a few patches of ground across the battlefield. Will that spend be worthwhile when balanced against the sacrifice of overall army strength? Your generalship will decide!

PLAYING ON THE BACKFOOT

With your elite huscarls and horses, plus potential spend on rough ground, you might find that the rest of your army ends up with less hitting power than the Saxons. Consider putting the rest of your army on the defensive and maintain a cautious approach until you have used the terrain to your advantage, avoided any pesky mystical sites, and found an opening that you can exploit.

Right: Huscarls make their way through the rough going terrain.



WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR, THE FIRST NORMAN KING*

William, aka Guillaume le Batard, probably needs no introduction if you've studied history in an English school. For our international readers though, William's father went by the diminutive title of Robert the Magnificent (nothing to live up to there) and was the Duke of Normandy. After Robert's death in 1035, William - his illegitimate son - succeeded him and spent the next thirty years consolidating his throne, fighting off various claimants, then moving on to grander ambitions. He would eventually become, as the title there says, the first Norman king of England and reign from 1066 until his death in 1087.



Above: William on the advance.

His army, the third fighting in England in 1066, was the product of the development of Carolingian and European cavalry. Their nobles rode and fought on horses rather than on foot like real men; they were effete southerners with access to heavy horses and the open spaces to use them... that's the easy stereotype anyway! There is a very good argument that the Normans had a decent amount of Viking blood in their veins too, but we'll skip over that.

WILLIAM'S ARMY

While William was conquering Britain, other Normans were heading south to scrap in Italy and Sicily; this gives your army double-dip potential and makes it a cost-effective 11th Century option with plenty of gaming possibilities. The Normans set the trend for 'Brits abroad in the Med' which is why you occasionally come across red haired Sicilians called Tancredi!

Norman cavalry are pretty much the archetype for any 11th or 12th Century heavy horse, which means you'll have a rather different kind of army composition to the Saxons and Vikings. In the same way that their foot can be adapted to

most contemporary armies with a simple change of banner (consider the use of small rare earth magnets) Norman horse can be anything 'Frankish' (as the Byzantines would put it).

A MOUNTED OUTLIER

The Norman army makes up for its lack of huscarls with decent heavy cavalry and you'd be a foolish general if you didn't include some of them in your force. A

major consideration here is how they are armed: spear or a lance? Check your rules, of course, but also consider the historical sources; the Bayeux Tapestry suggests a spear being used overhand, and who are we to argue with that fabulous bit of fabric? Blunt force trauma could be an option too. If a mace can be purchased for extra points, then it's worth consideration... but don't put all your egg breakers in one basket.



Above: Norman cavalry make a fearsome sight as they drive their mounts forward.

* He really was!

DON'T FORGET FOOT

It's easy to get hung up on cavalry; they are the army's unique selling point, after all. Don't forget that your high-impact horse should be the cutting edge, supported by a solid and strong arm of... foot!

Men slogging along with spear and shield are essential to close off areas and delay enemy manoeuvres. They should do fine against shield walls but will struggle against huscarls. If your cavalry are off elsewhere, fighting against the weaker troops in the enemy army, then the sacrifice of your men on foot, getting cut down by huscarls, will be worthwhile.

Saxons and Vikings were more mobile, and you should try and reflect this in the game. Get your foot deployed close to where you want them to fight and then consider an escalating bonus (or not losing as much fatigue as your opponent) if they remain in place in a sustained melee slogfest.

SHOOTING TO THE TOP

Don't despair about your limited ranged options, the ability to hit your enemy at a distance beyond the reach of a weapon swing is better than anyone else can manage - just ask Harold! Consider giving bows a damage bonus when fire is concentrated but a negative modifier if split or shot against a stationary shield wall.

FULFORD, THE FORGOTTEN BATTLE OF 1066

The Battle of Fulford, 20 September 1066, is the forgotten battle of that year but it sets the scene for what follows. In some ways, it is the most interesting battle them all and one that is worth your consideration on the tabletop.

The Northern Earls loyal to Harold - Edwin and Morcar of Northumbria - intercepted the army of Harald and Tostig to put down the latter's rebellion. Harald and Tostig had arrived by sea and moved to the Humber, one of the great Norse highways into England, then disembarked and headed in the direction of York, the seat of Harold's power in the north.

Harald's army is described in many ways, so the terms 'Norse', 'rebels', and 'Scandinavians' are used interchangeably here.

THE INVASIONS OF 1066 AND KING HAROLD'S RESPONSES

1. April: Tostig attacks Isle of Wight.
2. Tostig raids along the south coast.
3. Tostig forced north and raids Lindsey.
4. Tostig sails on to Scotland.
5. September 11: William's fleet sails for England but is driven by storms into the Bay of the Somme.
6. Mid-September: Harald and Tostig's fleet arrives in the Humber. Their forces go on to defeat the English northern levies at Fulford Gate 22 September.
7. King Harold marches north and attacks the invaders at Stamford Bridge, 24 September. Harold and Tostig are killed.
8. Night of 28/29 September: William's fleet crosses the Channel to land his forces at Pevensey.
9. King Harold marches south and regroups his forces at London, early October.
10. Harold advances towards Hastings and takes up a position 7 miles (11km) north of the town.
11. William advances in the early morning of 14 October.



Above: Illustration from CAM 13 Hastings 1066 © Osprey Publishing www.ospreypublishing.com

DEPLOYMENT AT FULFORD

Fulford lies just to the south of York, and it is there that Edwin and Morcar met the invaders. Arriving first, they drew up their army with the right flank secured on the River Ouse and the left flank on a marsh, called Fordland. Their wings were protected but this deployment had some disadvantages: it left higher ground for the Norse and rebels to exploit, and it gave the Saxons nowhere to retreat to should things go wrong. The Earls were confident; they outnumbered the invaders and could start the battle at a time of their choosing, so perhaps retreat was not a consideration. They would not give the Norse time to deploy (as they would have against another English army) as rebels

and Vikings deserved no consideration; in their minds they would dictate the fight and take out the enemy before they could get started.

Harald approached the battle from the south but had to move in three columns, which hindered his approach so his army would arrive piecemeal, exactly what the Saxons hoped for. Harald sent his fyrd to his right flank and huscarls to his left (next to the river) as they arrived; predictably the Saxons attacked as the Scandinavians were deploying and met with success against the fyrd. The Norwegians were forced back but not decisively; more troops were arriving and began to make an impact on that flank.

HARALD TURNS THE TIDE

Having stabilised his right, Harald turned his reinforcements inwards to threaten the English centre, which slowly gave way. The English troops on the riverbank were left isolated when the centre folded, and they retreated to York. As more Norwegians arrived, they cut off the English right and defeated the Saxons one group at a time. The Earls fled to York then surrendered the city to Tostig on favourable terms; the last thing Tostig wanted was to have his capital looted and destroyed.

Knowing Harald would respond to the defeat, the Scandinavians moved to Stamford Bridge to tend their wounds, sharpen their swords, and wait for Harald and his army.

FULLFORD REFOUGHT

Some sources say that Tostig first approached William of Normandy for aid but was refused, at which point he turned to Harald. This difference could have had knock-on effects all the way to Hastings; Harold could still have had his household troops (they would not have been lost at Stamford Bridge) and his northern earls. But before that you'll need to re-fight Fullford.



Above: A Saxon shieldwall.

FORCES

SAGA is an ideal ruleset to use and both armies field 12 point armies divided into three divisions of 4 points:

- The Viking army is comprised of two Viking divisions of 4 points and Tostig's Anglo-Dane division of 4 points. They may field Harald Hardrada at no extra cost and 1 point of Varangian Hearthguard as part of their force.
- The Anglo-Saxon army organises and fights as Anglo-Danes.

Anglo-Saxons: Edwin and Morcar

- Morcar's Division
- Edwin's Division
- Northumbrian Division

Rebels: Harald and Tostig

- Harald's Division
- Norwegian Division
- Tostig's Anglo-Dane Division

BATTLEFIELD AND DEPLOYMENT

The Battle is fought on an 8'x4' table with the River Ouse edging the western flank and a marsh on the east, neither of which need be represented. A small, low hill (6"x12") sits at the centre of the southern edge. In addition, the Anglo-Saxon Commanding General may place a terrain block of marshland (12"x12") anywhere on the eastern half of the field, and the Viking Commanding General may do likewise with a low hill (12"x12") on the western half of the field. The rest of the field is flat with a few trees and bushes for aesthetic purposes only.

SCENARIO RULES

Number of Turns: Max 10

Initiative: Anglo-Saxon (Deploy first or second, and Move first)

Attacking and/or shooting uphill: Loses 1 Attack Dice

VICTORY CONDITIONS

Vikings (Decisive)

Destroy 2/3 of the Anglo-Saxon force, measured in reduction in starting SAGA dice from 12 to 4, and have at least 1pt of Viking forces sitting on the northern edge of the battlefield at the end of the battle.

Anglo-Saxon (Decisive)

Prevent the Vikings achieving their victory conditions and kill Harald or Tostig

Minor Victory

Calculated on SAGA Victory Points.



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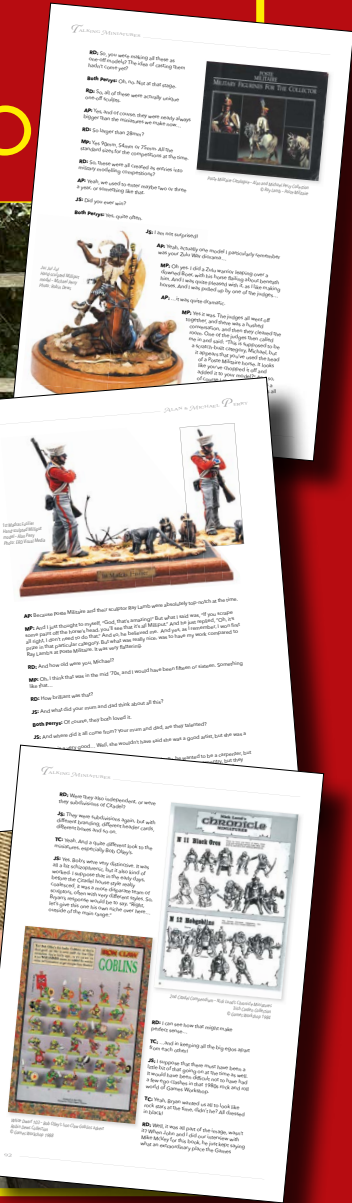
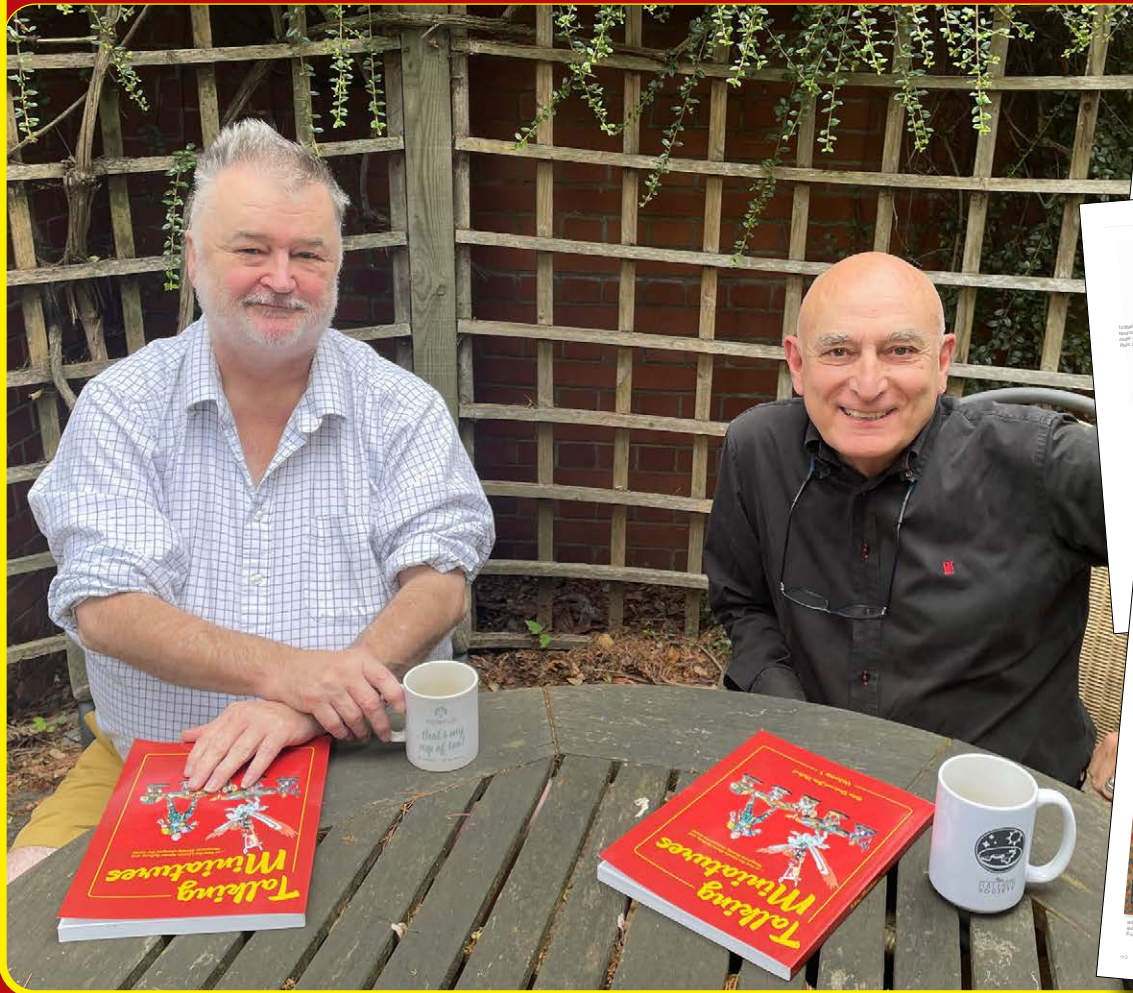


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TALKING MINIATURES

Stories from the early days of Games Workshop



Wargames Illustrated Editor Dan takes a trip across town to chat with Robin Dews and John Stallard about the new book from their joint venture Shaggy Dog Publishing: *Talking Miniatures... or how the Lincoln Model Railway and Wargaming Society changed the world.*

Talking Miniatures is a two volume collection of conversations in which Robin and John speak to 17 of their ex-co-workers from Games Workshop, sharing stories about the formative years of the company that went on to be a global tabletop gaming phenomenon.

