

Mustangs & Phantoms

I have long been a fan of air combat wargames, starting with the old SPI Foxbat and Phantom game. From there I went to Avalon Hill's Flight Leader in the 1980's, then to the excellent GDW Air Superiority series. When Clash of Arms took the AS system to it's next level with The



1/300th F-8E Crusaders from Skytrex cover an air strike.

Speed of Heat, I played that, too. The problem has always been how to use miniatures and present the game in a group setting with anywhere from 6-10 players. Most of the miniatures specific rules are not very good, and the board games are too complex to convert to miniatures.

Having almost completely given up I came across a Yahoo Group called *Air Pirates*. The basis for the group revolves around a love for air combat and rules converted

from the Avalon Hill board game *Mustangs*. There are variants for WWI, Korea, and a Vietnam/Modern version called *Phantoms*.

The basic game system is centered on the use of maneuver markers which are put out in front of the aircraft. These markers

lock an aircraft into performing a turn, sideslip, half loop, etc..., and you can't change facing or maneuvers until the current one is completed. Simple and very effective.

Each aircraft is rated for engine performance and it's ability to complete maneuvers. You

simply look at your current speed, cross index the type of maneuver you wish to perform, and you get how many hexes you have to travel before completing the maneuver along with any speed loss associated with the chosen maneuver. Out of all of the air movement game systems I've seen or played, this one is surprisingly simple, but works well and gives players a wide range of decisions.

Gunnery is handled by a

dice off between the shooting aircraft and the target, with various modifiers applied to the roll. If you roll higher than your opponent, then you cause damage which is rolled for on a chart.

The best part of all of this is that the rules, data cards, scenarios, bomber supplements, etc..., are FREE! Just go to the Yahoo Groups section and look for the Air Pirates group. There are several variations of the rules, full color data cards in different formats, scenarios, add on rules for flak, ships, attacking ground targets, and listings for companies who



1/300th Spitfires and Hurricanes from Collectair.

sell 1/300 aircraft.

To play, however, you will need a large hex mat, preferably with 5" hexes. These usually aren't sold, so you will need to create one, which is easy, but pretty boring (cont. on p.6)

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- Review of the *COA Struggle For Europe* series.
- Back to war movies and wargaming.
- *Age of Reason Battle Report*

Interview with Col. Bill Gray (ret.)

by Matt Irsik

Continuing our series of interviewing rules authors and the people who are a driving force in the hobby, this time we bring you an interview with Col. Bill Gray. Bill is the man responsible for the popular Napoleonic Fire and Fury variant called Age of Eagles. Bill is also the author of Age of Honor and is working on the Age of Valor. AOE, as it is affectionately called, has changed the perspective of wargamers and brought life back into the Napoleonic period for many who could not decide on a set of rules. After seeing many of his informative posts on the Yahoo NF&F group, I decided to ask Bill for his thoughts on the hobby. Bill graciously agreed and has some fascinating insight into wargaming.



1.) How did you get into wargaming?

I was on a campus visit to the Citadel in 1973 and the cadet who hosted me invited me to learn and play Panzerblitz by Avalon Hill. I was hooked and began my wargame collection during college (at Clemson University, not the Citadel - must have been the bars on the windows:), buying just about every SPI game made. After college and on my first military assignment at Ft Hood, TX in 1977, I stopped by the local hobby shop - called the Bunker - to see what AH or SPI games they had, and watched a Napoleonic miniature game in process. The rules were Empire II, the figures 15mm Heritage Napoleonic and the spectacle was unbelievable. I was re-hooked and walked out with four packs of Russian Grenadiers.

From then the rest is history.

2.) What is your favorite period and why?

Napoleonic. Not only is it the era of history's greatest soldier, but the pageantry is unmatched, the battles huge and it is also one of the few periods where all three combat services - horse, foot and guns - are in relative equity. No one of the three is so overpowering that it tends to negate the other two. It is also an era where a revolution in command and control took place, and this just happens to be a very big interest with me.

3) Having been in the military, what is your view of the realism of wargaming as compared to actual combat?

In many respects it is realistic as regards the fundamentals of higher level command, eg, staff coordination, analysis and decision making as well excellent training in exercising the "principals of war" that various military doctrines world-wide define and follow. However, there are two critical, and related areas, where miniature wargames (and I assume for the rest of this interview you mean miniatures



when you use the term "wargame") fail. That is stress and information paucity. Wargames simply do not recreate the issues of stress and lack of information (which exacerbates stress) that all warfare, not just modern conflict, inflicts

upon its commanders. The direct impact is that wargame players will likely make far less mistakes than their actual historical counterparts.