By design *Talking Miniatures* isn't a linear history of Games Workshop, but having said that, the first question I posed to the boys did take us right back to the very beginning -

Wargames Illustrated: What was the Lincoln Model Railway and Wargaming Society?

Robin Dews: As a sub-title for the book it's slightly tongue-in-cheek, but the story behind it is that when Rick Priestley was 13 or 14 years old the guy who ran the model shop in Rick's home town of Lincoln set up a club called The Lincoln Model Railway and Wargaming Society. Upstairs at the club house, some older gentlemen would go every week and set up their model railway tracks and discuss all things 0 gauge, etc. Downstairs Rick, his friends Richard 'Hal' Halliwell, Anthony 'Ep' Epworth, Paul Elsey, John Dowman (five Lincoln lads), and others, would turn up and play wargames with miniatures. At that time they got really

into the recently published single volume version of *Lord of the Rings* and Rick and Hal were motivated to design a set of wargames rules inspired by all things Tolkien, which they called *Reaper*. They were still at school at this point and didn't have any idea how to publish a set of wargames rules, so they spoke to one Bryan Ansell who was running a company called Asgard Miniatures at the time [before going on to form Citadel Miniatures - Ed]. From that connection and those beginnings, *Warhammer* was born in 1983, followed by *40k* in 1987, and the rest, as they say, is history. So the Lincoln Model Railway and Wargaming

Society is the closest we get to the 'origin story' of, if not Games Workshop, then *Warhammer* and the genealogy that then connected all the people featured in *Talking Miniatures*.

Wi: So that's one of the stories that features in Rick's chapter of the book, right?

RD: Yes, in Rick's, and we also hear some more on that in Ep's (Antony Epworth) chapter. Ep went on to be the most prolific mould maker of miniatures in the country. He still makes the moulds and casts for Perry Miniatures.

Wi: And that really is the make-up of the book isn't it? Different 'insiders' telling stories about their time at Citadel/Games Workshop.

John Stallard: Yes, pretty much. The idea for the book came about when Robin was over at my house one day. We were outside chatting in the garden and having a giggle about various mad things that used to go on at GW, and one of us said "we ought to write this kind of stuff down you know, otherwise it will all be lost". The more we thought about it the more seriously we considered how we would go about it. So, we picked out 17 people, all of whom have now left Games Workshop and we knew would have a really interesting story to tell, and we tracked them down. We got in our cars, or (during lockdown) met up over Zoom, and had a couple of hours chatting to them, chewing the fat and cajoling them for juicy information.

RD: Many of the people we feature in the book have been interviewed before, but in those previous interviews there tends to be a degree of deference, e.g. "Mr Priestley please share your pearls of wisdom"; you don't get that in *Talking Miniatures*. Generally, it's three old mates sharing recollections and feeding off each other's memories to spark further talking points or laughs.

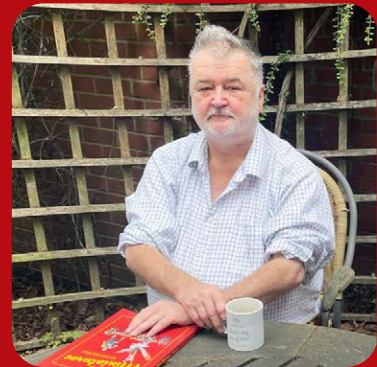
Wi: Despite having known these people for many years yourselves, did you find out things you didn't know before?

RD: Oh god yes. For example: Bob Naismith told us the iconic Space Marine backpack was modelled on the American WWI soldier's backpack (see picture, right). Here's what Bob says in the book:

The Space Marine backpack consisted of two or three smaller packs, nested on top of each other with a bedroll as the two breathing/filtration vents on the top sides. You see all this stuff comes from somewhere, just filtered through the mind of a designer.

The men behind the book

JOHN STALLARD



Manager at Games Workshop (after Citadel and Workshop had amalgamated) and ultimately, many years later, Sales Director. I left in 2007, and formed Warlord Games later that same year.

JS: I started at Citadel Miniatures straight out of college in 1980, when I was 21. I applied for the position of Quality Control Supervisor, based in Newark, Notts, which was advertised in *White Dwarf*. The then owner of Citadel, Bryan Ansell, took me on, although I never did anything that resembled being a Quality Control Supervisor! I worked in Mail Order under Rick Priestley (who had very long hair at the time, down below his waist). After a couple of years, I began running Mail Order, before moving into trade sales - Bryan said I had a posh voice which suited sales. After being on the road as a rep for a while I became Trade Sales

I've known Bob for 30 years and I'd never heard that story before! There are plenty of gems like that dotted about the books.

Wi: How much did the early Workshop and Citadel culture borrow from what had gone before in the wargaming world do you think? Were the GW designers aware of the likes of Don Featherstone and Charles Grant, for example?

JS: Citadel founder, Bryan Ansell, was certainly aware of their work, and so were Rick and Hal. All of these people would cite the 'godfathers of wargaming' amongst their influences, and Rick always says his watchwords of 'clarity, brevity, and wit' come from those early pioneers.

RD: Despite the fashion in the early '80s, Bryan had an absolute obsession with only featuring six-sided dice in *Warhammer*. He specifically said there should be no D10s, D20s, etc. in his games, and that partly came from his love of 'proper' wargames.

In his chapter, Jervis (Johnson) mentions the influences of 1960s gamers like Charles Grant. When he wrote his column in *White Dwarf* he would often say he was "channelling his inner Charles Grant".

Another lesson GW learned from the broader hobby when it came to marketing 'the Games Workshop hobby' was that everything a collector/player could do



in wargaming needed to be done within Games Workshop and the *Warhammer* worlds. Epic gaming had anyone interested in micro armour covered, *Warhammer Fantasy* or *40k* was for 28mm fans, and (later) *Inquisitor* catered for 54mm skirmish gamers.

Wi: One of the things that excited me about the books on my first flick through was the pictures - there's loads of 'em. Was that important to you from the start, or did the image content grow organically?

RD: For me, it was something that was important from the start. In fact, before we got going on the project I came over to John's and pulled out of his collection of books on the history of Airfix by Arthur Ward. I wanted to try and capture that look and feel, and that meant lots of images.

As I listened back to our recorded conversations and began my work on editing, I was constantly thinking about old issues of *White Dwarf*, mail order leaflets, or game covers which I could use to decorate the pages. Of course, we also had access to the contributors' private collections of photos and memorabilia. Tim Pollard, one of our interviewees, has the most magnificent collection of early Citadel Miniatures; several of his pieces were photographed for the book. One of Citadel's greatest figure painters Mike McVey gave us his (initial) job application rejection letter from John Blanche - something else we knew we had to picture in the book.

JS: The pictures absolutely make the books. There's nearly 500 pages of coffee table book flicking. Even if you don't read a word, you can flick through time and again saying "Got. Not got. Wanted. Sold. Lost!".

Wi: Is there any method in the split of interviewees between the two books?

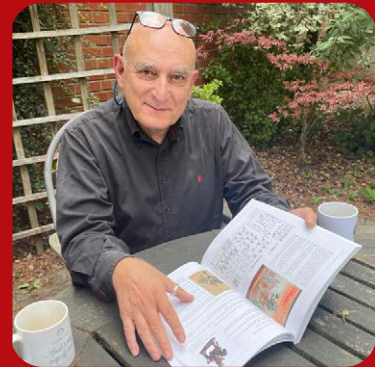
RD: We didn't spend a lot of time mulling over it to be honest, but the first volume is generally the miniature sculptors: Alan and Michael Perry, Trish Carden, and Bob Naismith; Games Designers: Jervis Johnson, Andy Chambers, and Rick; plus Tony Ackland. The second book contains what we have called "the salesmen, craftsmen and cat-herders". People like Anthony Epworth, who knows more about making metal miniatures than pretty much anyone alive, and Helen Morley, who, while not at the 'rock and roll' end of the business, was able to give us a great insight into the running of Games Workshop the business.

JS: Speaking of the less rock and roll characters, my favourite chapter in the books comes from one of the lesser-known GW staff members; Paul Robbins. He was the Factory Manager

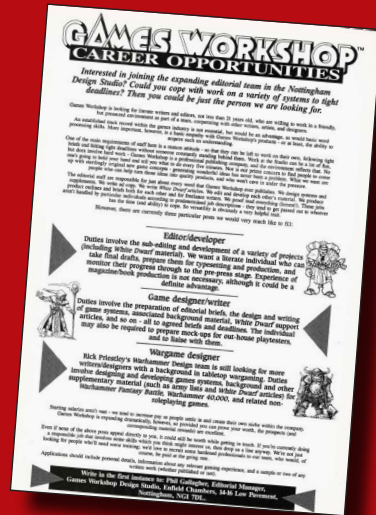
The men behind the book

ROBIN DEWS

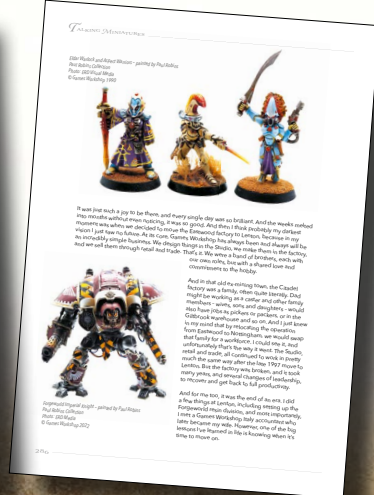
RD: Initially, my working life took me into youth work, running Youth Centres in southeast London. In 1984, I picked up a copy of *Warhammer* and started running games of that and *Dungeons & Dragons*, etc. at one of the youth clubs. I had been doing that for several year's when, in 1988, Thames TV ran a money raising 'telethon' event and the kids in my club said "lets do a sponsored 24 hour *Warhammer* game" raising money for the telethon and various charities. So, we did, and afterwards I wrote up the battle report and sent it in to *White Dwarf* magazine, it was published in issue 107. Shortly after that, I saw a job advert in *White Dwarf* for Editors/Developers (right), I applied, got the job, and, in 1989, upped sticks with my wife and children and went to work in the Design Studio at Enfield Chambers in Nottingham. After six months of doing that, Byran's number two, the then Operations Manager, Tom Kirby, asked me to organise the production floor, making sure products got out the door on time. Then in 1991, after Tom had bought the company, he said "I'd like you to sort out *White Dwarf*" which was being run quite chaotically at the time. After four years, I got the Studio Manager job, so I ran the Design Studio for the rest of the '90s until 2001. I then went on



to do other jobs for GW including setting up *Warhammer World* and running the Spanish operation from 2009 - 2012. After a year back at head office, I left in 2013.



when Games Workshop/Citadel moved to Eastwood in north Notts, and he writes very movingly about the people he worked with in the factory and the atmosphere of the place. This was during a tough time in the area, when a lot of local people had lost their jobs after the local mines had closed and they were looking for work. He talks about how, even with the greatest models in the world, for the company to be successful it needed people who were able to manufacture the products to a high standard, on time, and keep doing it seven days a week.



Wi: As John has chosen his favourite chapter, my gaze now turns on you, Robin, to do the same.