4) What is your opinion of the tactics used by most wargamers? How do you think most gamers would perform under fire?

Lacking for the most, at least in one specific aspect. Most players try to play the rules rather than the doctrine or tactics of the period. In particular a lot seem to look at the game as more a less a mathematical puzzle, and spend a lot of time going over in their minds various odds calculations and so on. The best players I've seen don't even look at



the charts prior to movement or engaging in combat but simply execute their mission as efficiently as possible with due regard to the principals of war. While most wargamers would have an advantage of sorts over non-wargamers as regards actual military operations, I think they would still have immense problems dealing with the stress, especially given the knowledge that their decisions impact actual human lives, and also with the information and time constraints that combat imposes. BTW, the principals of war the US Army uses are as follows:

- a. Mass
- b. Objective
- c. Surprise
- d. Security
- e. Maneuver
- f. Offensive
- g. Unity of Command
- h. Simplicity
- i. Economy of Force

Interview with Col. Bill Gray (cont.)

5) Do you think that the brigade as a unit design philosophy is the way to go in wargaming?

The brigade is not the perfect end all as there are some fascinating small engagements (such as Mollwitz during the Lace Wars) that demand play at a battalion or lower level. However, brigade level does offer several advantages not the least of which is speed - the ability to play large battles in a reasonable amount of time. Part of this is due to abstraction of certain sub-tactical functions such that they do not need to be replicated directly, but more important is the fact that you have cut down the time requirements for such things as calculating and resolving combat by as much as a factor of seven (eg, at Ramillies Orkney's brigade had seven battalions - that's seven calculations and resolutions in a battalion level game vs. one at brigade level). This is very important because in certain eras the military processes that made that period unique only occurred at the army level (command and control during the Napoleonic period, for example) and this mandates replication. Seeing the stunning advantage Napoleon enjoyed over his foes via the application of Grand Battery fire might be easily portrayed thru Lauriston's 100+ gun monster at Wagram, but to get the proper impact of this aspect of war means you have to play the entire battle. Do Wagram in Empire? Sorry, I'd be truly retired before we ever finished.

The other thing I really like about the brigade level of war is that you can effectively preclude the player from acting as a company, battalion and regimental commander. In games like Empire, you may by the rules assume the role of corps commander, but because



you maneuver and fight with individual skirmish companies, infantry battalions and cavalry regiments, you not only become a three-star general, but also the brigadiers, light colonels, majors and captains who work for him. You are the major on the firing line where combat stress is likely greatest, but you have none. You are the battalion commander, but as the player/corps commander as well you have far more information about what is happening on the battlefield around you than any lieutenant colonel could have dreamed of. Coordination problems up and down the chain of command? There are none because you are the ENTIRE chain of command. The result is that wargamers are likely to make far fewer mistakes in their games than their historical counterparts did in the actual battle. Coordination is perfect, information abundant and stress zero.

With brigade level games you can portray that below the brigade are colonels, lieutenant colonels, majors and captains working for you, the player. These officers are under lots of stress, likely have no more information than what they can see and thus will make mistakes. These "mistakes" can be factored into the combat system and this, I believe, makes for a more realistic and enjoyable game.

6.) How do you stand on the eternal argument about complexity vs. playability?

Playability, but that's really the wrong argument. It should be realism (to some defined as "detail") vs. playability and

the two concepts are not mutually exclusive. My ultimate goal when I roll the dice is to play the most realistic game possible, appropriate for the level of command I am assuming. This means if I am playing a game where I assume the roll of a division and brigade commander, moving battalions all over the board, I think the detail of attaching, detaching and fighting with individual skirmish companies is not only appropriate, but fun. As a corps or wing commander, that's not my job and no matter how realistic or detailed the game mechanic might be, the game shouldn't burden me with that responsibility. In reality this makes the game unrealistic. If on the other hand, two game systems portray the same battlefield process realistically (and the process is appropriate for the game's level of play), then I always go with the simpler, especially if it involves less die rolling. Too many times people miss the enjoyment and history of the game

because of all the unnecessary detail created for the sake of realism.



I also prefer process rather than results based realism (eg, the game mechanic that shows Prussian command and control in 1806 was chaotic needs to be realistic, rather than any mechanic that produces the chaos their command structure conveyed to the army as a whole), but here I always go with the simpler system within the process realism sphere.

7.) What is your view on why gamers and/or clubs can't decide on a set of Napoleonic rules? Do you ever think you'll see the day when one set of rules dominates a period anymore such as WRG did with Ancients in the 70's and 80's?