RD: [Much chin rubbing and ohing and aching ensues.] That's a really difficult one, pretty much impossible to answer, but I don't want to duck out, so I will say that the most fun chapter for me is Tony Ackland's - the great early Citadel artist. John, Rick, and I took a road trip down to Carbis Bay in Cornwall to see Tony. We spent a night in the pub drinking and chatting, and the next morning we put the tape recorder on the table in the hotel and sat back and listened to Rick and Tony talking. Those two guys were the Games Workshop Design Studio at the beginning - where *Warhammer One* came from. Rick had a large carriage typewriter, typing text on A3 sheets of paper and leaving gaps in the pages. He would then hand the sheets over to Tony who would fill in the gaps with line drawn illustrations.

It was just great hearing those guys ramble on, taking the conversation in all different directions. Tony told one tale of how he once did a concept drawing of a dragon, which was passed on to the Perrys to make the model. Tony had added a quick bit of crosshatching to the sketch, just to give it some depth. When he saw the finished dragon model - it had crosshatched scales! The Perrys claimed they thought that was what he wanted, Tony claimed they were being "cheeky little gits".

Wi: Of course, some of the stories from that time are now sadly lost before anyone has had the chance to put them down in print. We've already lost an original members of the Lincoln Model Railway and Wargaming Society and *Warhammer* writer in Richard Halliwell. Was that something you were conscious of when you started compiling all these stories and conversations?



JS: It was at the forefront of our minds when we set out to write the book five years ago, to be honest. Near the front of the book there is a dedication to those we have 'lost in service', and we didn't want to miss out on any more of these great tales.

Wi: It's a great book fellas, and I for one - someone who was raised on a diet of Citadel figures, Games Workshop games, and the people behind them - really appreciate the simple fact that someone has brought all these conversations together, and in such an easily accessible format.

While I have you here John... when you're not dreaming of days of yore, you are of course busy running Warlord Games, and I can't let you go without asking you a little about the future as well as the past. The Hornby stake in Warlord Games - does that speak of exciting times ahead?

JS: Yes, it's exciting news. Hornby and I go back a long way. We've been chatting to each other for about 25 years on and off, going back to my Games Workshop days funnily enough.

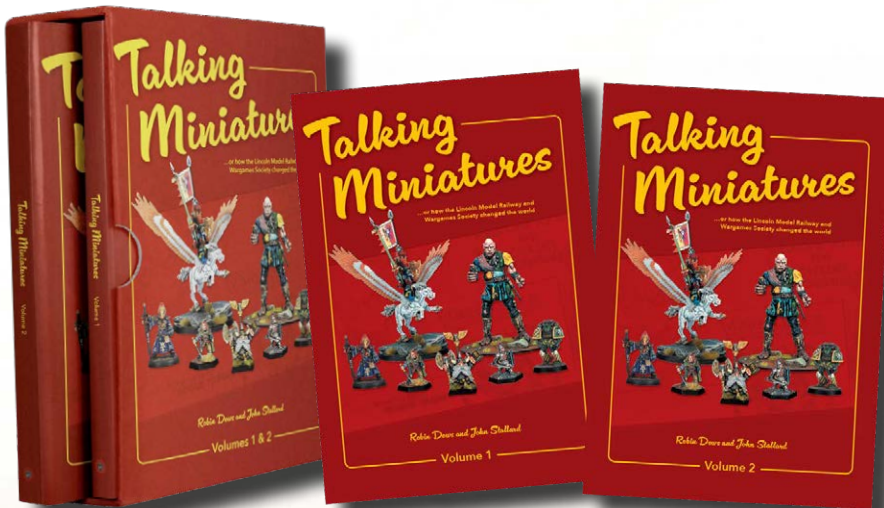
I usually have a rule that anyone is allowed to take a shot at me if I use the word 'synergy', but unfortunately it is appropriate in this case - there is a lot of synergy between what Warlord and Hornby do - and there are areas where our markets overlap and where we can work together going forward. They approached us about six months

ago and said they would like to make the relationship a little more formal, and as of mid-July they now own 25% of Warlord Games. For us, it means stability. Hornby have big financial backers and they will bring that clout to backing Warlord Games as well. There are clearly things that we can do for them and that they can do for us, what those things are still being worked on, but it's clearly very exciting times.

Wi: And what about the future of Shaggy Dog Publishing, Robin? Are there any more books up your sleeve?

RD: To be honest I don't know. We set up the company (bearing in mind that's just myself and John!) with a view of getting *Talking Miniatures* published. But if we get good feedback and there is an appetite for more books based around subjects relating to the hobby, then there may be more to come. We'll see.

Wi: Thanks again fellas, and good luck with it.



FROM THE VAULT

MORE WORKSHOP NOSTALGIA IN THE Wi VAULT

WiPrime members should check out our interview with Citadel founder Bryan Ansell in Wi302 to learn more about the early days of Games Workshop.

TOUGH GUT



Dom Sore guides us through the new *Bolt Action Campaign Italy* book and highlights some of the tasty Italian seasoning it will sprinkle into your gaming.

The latest addition to the *Bolt Action* library is a Campaign book - *Italy: Tough Gut* - following on from *Italy: Soft Underbelly* in what will eventually be a three-part series detailing the Italy campaign from start to finish.

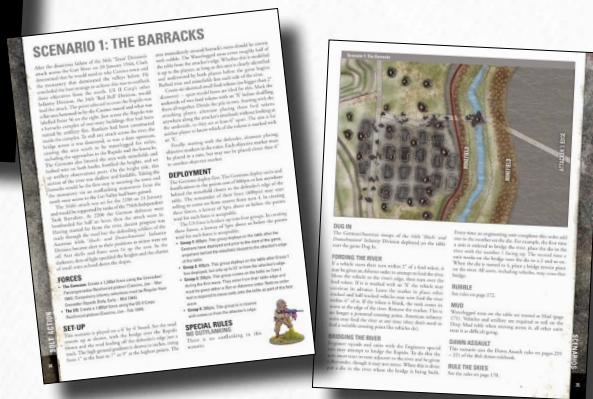
This second book in the trilogy follows the well-trodden path *Bolt Action's* other supplements have taken, marching the reader through a concise history, a series of scenarios, details of new units, and theatre selectors, plus an appendix of general rules for your games. At 176 pages, there is a lot to digest, and the focus is the first five months of 1944, after the initial landings on mainland Italy. The Allied advance slowed to a crawl before it stopped in front of Monte Cassino, and finished with the capture of Rome - a period of the war with much potential on the tabletop.

There's a brief introduction, then a history section that provides a synopsis of events. This will be a useful primer to any gamers less familiar with the campaign, and starts with the initial Italy landings from Sicily to the Gustav Line. After that comes the rundown of the battle to break through that line, the massif of Monte Cassino and the effort to take it, as well as the Anzio landings.



INTO THE SCENARIOS

With the history polished off, the meat of the *Tough Gut* presents itself in the form of ten scenarios. All come in the standard *Bolt Action* format, but none are straightforward games pitched for competitive play; these are more intriguing - and sometimes deliberately unbalanced - battles designed to represent actions from the history. It's also worth noting that most of these scenarios last a good bit longer than the game's standard six turns.



Scenario one - The Barracks - is 14 turns long and packed with special rules. It pits waves of the US II Corps Reinforced platoon against a fortified Grenadier/Panzergrenadier Reinforced platoon. The US can attempt to bridge the river Rapido with their engineers, or just risk fording it with their vehicles.

Above: Canadian infantry with Churchill tank support assault the German fortifications.

German paratroopers defend the Continental Hotel with dogged determination.



Battle for the Thumb (Scenario two) could go very badly for either player if they aren't careful. Keeping both objectives under control will be tough for the British defender, as the Axis player can win the game by holding just one objective. The random game length here means that players won't know quite when the battle will end; they must do their best to maintain a strong defence for as long as it takes. The German player will need two Nashorns in their collection, as one advances from each side of the attacker deployment zones in this scenario.

The Gates of Hell scenario is the German attempt to push the Anzio landings back into the sea. Hard-pressed Allied forces face a seemingly endless wave of Germans in this one. Perhaps don't destroy the infantry units if you can avoid it, as they can't then come back onto the table!

There's room within these scenarios for a good range of forces. New Zealanders enter the fray as an all-Māori force in a take-and-hold mission at Cassino Railway Station, while Indian Infantry Sections and Veteran Infantry Sections must defend Castle Hill in brutal fighting

on the slopes of the Cassino Massif. There's lots of variety here and, although the central scenarios focus on the fighting for the Massif, the battles feel diverse. This is in part because the undulating ground (a modelling project for which the book suggests some simple solutions) creates varying tactical challenges, but also because of the types of missions. These include a night raid, a medieval siege-type assault on Castle Hill, battling over nightmarishly unstable carpet-bombed ground on the approach to the Continental Hotel, and special rules for vehicles potentially encountering disaster on the slopes of the Cassino Massif.

After the capture of Cassino comes the first attack there: an assault on the Hitler Line by the French Canadians of 22e Regiment. They have a two-to-one advantage, but face the threat of two free German snipers hiding in the treetops of the wood. The Canadians get three free Churchill tanks to aid their advance, while the Germans' free Hornisse will do some tank-hunting in response. As you can see from this list, the games in *Tough Gut* generally call for quite specific selections of figures, and plenty of them; this is not a book for newcomers to the game!

Things finish with the breakout from Anzio, and the first non-German Axis force appears in the form of the Italians of the RSI. There are far fewer special rules for this one - perhaps the writers ran out of steam at the end!

The scenarios will make for interesting friendly games, as both sides strive to improve on the historical results presented. It's exciting that various battles are pitched as ideal multiplayer battles; this will add another dimension to scenarios that are already well thought out and translate the historical situations to the tabletop effectively. Not everything is perfect, though. There are some details

COME ONE, COME ALL!

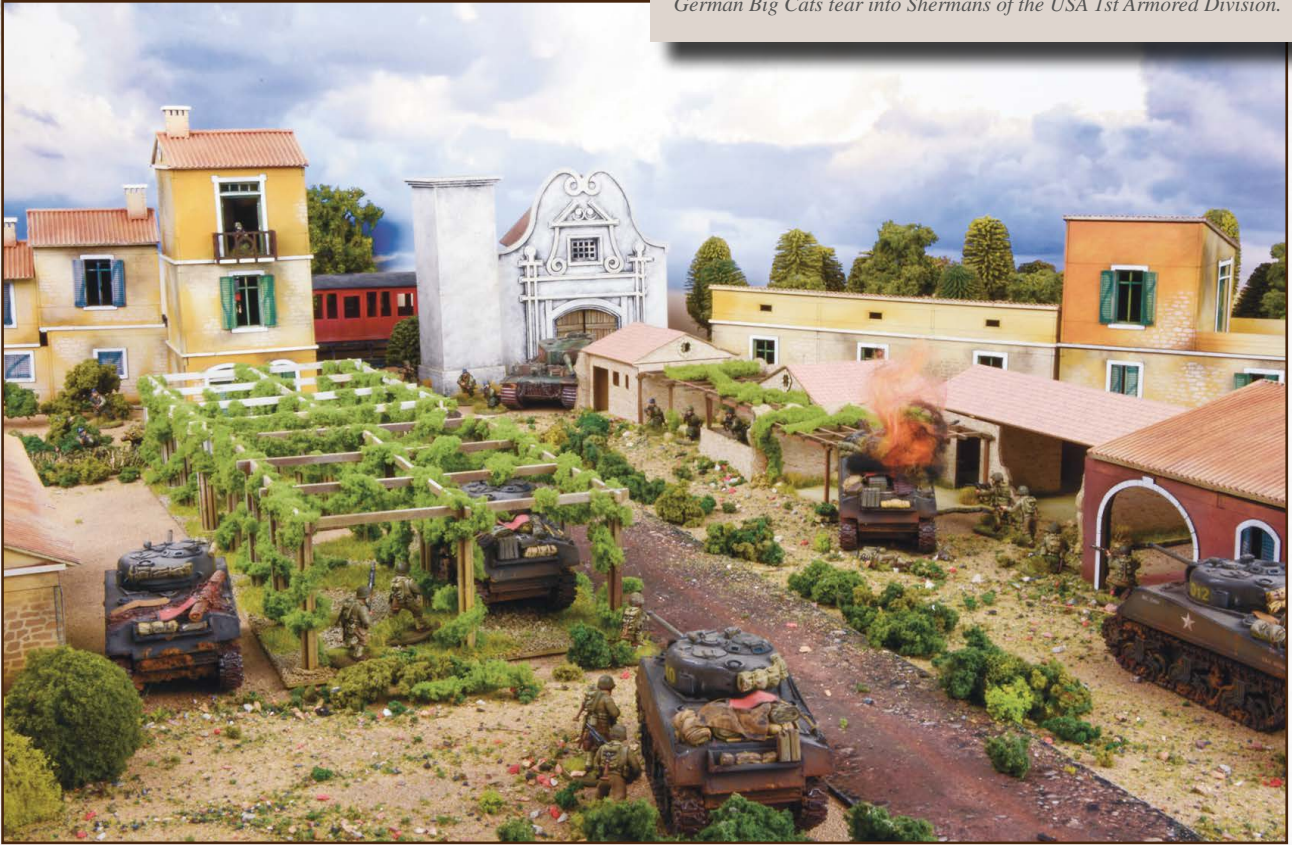
Most of the scenarios split the forces in directed ways, and have them entering the battle from multiple deployment points or in waves. This is highlighted as something that makes them ideal for multiplayer games, with box outs for the scenarios detailing how to bring in extra players. As the battles are generally large, this seems like a good idea; it will certainly make it more likely that you'll be able to scrounge together the required troops. Playing scenarios with groups of players (generally up to five or so people) requires only minor tweaks, often little more than having each player use a specific colour of dice.

Bringing in different players always adds extra friction, as teams attempt to combine battleplans and work out who should attack where, especially when there is a choice of equally-threatening targets. In a world of ever-increasing solo-play rules, it's intriguing that *Tough Gut* highlights the fun of larger, more communal games, but it's certainly not a bad thing!

TOP SECRET

MULTIPLAYER OPTION

This scenario can be played in a one-on-one or with up to five players (two German and three British players). If played with more than two players, it is highly recommended that different coloured dice be used each player's force (see forces). In one-on-one games, the use of different coloured dice for each force is optional but still recommended. The Order dice of forces that are in reserve that can only be used after a certain turn are kept out of the bag until the start of the turn they are available.



missing, starting with the very first scenario - the winner is the player controlling the most objectives, but you are not told how many to place to begin with; I would go with five. There are a few too many special rules floating about for my taste, and I fear things will be forgotten in the heat of battle. Nevertheless, they all seem fun to play.

UPPING THE OPTIONS

Taking up a large chunk of the book are the new toys for the various combatants. I can't possibly list every exciting option from these 40-plus pages, but I'll do my best to take you on a whistle-stop tour.

BRITISH AND COMMONWEALTH

Nine new units and two special characters.

There's only one new vehicle here, in the form of the Staghound MkII (CS), which was a New Zealand adaption mounting a light howitzer. Of the two special characters, it is probably Corporal

Wojtek that stands out above the others, quite literally; he is a bear, an actual bear. He was present at Monte Cassino and carried ammunition to the artillery. In the game, he helps artillery pieces fire more effectively while providing a morale boost to friendly units.



Wojtek, the Bear special miniature.

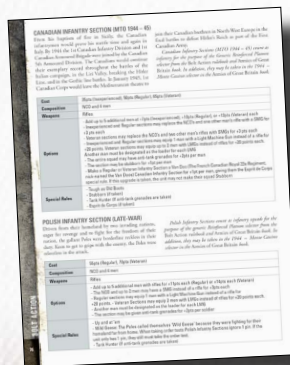
BRITISH AND COMMONWEALTH NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Within the details of new units, there is a small box-out about National Characteristics that British and Commonwealth players (and their opponents) won't want to miss; it brings quite the change. Your force, if chosen from this book, will not get the standard national rules; rather, they have rules assigned to them from profiles here. These changes might benefit some options and hinder others. The Indian Infantry section gets a free Mountain Warriors rule, allowing them to move quickly through rough terrain and climb otherwise impassable terrain. On the flipside, the Gurkha section here is 'worse' than the standard unit entry, although it can take Mountain Warriors.

TOP SECRET

NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

As a rule, all British, Commonwealth, and British supported armies chosen from this book do not benefit from the normal national characteristics, nor do any individual units chosen from this book as part of other armies. This is because each unit has individual special rules as outlined below. See page 118 for more details.



US AND FREE FRENCH

Twelve new units and two special characters.

A FEC Officer is included, so you can create your Free French platoon and bring their famed *elan* to the tabletop. He is accompanied by five different Free French units. Oddly, those French units are for use with United States platoons only. They are not legitimate for the Free French list released earlier, which is a quirk that I cannot quite get my head around.

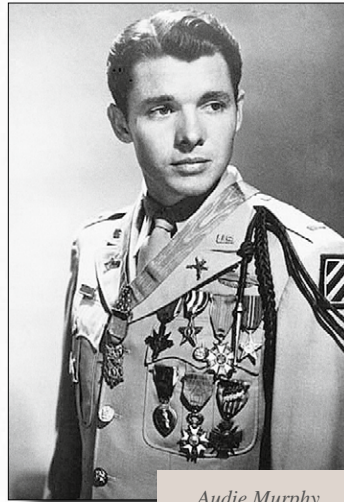
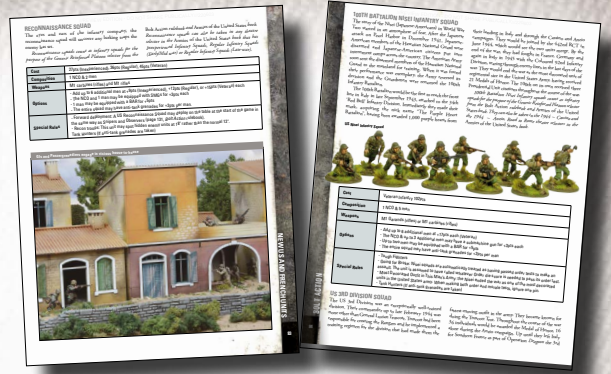
Other options include a sneaky Recon Squad that brings forward deployment and spotting, and a Nisei (Japanese American) squad that ignore a pin when making order and morale tests, and will always be able to assault. There is also an FSSF squad that differs from the one in the *Soft Underbelly* book. Instead of 'Specialist Training' that allows one member act like a medic, they get a 'Death cards' special rule that makes it harder for them to be assaulted.

Both US characters deserve a mention, starting with Staff Sergeant Audie Murphy, the most decorated American soldier of World War Two who went on to become a film star. His is a tale that is hard to believe, to the extent that many people thought it a work of fiction. You can arm his *Bolt Action* character with a MG42 if you wish; he is a beefy unit that may just be worth the points expense. The other character is PFC William James Johnston Sr, who also likes to use a machine gun, can't be broken, and must be wounded twice; he is one tough cookie!

ALLIED ITALIANS

Five new units and a special character.

Completing the Allies' options are an Italian officer (who can be upgraded to a Paracadutisti, Alpini, or Bersaglieri officer), Paracadutisti Section, Infantry, Alpini, and Bersaglieri squads. These are to be used with the *Armies of Italy* book, so think of them as additions rather than replacements. Their character is Genral Utili, who helped forge the initial CIL troops into a reasonably effective force that did enough to persuade the British to re-arm them



Audie Murphy.

rather than relying on their original Italian weaponry. He will ensure troops are less likely to desert, as they'll only dare to scarper on a 1 rather than a 1 or 2.

AXIS ITALIANS

Four new units and a special character.

An HQ plus a Paracadutisti squad, Paracadutisti MMG, and Decima Mas Naval Infantry Section make up the Axis options. The Decima Mas section is not the underwater specialists of earlier war actions, but a green force of troops who

gradually became better, if not quite the elite unit their predecessors were. Capitano Sala is the RSI character here, and he causes Paracadutisti units within his command radius to become fanatics, as well as providing a bonus to troops with anti-tank weapons.

GERMANY

Sixteen new units and three special characters.

A hefty lot for the Germans includes an Italian Waffen SS squad that isn't part of the RSI. There is a Fallschirmjager officer, Berlin-Spandau Lehr Pioneer Assault Squad (possibly the unit with the longest name in the game), Spahtrupp, Gewehr 43 sniper, and the mechanically unreliable Tiger I and Elefant. The new sniper is very intriguing; it gets the US Fire and Manoeuvre rule, plus a chance of a second shot at their initial target.



Paratroopers of Italian division 'Nembo' support their German allies.



German Elephant Tank Destroyer.

PLASTIC ALPINI

New plastic Alpini support this book's release, and come in a box set of 30 figures on six identical frames. The central part of the frame contains identical torsos to the existing Italian frame, but the outer elements are all updated with Alpini-specific options for headgear and equipment. Alpine caps and M33 helmets are included, along with the distinctive raven feathers that go on them. Be warned - you must attach these rather small extras individually. This will please keen kitbashers, but slow down anyone wanting to assemble some troops quickly. There are plentiful weapon options with M91/41 rifle, M91/38 Carcano Cavalry Carbine, M38A Beretta SMG, M38 Carcano carbine, M1934 9mm Beretta pistol, Breda M30 LMG, and combat knives.

It's great to see some of the less obvious troop choices available in lightweight plastic; it is a sign that the *Bolt Action* range is really coming of age as more 'specialist' troops get the multi-part treatment.

YouTube

Check out the *Wargames Illustrated* YouTube channel for a close look at these, and other, new *Bolt Action* models.



YOU CAN'T PLEASE EVERYONE

I know that some competitive players are not overly happy with the contents of this book. A lot of the complaints stem from combatants not getting their own theatre or army lists, and not getting any new 'supertoys' to lead them to victory. This especially seems to relate to the Italians, Poles, and Free French.

For the Italians, their main units already exist elsewhere; repeating them here would be simply taking up pages. The Poles were British-armed, -trained, and -organised, as well as being part of the British Army entirely; they did not operate independently, and from a distance you wouldn't know they weren't British. The same can be said for the Free French, albeit US rather than British, although they did have some French kit. Perhaps the 'problems' are being blown a little out of proportion by a vocal minority.

NEW THEATRE SELECTORS

After units come theatre selectors. It's difficult to get into detail with these, as they are plentiful, and there's only so much space in short overview. Some that caught my eye include:

- The Revenge Force Reinforced Tank Platoon is a bit of an oddity, with limited vehicle choices to represent this mixed force of New Zealand, British, Indian, and United States tankers. It includes some infantry HQ units that use jeeps to get around, which should add a little spice and figure variation!
- The French Expeditionary Corps theatre selector allows you to field the French troops in the area at the time.
- Allied and RSI Italian selectors: the RSI one allows German troops to be mixed in, including the Nebelwerfer, which makes for an interesting modelling opportunity.

The book ends with an appendix that is packed with all the useful details we've come to expect as *Bolt Action* players, and it will make your in-game referencing easier.

NEW 88MM FLAK GUNS

There are always plenty of new miniature releases on the way from Warlord, but they're also adding to existing ones. There's a 'standard' version of the 8.8cm Flak 37 in the *Bolt Action* range for your German forces to train on enemy armour, but now there are two variants of the crew.

The plastic 88mm (which plays a part in various battles in this Campaign book) remains the same, but each of the new sets gets a brand new metal crew - Winter Heer or Waffen-SS. Each crew of seven features varied figures in different poses and uniforms; this is great news for anyone who wants to add more of these 'anti-everything' weapons to their armies. Given the ubiquitous nature of the 8.8cm Flak 37, it will make an excellent addition to your Italy-themed force - or pretty much any other army you have on the go.



German Heer 88mm Flak 37 (Winter).



Waffen-SS 88mm Flak 37.

CONCLUSION

Whether you find this book useful will depend on the kind of player you are. If you enjoy playing through scenarios while learning a little bit of the history, then you will certainly find a lot of value in *Tough Gut*. There is variety, challenge, and scale to the scenarios; these bring a very different dimension to games, compared to the standard missions.

The standout new unit is probably the German Gewehr 43 sniper; for an extra five points you get a much more mobile and potentially deadly option. Non-competitive players will enjoy the range of new options and their functions within the scenarios here.

There are a lot of special rules amongst the various units, so good luck keeping up with that, at first! You can't simply use this book with the main rules and crack on, but the Appendix will make it easier to settle in-game debates. The special rules presented do not seem to have followed the power creep of previous books, which is to be applauded. If the Italian campaign is your thing, then this is certainly an essential addition to your collection.



Fallschirmjäger redeploy under the cover of thick fog.

SCRATCH-BUILDING TERRAIN FOR

THE DOOMED



Ana Polanščak has explained how she built a Warband and Horror in previous articles. In this final piece of her *The Doomed* trilogy she makes some fantastic hand-crafted terrain, suitable for many games or genres.

The Doomed's rules suggest a board two or three feet long, densely packed with terrain pieces to create obstacles to movement and provide cover. The setting of the game combines sci-fi and low fantasy: abandoned hi-tech and futuristic weaponry meets steel armour and swords of ragged feudal societies. With that in mind, I had a few different ideas for environments that could be found in such a world, and be represented as a miniature battlefield:

- A humble village with a scattering of tech poking from its stone huts and barns, and tractors used alongside farm animals.
- An overgrown industrial facility, rusting away as it is reclaimed by the wilderness.
- A wrecked spaceship, looted for building material and converted into a shanty town.

Each of these examples is in some way evocative of the fusion of medieval and spacefaring that characterises the setting. I eventually elected to make a derelict industrial complex, once used for the exploitation of the planet's resources, but left behind to decay.