First, ancients gaming is almost always

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done at the low tactical level, and I think this assists in producing a world-wide basing standard. Also, because ancients gaming has invariably been linked to tournament play, that in extreme cases produces such things as "national champions," the need for a standardized basing system was almost mandated. WRG I think just happened to be in the right place and right time as regards what they use, but given the unique structure of the ancients community, it was bound to happen. Napoleonics will always be tough because there are so many levels of play (battalion, brigade, division) appropriate to the period and many of these simply demand their own unique basing system to be accurate and practical.

8.) Which figure scale do you think best simulates brigade level warfare for the Age of Honor series or Fire and Fury?

I prefer 15 mm as it is a good compromise between realism and the visual impact of mass. The 25 mm scale is a bit too expensive for large scale battles and this influences a lot of people to use less figures per brigade. This in term defeats one of the best eye candy aspects of F&F and that is the ability to have a LOT of figures in one unit. Having 12 figures in a battalion as in Empire simply doesn't convey that serried ranks of massed bayonets effect as does a 14 stand - 64



figure unit in AOH or AOE. I'm still undecided about 10 mm because although the ability to have even more figures on an F&F or AOE stand is tempting, my own opinion is that figures much smaller than 15 mm (6mm especially) have their visual impact

overpowered by the size of the stand they are attached to. Just looks a little too thick, with too much surface area given the diminutive size of the figures.

9.) Is this truly the Golden Age of wargaming? What do you like and

dislike about the hobby?

For miniatures only, and here I think you can thank the artistic aspect of our hobby, the fact that it is a group vice individual activity and also promotion efforts of organizations like HMGS. The biggest plus of the hobby is all of the great friends I've met over the years while the biggest minus is the politicization of the hobby over trivial matters. A hobby is supposed to be a stress reliever, an avocation that helps you relax from the mundane stress of everyday work and life in general. To many, however, it has become a stress enhancer as they continually interject themselves into hobby related politics over the most innocent of issues. Of particular irritation is the fact that by doing so they impact the enjoyment of the hobby for the rest of us.

10) What are your plans for your own wargaming in the future and what would you like to work on next?

I would like to see the commercial publication of AOE thru to the end, and if success-

ful begin work on a series of scenario books. Simultaneously I'd like to finish up the third and final volume of the L'Armee Francaise series, the Age of Valor (covering from the Crimean to the Russo-Japanese War in 1905). After that I'd like to get some sleep.

Age of Eagles is a brigade level set of rules for the Napoleonic period of warfare. Scale is 1:320 for infantry, 1:160 for cavalry, and one gun equals one battery, with each crew figure representing two guns. The game is based off of the Fire and Fury rules for the ACW, but with some changes because of the scale. Also, there is a Reserve Movement phase which is not in the original. The firing ranges are much shorter due to the ground scale, but the combat system works extremely well.



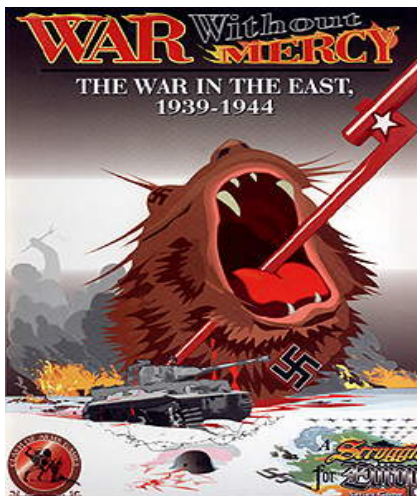
In fact, the entire game system works well, which is why it continues to grow in popularity. Our group had been avoiding Napoleonics for years after tiring of three night, 18 hour games of Empire or spending two hours on a brigade cavalry charge in From Valmy to Waterloo. After a playtest of this, everyone started to rebase and now we have several corps from various nations. You can teach new gamers in minutes, but you still need a firm grasp of tactics and combined arms to succeed on the tabletop.

We feel that the commercial rules, once published, will get many more gamers into this system who have let their Napoleonic collections sit on shelves and collect dust over the years.

For more information and a free copy of the rules, join the Napoleonic Fire & Fury group on Yahoo Groups.



Having played Russian Campaign many times and it's poor West Front version, Fortress Europa, I was looking for something new on that scale. I actually bought all of the World in Flames sets and with the 5400 counters and multiple maps, it looked good. However, after reading the rules and going over the sequence of play, it looked as if it would



take a long time. My suspicion was confirmed when I joined the WIF egroun on Yahoo. World in Flames must be your life! Thousands of rule changes, people talking about playing a game 5-6 hours a week for a year, etc..., quickly made me have second thoughts.