MULTIPURPOSE PIECES FROM TRASH

Since I don't have unlimited storage space for terrain, I like to build and collect scenery that I can reuse for multiple game systems. My gaming board idea for *The Doomed* combines forest scenery with industrial and sci-fi structures. I already have plenty of vegetation in my collection from all the fantasy skirmish games I play, so my focus here was on building and painting industrial ruins. In addition to *The Doomed*, this kind of scenery will be useful for anything sci-fi or post-apocalyptic I want to play in the future.

When building medieval structures, my go-to materials are foam, plaster, and balsawood. For natural features like rocks and vegetation, I combine foam, tree bark, and roots with air-drying clay sculpted to bind them and hide joins. Modern and sci-fi structures with lots of smooth surfaces and regular geometry require their own building materials; sheet styrene/plasticard is excellent, but plastic trash and toys come in extremely handy, too.

I scour flea markets and shops for toys and assorted household items with interesting shapes or textures. Your household passively generates plastic waste, too; one only needs to start examining objects through the tabletop modeller's lens before recycling them into many wonderful options. I do occasionally find myself purchasing a product just because its container will be great terrain material, though force yourself to be selective, since storage space is always a factor. Be a collector of materials, not a garbage hoarder!

Make sure everything is thoroughly cleaned before stashing it away. It's good to take inventory every once in a while and throw away the stuff you don't find a use for. Keeping things organised is a must; what use is having something if you don't even remember it's there, or can't find it in a massive pile of miscellany?

THE TWO TOWERS ON A BUDGET

This article documents the building and painting of two terrain pieces: a drilling machine with pipes, and a comms tower. When building industrial or sci-fi structures, I usually have only a vague idea what I want to make. Most of the planning process is sitting down with my collection of trash and test-fitting things until I hit gold. For the main structure, it's important to use firmer plastic and card, which make the terrain piece sturdy enough to last during gaming. If the structure is easily bent or dented it will be battered and scratched after only a few games. If necessary, it can be reinforced with chunks of styrene foam underneath.

My comms tower's main structure is the handle of a plastic wand, while the drill used to be a water pistol. There will likely be some cutting involved in a build and you will find that some plastics are harder to cut through than others. At times, one can get away with using a simple hobby knife, but often a hand saw or electric saw is the safest and cleanest solution. I used a hand saw to remove the parts of the water pistol I wouldn't need (1). The cut was made at an angle so the machine will be slightly crooked, adding to its derelict appearance.

Once I have what I need and know how it will be put together, I sand the surfaces with a fine sanding pad or sandpaper to distress them lightly (2). This helps glue and paint to adhere to them, and skipping this step is likely to lead to much frustration further down the line. If you want to be extra sure, try cleaning the parts with isopropyl alcohol to remove any greasy fingerprints or other grime.



COLLECTING A SCI-FI TERRAIN CONSTRUCTION KIT

- Food packaging: noodle cups, yoghurt containers, beverage cans, bottles, bottle caps, and other assorted packaging (based on shape and texture) are ideal for grander shapes or intermediate details.
- Old electronics: mouse and keyboard parts, circuit boards, assorted wires, tape players, electric kettle parts, and more will add technological detailing.
- Office supplies: pens, highlighters, and sharpeners come in interesting shapes and make excellent chimneys, pipes, and surface details.
- Children's toys: Nerf and water guns of various sizes, robots, vehicles, action figure weapons, and so much more.



- Perfect pipes: novelty drinking straws and children's toys that look like tiny modular pipes can be found in different sizes to add variety to fuel and cooling pipes.
- Keep an open mind: anything flimsy that you break could be used or contain parts. Covid testing kits can be painted up to look like a piece of a hi-tech spaceship, for example!



3



After that, I glue the components together with superglue and a hot glue gun (3). Some parts are better left separate for easier painting, more convenient storage, or for the sake of modularity. They may or may not be permanently attached at a later stage.

Once the main structure is built, it's time to add small details. On industrial terrain, it's always nice to see rivets. I usually glue tiny flat back rhinestones with PVA to simulate rivets. One can measure and mark to make sure they are evenly spaced, but I normally just approximate and it looks regular enough. Loose wires and techy greebles complete the build.

Greebling is the process of adding cosmetic detailing on the surface of an object to make it appear more complex, and is a common feature in sci-fi designs. It is covered in more detail in my previous article about crafting a mechanical Horror figure [See *Wi427 - Ed*].

A base that helps hold the structure together and provides additional stability is worth considering. My industrial builds have bases made of card, which only slightly extends from the bottom of the structure. Since card is flimsy and flat, I loop hot glue all over it to provide volume and integrity. Once that layer of hot glue sets, I texture it with PVA and sand. With a primer coat the terrain already looks far more cohesive.



TOOL TIP

A wax-tipped pencil is an essential tool for placing lots of rivets. The tip is 'tacky' and easily picks up tiny objects like rhinestones to be placed with precision. On the other end of my wax pencil, I have a metal tip, which I use to pick up a drop of PVA glue and dot onto the terrain before the rhinestones. Having both utensils on the same tool is convenient and fast; I can just flip it and carry on.



MESSY PAINTING

Painting heavily-weathered, abandoned machinery can be a loose, messy, and relaxed process. After spraying or airbrushing a basecoat on, it's all about building up the rust and grime. There are tons of products on the market these days: acrylic, enamel, oil, and other specialist weathering products. One can meticulously render highly realistic effects, or achieve a good-looking approximation at speed. The former makes sense for fancy dioramas, but when painting my terrain, I lean heavily towards the latter. I normally paint several pieces at once, which increases the speed and makes for more harmonious finishes.

Rusty surfaces

When dealing with large surfaces, where visible brush strokes are not welcome, sponges and an airbrush are your friends. Airbrushing is the perfect way to create a smooth and even surface, while sponge application will create a slight texture and is more suited to older and run-down terrain. The latter was my goal here, and I used just one of my various rust recipes to cover the terrain. Treat this as a starting point, and experiment to find your own preferences.



1. Sponge on your basecoat by dabbing with an off-white. Cheaper craft paints will do, and the paint does not need to be thinned; texture is welcome.



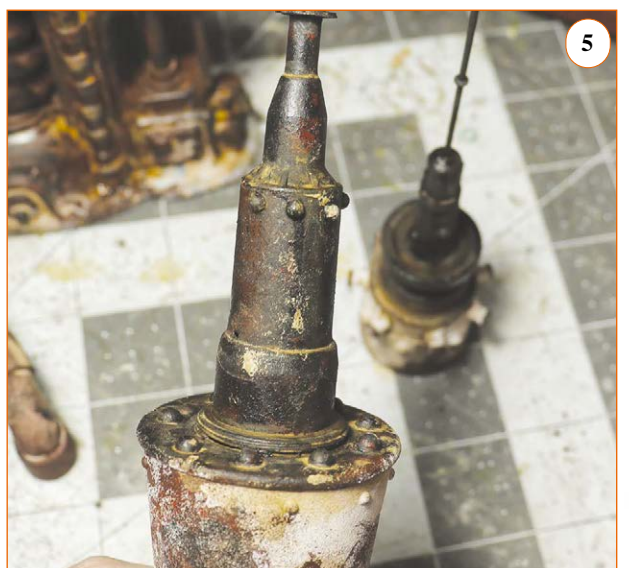
2. Generously apply burnt umber with a sponge, in large uneven patches.



3. Repeat the sponging, but apply smaller patches of different browns and black.



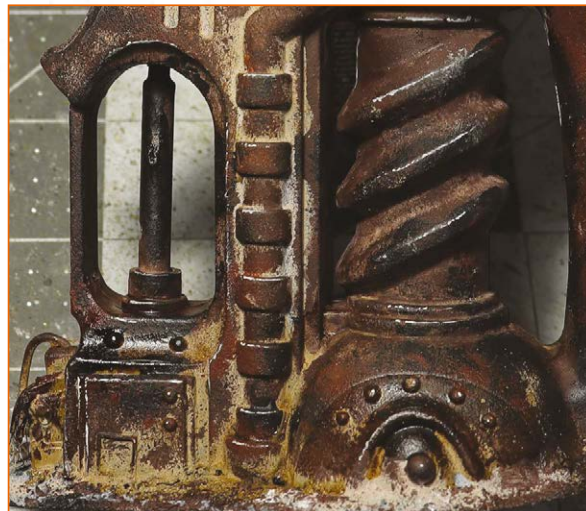
4. Washes of rust and grime colours should be concentrated in the recesses. Vertical streaks are good, too, and using oil paints can allow for a longer time to manipulate the streaking on the model.



5. Rust and/or yellow pigment powders can be thinned with water to flow into the recesses.



6

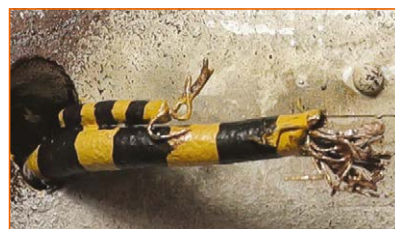
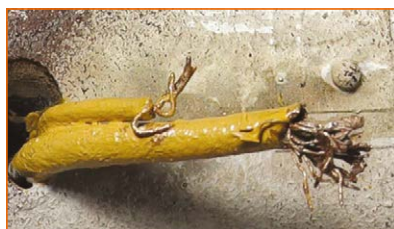


6. Bright ivory highlights pick out a few edges and details for final contrast. On the pictures above you can see before (left) and after (right) the final ivory highlights.

Detailing cables

With the big rusty job done, it's time to give attention to small details like broken wires and cables. I picked a black-and-yellow striped pattern for them, which will not be too obvious and contrasting, but will add a bit of interest.

Detail was more important here, so a finer brush was used to paint the cable yellow before I carefully freehanded black stripes on top. The exposed wire at the cable's ends was painted a copper colour, and the entire cable was grimed up with a brown wash.



Finishing things up

The bases were left for last. It's a small area, but it can be painted and flocked to match your table and blend in. In my case, I wanted to keep it as neutral as possible; I intend to use this terrain on a yellow sand board as much as on a green mossy one, so I opted for a slightly greenish mud colour, which won't stand out on any table.

As a final touch, it's advisable to protect the paintjob with a coat of clear matt or satin varnish.





A Horror stalks through the grim terrain, which has been accentuated with trees from Ana's collection.

CONCLUSION

Making your own scenery from scratch is cheap, creative, and immensely satisfying. Terrain kits, 3D-printed, and pre-made terrain have their own merits, but I'm most proud to show off and play on my original creations. Now I'm equipped to throw a game of *The Doomed* in style!



Distracted by the lesser foe ahead, this unfortunate soul looks to be truly Doomed!

PATRON CLASS TRIREMES



Ricard Fortun revisits *Thalassa's* ancient naval battles with rules for a new class of ship that brings the divine powers to the tabletop.

Since we started building on the idea of *Thalassa* as a naval skirmish game, sculptor Daniel and I knew that we wanted eventually to go beyond the purely historical. With work complete on models for Triremes and Penteconters (which have the odd element of artistic or technical license taken, but are largely based in history), and the standard rules available [you can still order copies of *Thalassa* at *Wargames Illustrated - Ed*], the time had come to create more elaborate designs inspired by the rich culture of classical myth.

As in the true classical history, the poles of the Hellas region show great respect for their Olympian gods, erecting temples, squares, and oracles to honour them. In our alternative classical world, this display of fervour and celebration of the gods extends to the fleets; which are often joined by extremely ornate ships epitomising the different divine powers. The Patron war galleys in this class are authentic floating temples that display not only the

magnificence of the gods they represent, but also the power and wealth of the nations that can afford to charter them.

THE PATRON CLASS SHIPS

While some nations, like Athens or Aegina, can afford to maintain a permanent fleet to patrol their coastal waters, or to launch continuous skirmishes to keep their enemies and colonies in check, many of the nations that make up Hellas do not have a permanently active navy. They only charter ships to form their fleets if they need to defend their national interests, or must build alliances with other nations in the region against common enemies. When these alliances become long-term, they are known as Leagues.

The ships required during these Leagues are commissioned to be manufactured in specialised shipyards belonging to nations that, coincidentally, tend to remain neutral in the conflicts. In fact, since most military campaigns are prepared and resolved in the equivalent months between April and August (after the bad winter weather and just before the harvests), these 'impartial' shipyards usually keep a stock of ships ready to be acquired when needed.

To ensure that their crews and oarsmen remain fit and ready, many nations build or contract the construction of flagships representative of their societies; the ships are often dedicated to the most prominent patron gods. These Patron Ships are designed to evoke the position, history, and power of the gods they honour in their form and imagery. The Patron Ships are used to conduct drills, and provide training for the citizens who must serve in the fleet during times of war.

Each nation may have one or more of these Patron Ships, and in times of peace, they are used to pay tribute to the gods they represent during festivities.

The Patron Ships are a valued asset in any nation's fleet, not only as a 'school ship', but also in their appreciable value; only the finest materials are used, and the ships' financial and symbolic significance to their communities is immeasurable. For this reason, it is very rare that even one of these ships is commissioned for battle, let alone more than one chartered to serve in a particular campaign. When multiple Patron Ships set sail to war, it is truly a time to be recorded in legend.

ZEUS

PATRON MAIN SHIP

The Zeus is the most important Patron Ship of any Polis. It is the representation of the father of the Olympian gods at the front of the fleet, and therefore has absolute relevance as a sacred symbol as well as a martial one. The Zeus is the command centre of the Navarch, who is also often the highest naval authority of the state.

The Triremes destined to represent the tutelage of Zeus are usually immensely ornate, and their most relevant characteristic is their powerful battering ram, whose mass requires the structure of the entire ship to be reinforced and built with the finest, lightest, and strongest materials. It is very common for the Zeus to endow himself with a temple or a sacred altar dedicated to the Father of the Gods in which oracles and augurs often guide the Navarch and advise him during the campaign.

During the closure ceremony of the Olympian funerals, the oarsmen of the Zeus are chosen from among the champions of the Poleis who will contribute to the construction of the ship, and who must serve the Trireme for no fewer than three Olympic cycles (12 years).

THALASSA: MYTH

When playing *Thalassa: Myth*, the following rules apply to the Zeus, increasing the cost of the ship by +45 recruitment points.

⚡ OF LIGHTNING: Instead of a regular *Captain's Order*, the Zeus can project a lightning bolt against a target ship within a clear line of sight.

Cast (7+)

Play: Place one Blessing token (☀️) next to the target ship and roll 1D10. If the cast succeeds, the ship receives one Blaze token (🔥) with the *Shattering* special rule.

Shattering: After resolving any other effects, roll 1D10. On a result of 6+, the ship loses 1 structure point that cannot be saved with a normal armour save, but can otherwise be allocated to an engine of war, as normal.

You can download these profile cards on the *Wargames Illustrated* website. Just search for 'Thalassa'.

Wargamesillustrated.net

POSEIDON

PATRON MAIN SHIP

After the overthrow of the Titan Cronus, the world was divided into three parts, with each under the custody and rule of one of the three brothers: Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades. While Zeus took control of the heavens, including the rule of the Olympus, for Poseidon was the domain of the seas, the oceans, and all the land's wild waters that are often represented by the image of the sacred hypos (the horse).

Poseidon and Hades are amongst the most powerful gods in the Olympus, second only to their younger brother Zeus. As such the cult and veneration of Poseidon is almost as powerful and widespread as that of his other two brothers. The ships dedicated to Poseidon are undoubtedly the most seaworthy, capable of reaching the greatest speed, making them excellent warships. But, without a doubt, the most relevant feature they all display is their mighty trident-shaped bronze ram, capable of piercing the hulls of the most robust ships.

Like all Patron Class Ships that go to war, they are fully manned by the expert Olympian Oarsmen, chosen during the Olympic Games from among the best athletes - in particular those dedicated to Poseidon and the aquatic trials of the funeral games.

THALASSA: MYTH

When playing *Thalassa: Myth*, the following rules apply to the Poseidon, increasing the cost of the ship by +35 recruitment points.

THE HAND OF POSEIDON: Instead of a regular *Captain's Order*, the Poseidon can summon the hand of the god of the seas to move itself or another friendly ship without the need of sails or oars.

Cast (7+)

Play: Place one Blessing token (☀️) next to the Poseidon or a friendly ship anywhere on the table, and roll 1D10 to attempt casting the power. If the cast succeeds, the player may pick up the ship and place it anywhere within 6" of its current position, measuring from its mainmast and facing in any direction. The model of the ship must fit entirely on its new position, but may suffer a collision as normal if it touches an element of scenery or another ship.

DENOMINATION	MOVEMENT	MASS	STRUCTURE	HULL			ARMOUR SAVE	GOV
				FRONT	SIDE	BACK		
'ZEUS' Hellenic Trireme	3"	7 (9)	4	7	7	6	6+	5

Might of Zeus - The mighty ram attached to the bow of the *Zeus* adds +2 to the Mass (already included on the profile). Like regular rams, the reinforced structure of the bow needed to hold the heavy bronze generates a +1 bonus to any Armour saves made against impacts received on the Front Hull.

Foredeck Slots (1) - The *Zeus* can select up to one foredeck upgrade from those available to Triremes.

Crew Slots (3) - The *Zeus* is manned by three *Olympian Oarsmen* crew stands, which can be upgraded with any of the options available from the fleet selector list of the corresponding nation.

CREW	RESILIENCE	ARMOUR SAVE	AD/MOD	SD/MOD	RANGE
Olympian Oarsmen	3	8+	3/-1	-/-	-

NOTES



Mastery Level: Veteran (2+)

Only the most veteran crew is worthy to man the most noble of the ships. The *Zeus* has a Veteran Mastery Level and must always be the *Flagship* of the fleet.

COST 160

DENOMINATION	MOVEMENT	MASS	STRUCTURE	HULL			ARMOUR SAVE	GOV
				FRONT	SIDE	BACK		
'POSEIDON' Hellenic Trireme	4"	6 (7)	4	6	6	6	5+	4

Poseidon Trident - The prominent ram the *Poseidon* displays is shaped as the god's ceremonial trident. Like a regular ram, this adds +1 to the Mass (already included on the profile). As with regular rams, this generates a +1 bonus to any Armour saves made against impacts to the Front Hull. In addition to this, the multiple spikes and sharp design of the ram generates a -1 Armour Save modifier to the target ship.

Foredeck Slots (1) - The *Poseidon* can select up to one foredeck upgrade from those available to Triremes.

Crew Slots (3) - The *Poseidon* is manned by three *Olympian Oarsmen* crew stands, which can be upgraded with any of the options available from the fleet selector list of the corresponding city state.

CREW	RESILIENCE	ARMOUR SAVE	AD/MOD	SD/MOD	RANGE
Olympian Oarsmen	3	8+	3/-1	-/-	-

NOTES



Mastery Level: Veteran (2+)

Only the most veteran crew is worthy to man the most noble of the ships. The *Poseidon* has a Veteran Mastery Level and must always be the *Flagship* of the fleet.

COST 140

HADES

PATRON MAIN SHIP

Hades, the eldest son of Cronus, received the Underworld, a realm beyond life where all souls must go and remain forever undisturbed. Hades rules the Underworld equitably, without remorse or compassion. He rarely leaves its domain as he has no concern for the matters of the living. The people of the Hellas rarely mention or speak about the god of the Underworld for fear of calling too much of his attention, and so only one celebration during the year is dedicated to his rule. No one can miss the festivities, because, like every god, Hades is proud and would not forgive mortals who didn't honour and worship him.

The Hades Patron Ships are built in dark hardwood to represent the lack of light in the Underworld, and decorated with chains and drapes, symbolising the mortal souls forever trapped in them. To represent the inexorable nature of death, Hades' ships mount a blade-shaped prow outlined in burnished bronze, which turns the ship into a sinister blade when it rams its enemy. The Hades Lantern shines on the prow with a never-extinguishing blue flame fed by an ingenious mechanism that supplies it with a liquid mixture of a mysterious nature that can spread onto the enemy ships after the ramming, often causing fires on board that are impossible to put out.

Like all Patron Class Ships, when it goes to war the Hades is crewed by a full hand of Olympian Oarsmen who serve and maintain the ship all year round.

THALASSA: MYTH

When playing *Thalassa: Myth*, the following rules apply to the *Hades*, increasing the cost of the ship by **+35 recruitment points**.

SOUL RECKONING: Instead of a regular *Captain's Order*, the *Hades* can call on the power of the ruler of the Underworld to prevent a ship from recovering crew after receiving wounds.

Cast (7+)

Play: Place one Blessing token (☉) next to an enemy ship with one or more Wound tokens (☠) and roll 1D10. If the cast succeeds, instead of removing the Wound tokens during the end phase, discard the Blessing token. The wounds are then carried onto the next turn.

RULES

Honoring One God

To represent the rarity and exclusivity of the Patron Class Ships, a player can only ever have one of them in their fleet, and it can only be used if both players (or the organiser of the game or tournament) agree. It is purchased at the recruitment cost in points indicated on its profile card.

Patron Class Ships count as Main Ships when assembling the fleet.

Mastery Level And Flagship

All Patron Class Ships are manned by the most excellent individuals, and their pilots (*Kybernetes*) are the most knowledgeable and skilful. They are considered Veterans on their Mastery Level (2+).

Patron Class Ships must always be the Flagship of the fleet, and therefore carry the *Navarch*.

Upgrades

Unless specified otherwise, all Patron Class Ships follow the normal rules for acquiring upgrades from the generic list. All specific nation rules and restrictions also apply to the Patron Class Ships, and players can consider them Triremes when acquiring upgrades.

Built-in Upgrades

Because of their symbolic purpose and representation of the god's favour to the nation, all Patron Class Ships count as having a *Revered Icon* and a *Sacred Shrine* upgrade built in. These are already included in the ship's cost and profile, but otherwise all special rules for these upgrades apply. The additional Structure

point generated by the *Sacred Shrine* has also been included in the main ship's profile, but, unlike other 'built-in towers', a player cannot destroy the *Sacred Shrine*; it counts as part of the ship. As the *Revered Icon* and the *Sacred Shrine* are restricted to one per fleet, the presence of a Patron Class Ship prevents other ships in the fleet from carrying these upgrades.

All Victory Points granted for the *Prized Target* rule on these upgrades are also included in the Patron Class Ship's profile.

Thalassa: Myth

If the players agree, they can use the Patron Class Ships in games where myths and classical fantasy take centre stage, producing supernatural or magical effects. In this case, the rules for *Thalassa: Myth* (included on each ship's profile card) are also applied at the additional recruitment points cost indicated.

For example, in regular games where the Zeus is used, its recruitment value is 160 points. However, if the Myth rules are used, the Zeus will have a recruitment cost of 205 points (an additional 45 points to represent the effects the ship has in the game when using the Myth rules).

When using *Myth*, all Patron Ships can invoke the powers of the god they represent, instead of the regular *Captain's Order* when activated. The power unleashed by the ship costs a specified number of Blessing tokens (☉) that are lost once used.

To check if the power has effect, the player must roll 1D10 and score equal to or above the Cast value of the power. These dice follow all the general rules for rolling D10s, and can be rerolled as normal.

DENOMINATION	MOVEMENT	MASS	STRUCTURE	HULL			ARMOUR SAVE	GOV
				FRONT	SIDE	BACK		
'HADES' Hellenic Trireme	3"	6 (7)	4	6	6	6	6+	4

Unstoppable Fate - The bow of the *Hades* is made of polished oak, and its profile is reinforced with the highest quality bronze, creating a deadly scythe capable of splitting a ship in half. To represent the effect of the sharp and hard edges of the ship's bow, a player may re-roll any dice that didn't hit during a ramming action. Like with regular rams, the structure of the bow in the *Hades* generates a +1 bonus to any Armour saves made against impacts received on the Front Hull.

Hades Lantern - During a ramming action, instead of a Chaos token (☠) for Tremor, the Hades Lantern produces one Blaze token (🔥) instead.

Crew Slots (3) - The *Hades* is manned by three *Olympian Oarsmen* crew stands, which can be upgraded with any of the options available from the fleet selector list of the corresponding city state.

CREW	RESILIENCE	ARMOUR SAVE	AD/MOD	SD/MOD	RANGE
Olympian Oarsmen	3	8+	3/-1	-/-	-

NOTES

3VP

3VP

120

COST 130

Mastery Level: Veteran (2+)

Only the most veteran crew is worthy to man the most noble of the ships. The *Hades* has a Veteran Mastery Level and must always be the **Flagship** of the fleet.

A WORD FROM THE SCULPTOR

Daniel: Designing Triremes inspired by the Greek gods Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades has been a great challenge for me as a digital sculptor, but a rewarding one nonetheless. I took the lessons I learned sculpting the more realistic Triremes - making a strong, practical, and seaworthy boat with the shape, structure, and materials used - then added the aesthetic and symbolic details traditionally attributed to these gods. Each Trireme has specific mythological and mystical elements that make them unique.

Zeus

We wanted a punching ship to show the might of the father of the gods, and represented this with a huge lightning-bolt-shaped ram. Zeus' majesty and austerity are represented by a sterncastle in the form of a classical temple. To further imbue the ship with the class and stature Zeus inspires, I brought the *undines* (the Greek mythical aquatic nymphs) into the ship's railings. This strikes a chord with the Greek classic art style, and unifies the two most prominent features of the ship, creating a cohesive model.

Poseidon

When I began conceiving this Trireme, all I could think about was the ever-present trident of the god. We immediately agreed that it would be a waste if the trident wasn't related to the ability to ram, and I came up with the idea of blending the two general features of our Triremes - the ram and figurehead - to form the trident. This added, for the first time in *Thalassa*, the anti-ram more typical of the Roman war galleys.

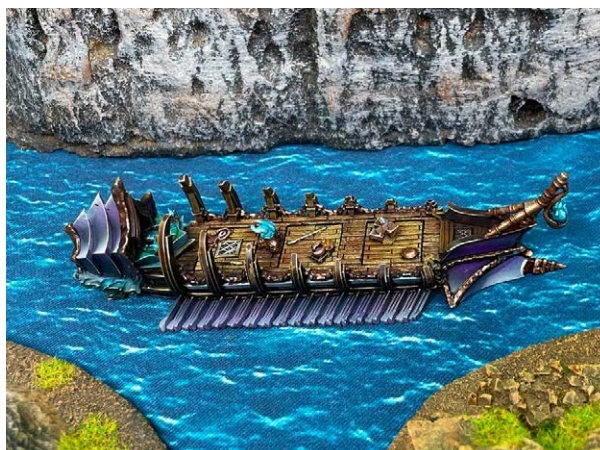
A centre of worship was added to identify the ship as a floating temple, and in this case it is an open, circular one which Ricard absolutely loved. With it the ship acquires a unique character that we think directly relates it to its mythological origin.

Hades

This ship was perhaps the most controversial to design. Due to its direct link with the Underworld, the elements used in its design had to be darker and more sombre, but not use the popular high-fantasy symbols of death, necromancy, and evil. The role of Hades and his Underworld in the classical mythology should not be confused with

the Christian concept of Hell or the fantasy of 'undead' coming back to life! Therefore, the ship takes a more subtle approach and still has design elements, such as a temple, to connect it to the other ships of the gods.

The task of combining technical, aesthetic, and symbolic aspects involved significant effort, which in the end has resulted in miniatures that combine the history, culture, and mythology of ancient times with the mechanics and dynamics of the game and the rest of the ships on the table.



Above: The *Hades* methodically and effortlessly picks its way through the tight and winding cliffs and rocks of this treacherous coastline.

ADDING COLOUR TO THE MODELS

ZEUS



The Zeus is as bold as the god himself with the orange/yellow making details pop. Beyond that, there's the wood and a blue/black and not a whole lot else until the temple. This has more purple tones to differentiate it from the rest of the vessel. The sail, with the simple black background and oversized image of Zeus himself, really stands out.



HADES



Above: We sculpted a simple flame where the mast and sail would usually go and painted it blue. This matches with the pool of blue that leads to the underworld at the ship's temple and the other flames on the ship. The lack of a sail differentiates The Hades from the other Patron Class Triremes, makes it look more like a vessel from a windless underworld, and gives a nod to Charon, the ferryman of Hades.



The Hades is painted with darker tones and muted wood and this palette continues onto the rib-like arches. The metal is a beaten copper and the skirt flowing behind it combines the colours of a dark sea. The purple areas have been given an otherworldly amethyst look with sharp highlights.



POSEIDON



The Poseidon's paint job uses a vast array of tones, selected from those you might find either in the sea or reflected on it. These are glazed over metallics and flat paints to create different effects across the length of the ship. Bringing silver into some of the highlights on non-metallic elements also adds to the oceanic impression by creating a glistening surface.

GETTING HOLD OF THE THALASSA MODELS

If you'd like to try *Thalassa*, you can now access the game products through several different channels.

Traditionally-cast ships and all gaming components (in full-colour MDF or acrylic) are available through NG Castings, Sarissa Precision, North Star, and many other retailers. Packs offer one or two-player bundles, which include everything you need to crack on with the game.

Alternatively, you can download STL files for 3D printing directly from X-Fantasy Games' MyMiniFactory site. Here you will also find all the upgrades, different ship classes, and much more.

myminifactory.com/es/users/Thalassa



COMMUNAL CONSTRUCTION

Salute 2023. (Left to right) Colin Farrant - Charlie Foxtrot Models, Tony Meekings - Debris of War, Ged Cronin - Gringo40s, and Geoff Lacey - Purple Lion Creations.



THE TET ATTACK ON THE SAIGON EMBASSY, 1968

Collin Farrant tells the tale of a collaborative project to build a Salute gaming board recreating the attack on the US Embassy in Saigon during the Vietnam War.

This huge display has an unusual backstory. It all started when a young Ged Cronin watched the televised coverage of the US Saigon Embassy attack on the news in 1968. Clearly, this incident made a huge impression on him, as he now has a wide range of associated miniatures for the period in his Gringo40s Vietnam range.

Many years later, a few months before the first lockdown, Ged called Geoff from Purple Lion Creations. Geoff makes terrain commissions 'old school' style using foamcore and DAS clay (along with other traditional materials) and has worked on projects for Ged before. The thrust of the call was along the lines of: "I want you to make the US Saigon Embassy for me". After some deliberation, Geoff concluded that this project was too big and did not lend itself solely to his handcrafting skills.



This is where I enter the story - I run Charlie Foxtrot Models and produce laser cut MDF models (amongst other things) - and Geoff figured I could help the build become a reality. There was just the slight problem that I had no idea about the Vietnam War beyond viewing a few choice movies; even less about the assault on the Saigon Embassy.

Ged and Geoff provided photographs that I spent many hours researching, staring at grainy black and white images to get the best understanding I could about the construction of this iconic building. I took receipt of a pencil drawing from Geoff and picked up my mouse to begin the design. Looking at the sketched image, I realised this was going to be big!



Above: A more standard Charlie Foxtrot creation, a WWII Georgian style bank building.

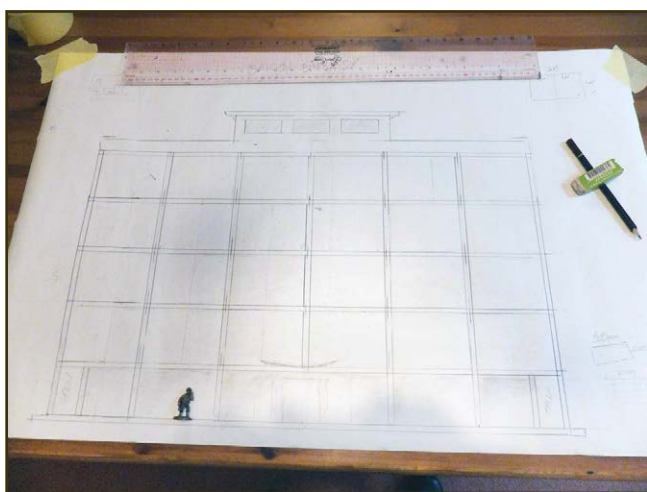
Just as we reached that point, Salute was cancelled due to Covid lockdown, and the project was shelved. This came as a disappointment for me, yet it turned out to be a blessing, as my core business - Charlie Foxtrot Models - became very busy.

In March 2022, after the pandemic, I went to visit Geoff in North Devon to refresh where we were on the project. A long time had passed so it was great to get back to it, mapping out the footprint of what I had drawn out so far on his dining table.

“Ged wants a Huey helicopter on the roof too!” was suddenly mentioned. This gave me concerns; just how big would the helicopter be? With the full-size building being so large, I had used a bit of artistic licence to ensure the model version fitted on a gaming table

and reduced lattice panels from nine to five sections wide. Once the size of the helicopter landing pad was established, I had to rework the drawings up to seven sections wide. This meant that the building also had to be deeper to maintain the proportions.

The actual structure of the building is quite simple - four identical rectangular trays in 3mm MDF, coated with the 2mm lattice work. The challenge came from the sheer size. I had to join the components, as the width of the completed model was wider than the machine bed of my laser. I made sure to hide the joins in the final build.



My initial approach was to create a sample section of the lattice work on the building walls and take things from there. After doing the maths, calculating ratios and percentages, I came up with a panel of rectangles I could readily replicate using my Computer Aided Design software (CAD).

Research informed me that the lattice work effect on the walls were not windows, as we originally surmised. The lattice surface is to provide shade and aims to reduce the temperature inside of the building. A secondary benefit is that the lattice worked along the lines of *schurzen* skirts on WWII German armour, detonating incoming missiles prematurely.

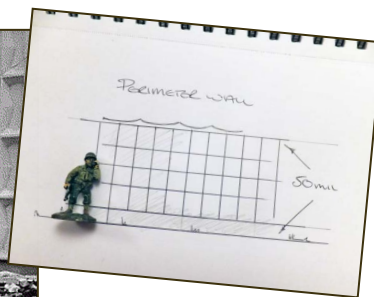
MOUNTING CHALLENGES

Just as I was feeling as though I had cracked it; I got a call from Geoff: “Ged wants to add the perimeter walls and associated buildings too!” It was back to the research to establish the details on the perimeter wall and back to the drawing board to work out panel sizes and discover how I could achieve the cast concrete 3D effect.

I came up with a layered approach using 3mm MDF as a core, overlaying a lattice of 1mm grey-board and layering this further with 2mm MDF. I glued up the sample pieces, primed and sprayed them white to get the look before posting them to Geoff.



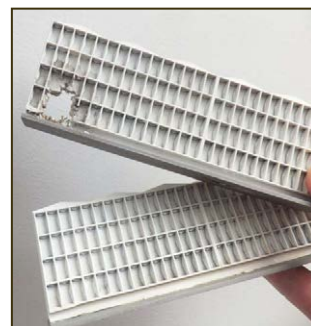
From reference - Military Policemen of the 716th lean against the Embassy wall after the battle.



To sketch - Getting the scale worked out alongside a 28mm figure.



To MDF - Cutting sheets of the designs.



To samples - Examples of the wall texture in damaged and undamaged states.

IN ON THE GROUND FLOOR

I studied as many images as I could but, with most photographs taken from helicopters or from a good distance outside of the perimeter, it wasn't overly clear what details the lowest level needed. Between us, I believe we came up with a fair representation.

The ground floor pillars were laminated to 10mm for aesthetics and to support the ever increasing weight of the structure above. 2mm Acrylic was used for the windows with the impression of glass doors being engraved on the inside.

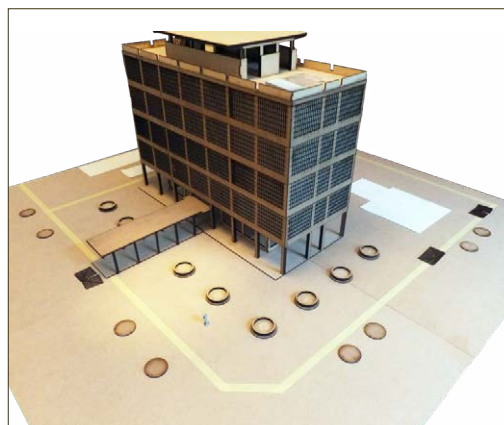
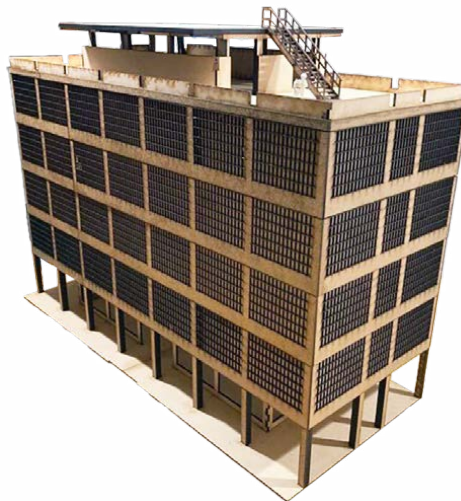
With the ground floor complete, all I believed I had to do (at the time) was to draw the top floor and helicopter pad. The lessons learned from the ground floor guided me in my design work and very shortly this was glued together.

The next stage was another meeting with Geoff. I took the now constructed Saigon Embassy back to Bideford where we once again sat, tea in hand, discussing the next steps. Armed with a tape measure, pencil and paper, and further sheets of paper, we planned out the floor layout for the perimeter wall and length of the covered entry walkway. The size and number of the circular planters was thrashed out too.

Other items were discussed: the outbuildings were to be Geoff's domain while I took on the perimeter wall, walkway, and circular planters. The next agenda item was the trees. With such a heavy workload Geoff would not have the time to make his own high-quality trees. We decided to outsource.

THE TEAM GETS BIGGER!

A quick telephone call to Tony from Debris of War put the wheels (or more accurately, trees) in motion. I made bases for the trees, sent them to Tony, and sent the corresponding base location tray to Geoff to embed into the table tiles and ensure exact positioning of the trees. Gringo40s would not have settled for less!



Above: The embassy building comes apart layer by layer to allow combat to progress through the floors of the building.

With the assembled embassy left with Geoff for painting, I was back in the workshop, designing the entrance walkway and perimeter walls from our freshly calculated dimensions. I also ran off some internal walling to strengthen the structure and decided that a lift needed to be located on the top floor. The Embassy would come apart in levels so that the fighting could move up the building.

I worked remotely and when my task was done, I wrapped and posted the components to Geoff to add to the growing display. It was a marvellous feeling having completed my end of the build. All I had to do now was enjoy regular updates from Geoff on his progress.

OVER TO GEOFF

Geoff concentrated on making the terrain boards and the supporting buildings around the Embassy. The layout is a 5' square, quartered into four 9mm MDF squares, braced with 10mm MDF strips. It was Geoff's vision to make the table easy to pack away, almost flat and quick to assemble, but be robust during gaming, so he fixed magnets along the edges of the boards to add stability when they were joined together.

The pavements were made from 3mm thick MDF, as were the lawns. The lawns in Asia consist of broader leafed, darker grasses than we are familiar with in Western Europe. Rather than use thin static grass, Geoff made the lawns from towelling. He cut thin towelling to size and glued the pieces to the pre-cut MDF lawn shapes, leaving a few mm of towelling protruding to cover any exposed gaps. The towelling was repeatedly brushed with an acrylic and Mod-Podge mix using a very stiff paintbrush. This was to ensure good paint coverage and give some 'body' to the otherwise flat expanse. Once dry the grass was drybrushed with a lighter yellow tone.

The boundary walls were glued to their own individual bases so that they could be removed from the table for storage and they, along with the Embassy exterior, were painted with grey primer then oversprayed with matt white from a rattle can. Geoff used a whopping seven cans of grey primer and six cans of white to cover everything!

The texture on the rooftop and helicopter pad was made with 2mm thin polystyrene (the sound dampening, insulation material used under laminate flooring), painted with acrylics and drybrushed to bring out the texture.

Geoff went to town making damaged wall sections and gates that can be swapped out as damage occurs. He also glued magnets inside the main building and made clear acrylic-based smoke markers so RPG hits can be visualised during a game.

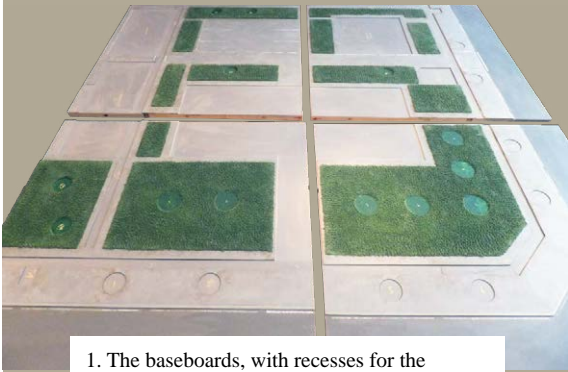


Above and left: The 'supporting' buildings are made with foamcore, DAS clay, and cardboard.



PIECE-BY-PIECE

Every element is designed to fit together securely and pack away easily. The board grows in levels and detail with the addition of each piece of terrain, as shown here:



1. The baseboards, with recesses for the various terrain pieces, are secured via magnets.



2. The Embassy ground floor and walkway fit in place next.



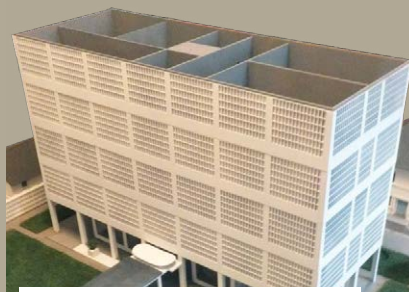
3. Some of Geoff's outer buildings join the tabletop.



4. More skirt the other side of the car park.



5. Perimeter walls enclose the compound.



6. Upper Embassy walls are placed.



7. Then the roof and helicopter pad.



8. Planters are added.



9. Outer trees finish the look of the table.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

The project was ending, and Geoff was completing the planters, when he gave me an unexpected call: "There is a car park at the back with no cars!" Ged leapt into research mode and sourced imagery for period vehicles. Being very niche, they were not the sort of kits you can walk into a model shop and just pick up off the shelf.

A call to Paul Edwards of Sabotag3d proved to be the solution and he was the final contributor to the project. Just days later I had 3D printed cars, tuk-tuks, and scooters in my hand. Thankfully, Paul and I were attending a Too Fat Lardies gaming event that weekend, so we met up and, with bacon saved, I could paint the vehicles over the next few evenings and post them to Ged in time.

He made the trip to Bideford to pick up the display with a few weeks in hand, before Salute 2023, and it wasn't until the show itself that the collaborators: Gringo40s, Purple Lion Creations, Charlie Foxtrot Models, Debris of War, and Sabotag3d got to see the completed display table. With the addition of beautifully painted miniatures from the Gringo40s Vietnam range, the attack on the Embassy was ready for play at the show!





HISTORICON® 2023

America: Expansion and Civil War, 1789 to 1897

Dave Taylor reports on Historicon 2023, which ran from 19 - 23 July in Lancaster Pennsylvania.

In July, thousands of wargamers returned to the Lancaster Convention Center in Pennsylvania to enjoy the multi-day offerings of Historicon 2023. Convention Director Joby Miller, department heads, and an army of volunteers all put in loads of hard work to make sure the show went off with as few hitches as possible.

There was a noticeable increase in attendance, both for gamers attending all four days, as well as a larger-than-expected surge of day-visitors on the Saturday. The quality of gaming tables was higher than in previous years, with a number of massive tables making their Historicon debut. There were more vendors on-site than ever before, many of whom reported solid increases in sales over the show, and there was a lot of demo gaming activity going on in the vendor hall, too. In the photos below you can see a huge container ship/gaming table in the Monster Fight Club booth, and demo games of *Battleground* being run by the Jayhawk Wargames team.

In a word, Historicon 2023 had MORE!

The theme for this particular show was 'America: Expansion and Civil War, 1789 to 1897', so throughout this article you'll spot some great Theme Games.

Historical Miniatures Gaming Society (HMGS) East is already hard at work planning their next event - Fall In! - and looking towards next year for a bigger and better Historicon.

For more info, visit:
www.historicon.org

And for a great video recap of Historicon 2023, visit our friends
at the Little Wars TV team on:
youtube.com/c/LittleWarsTV





BATTLE OF LAS GUASIMAS, 1898

Theme Game - A very enthusiastic Jeff Whitlock ran this Spanish American War game using the *Blood & Steel* ruleset from Firelock Games. General Wheeler (and a cast of many famous people, including future-President Teddy Roosevelt and media magnate William Randolph Hearst Sr.) lead the U.S. forces and Cuban insurgents off the beach in an effort to break the Spanish lines and push to take Santiago.





TRIUMPH!

Each year, the HMGS team works with a gaming group who is keen to showcase something big, and they situate them near the entrance to the vendor area to maximise the number of eyes on the effort.

This year, it was Rodney Cain and the Washington Grand Company who took pride of place. Showing off the versatility of their *TRIUMPH!* ruleset, the guys presented games in 15mm, 25mm, and even a 54mm floor game! The system is smooth, and games typically play through in under an hour, meaning they could also run a five-game campaign in a *Lord of The Rings* setting on Saturday night.



A REVOLT IN AUSTRIA

Hungary is revolting against the Emperor! The bulk of Austrian forces are engaged against the French. A small supply depot has been set up in town, and the revolutionaries need food and powder. A rag-tag band of loyal defenders stand in their way in this *Fistful of Lead* game run by GM Jon Lundberg.

PRESTON JOINS THE FIGHT, CHICKAMAUGA 1863

Theme Game - GM Michael Pierce ran this 15mm game (using the *Gettysburg Soldiers* ruleset) as a 'what if?' scenario, exploring what might have happened if, instead of guarding the Confederate flank during the battle, Preston's Division had advanced alongside Hindman's Division. Historically, Wilder's Lightning Brigade intervened at the opportune time and prevented a Union rout, but how would they have fared if they had faced two additional Confederate Brigades?





KHARTOUM! THE WARGAME

After spotting the 54mm *TRIUMPH!* game shown earlier, I realized that there were more of these larger scale games than usual at the show. Grandest of them all was this game from GM Jim Purky. Using the *War Along the Nile* ruleset, Jim guided a dozen players through a Dervish assault on Khartoum full of dhows, padde boats, fierce warcries, and lots of scaling ladders!



HELLO 2ND ARMOR! THE BATTLE OF BLOODY GULCH

GMs Michael Gesser, Adam Gesser, and Don Hogge ran a great 60mm game using the *Battleground WWII* ruleset. As Easy Company of the 101st Airborne pushed through Carentan on 13 June 1944, they ran into the 17th SS Panzergeradiers with Stug G support.



WiPRIME

MORE FROM H'CON ONLINE

We couldn't squeeze all the best games from Histroicon into this article. WiPrime members can see the full 12 pages from the convention in the Exclusive Posts section of the Members Area.

THE OTHER PARTIZAN

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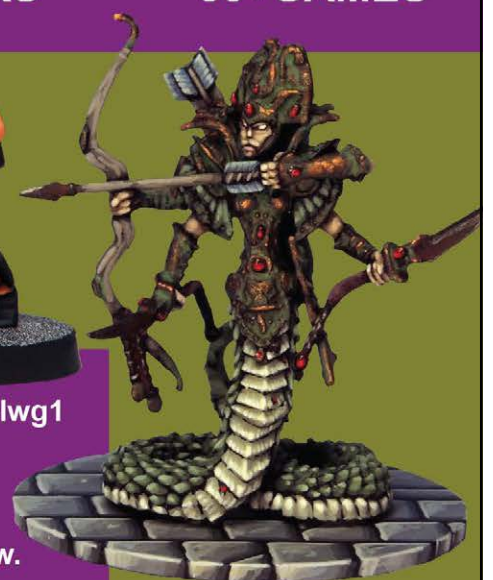
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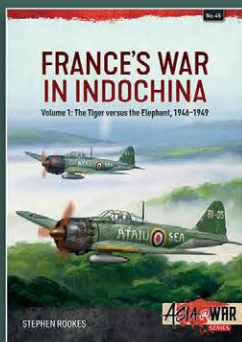
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FRANCE'S WAR IN INDOCHINA Volume 1:

The Tiger versus the Elephant, 1946–1949 Stephen Rookes



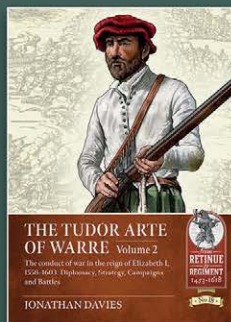
The First Indochina War was a particularly brutal conflict fought by the French for similar reasons as the United States in later years. Vietnamese forces sought to impose communist doctrines in Vietnam, a move that France deemed unacceptable and warranted a large-scale military engagement. Vietnam was considered an integral part of Indochina and France itself, and the spread of communism in the region was not to be permitted, nor were Ho Chi Minh's attempts to gain independence for Vietnam through these means. This volume, the first in a three-part series, examines the first phase of the First Indochina War, which lasted from 1946 to 1949.

Drawing on a variety of historical documents, this book provides readers with a comprehensive historical perspective on the French presence in Vietnam, the United States' support for France, the ideology and tactics of the insurgents in Vietnam, as well as a detailed account of the battles, strategies, machinery, and personnel employed by both sides to achieve their objectives during the conflict.



The Tudor Arte of Warre Volume 2:

The conduct of war in the reign of Elizabeth I, 1558–1603: Diplomacy, Strategy, Campaigns and Battles Jonathan Davies



On her accession to the throne, Elizabeth tried to take advantage of crises in Scotland and France, and for the first time experienced the gap between what her military men would promise and what they could deliver. Determined as she was to maintain domestic peace, the Northern Rebellion of 1569 made it clear that England's military preparedness was wholly inadequate. Thus began a long project to make widespread military service managed by the government, especially as after 1585 more and more men were sent for service abroad.

The book gives considerable space to the Nine Years' War in Ireland because it was of central importance to Elizabeth and the military establishment. It involved several key battles as well as developments in both strategy and tactics that have in the past been overlooked. Elizabeth's army played a vital part in defending the realm from foreign foes and domestic rebels, and although there was little glory it was a vital aspect of her reign and an important chapter in Britain's military history.



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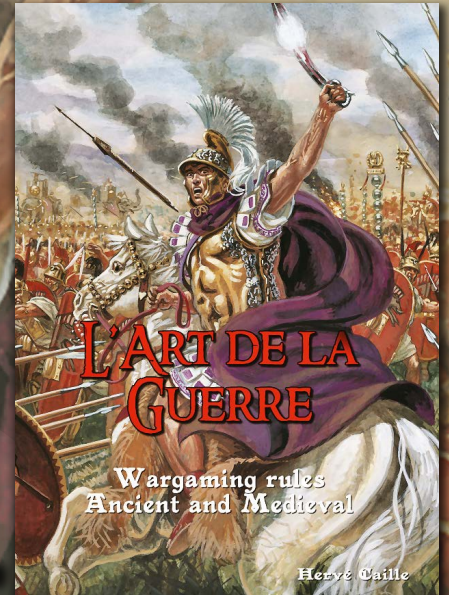
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