After checking the Bunker Hill Games site and reading a review of Clash of Arms game War Without Mercy, I ordered a copy. Clash of Arms has always had a good reputation for wargames and quality components. This game is no exception. You get two 22" x 34" maps, covering the area from Berlin to Siberia and from the Arctic Circle to Turkey. The maps are very well done and put the Russian Campaign board to shame. There is a rule book and a scenario book that are clearly laid out and the errata is actually quite small. The 860 back-printed counters are very nice. They cover the Germans, Russians, Turks, Hungarians, Romanians, Finland, and the Italian units that participated on the Eastern Front. Aircraft counters have silhouettes, capital ships are named, the Siberian units are in a nice shade of ice blue, and the leader

counters look like the actual generals. At least for the components and rules, so far, so good.

Each aircraft counter represents a wing of 100-150 aircraft, while a ship counter can be 1-2 capital ships, several cruisers, or a destroyer flotilla. Ground units are generally corps, with divisions and some brigades. Each turn is two weeks and follows a long established pattern of move, combat, armor moves again. This is certainly a throwback to the golden era of wargames and it works well. The only thing that will slow you down in the turn sequence is the use of aircraft. There is a detailed air system that is vital to success on the battlefield. Air units can intercept, fly transport, defensive support, offensive support, air-field attack, and naval attack. The good thing is that the rulebook has good and detailed examples of play.

When you set up the Barbarossa scenario you truly see how vast Russia is and how difficult the German enterprise was. You also think that this game could take forever after seeing the several hundred counters on the board. Here's where the surprise comes in; it plays quickly. With no card play, opponent response phase, activation gimmicks, etc..., the game plays surprisingly fast. Each side moves, allocates air units, has combat, then armor moves again. It certainly isn't anything that you will finish in a 3-4 hour session, but the game moves along.

The Germans have so many attack options that you could play the game several times and try new strategies each time. The endless supply of Russian units just keep coming and coming. The replacement and reinforcement rules work well, although I would have liked to have seen a better air replacement rule as it is too random for my tastes.

Overall, a great game system. The Poland scenario is great for teaching the basics and grognards will pick up the system quickly.

Brute Force is the second game in the Struggle For Europe series and it covers the Western Front. The maps extend the WWM maps by adding in all of Europe, England, Italy, and most of North Africa.

The counters include Belgium, Holland, France, England, Italy, Norway, and Germany. The second edition rules clear up some of the inconsistencies and clarify some rules from the first edition.

Scenarios include Norway, Blitzkrieg (the attack on the Low Countries and France), and Overlord. The Norway scenario is a short five turn game that is good for learning the game system. The other two scenarios are much longer and with more counters. They are much smaller than any of the WWM scenarios and ship counters are only used in the Norway game. Surprisingly, there are no campaign games included in this edition.

The rules have numerous examples of fleet actions, but the ship counters are only used in the Norway scenario. There is an example of play of a German invasion of Dover, but players are not allowed to do this in the Blitzkrieg scenario. Obviously, the third game in the series will cover Strategic Warfare, North Africa/Middle East, Operation Sea Lion, convoys, and will link up all of the games into a massive, but playable, WW2 game.

Overall, this is a very good series of games. The maps and counters are very good and high quality. Unlike most monster games that dwell on small details, this series lets you focus on the basics of movement and combat. There are few, if any surprises in the rules, although the air system will take some getting used to. All in all, this is probably the most playable monster game I've seen and I can't wait for the final volume to come out.



Mustangs & Phantoms (cont.)

(cont. from page 1) to do. 1/16th brass rods are inserted into the bases and the center of the aircraft. These are then fitted into 3/32nd brass tubing of varying lengths for the altitude. Again, no angles, turning mechanisms, etc..., so it's pretty basic. All of the charts and data cards are free, so you just need to print them and you're ready to play.

Phantoms takes the original Mustangs game and moves it into the jet era, covering the 1960s to the present day. Again, this system may not have the "realism" that hard core jet gamers may desire, but it works well on the tabletop. Each aircraft is rated for radar, ECM, and most air to air missiles are listed.

Naturally, the jets move faster and can kill from longer ranges, so it is a com-

pletely different style than a typical Mustangs game. We also use the new climb/dive rules from Mig Alley and Phantoms which is more realistic than in the original Mustangs games, so you do get some fights in the vertical mode.

There are also supplements for using bombers and attacking ground targets. Bomber formation defensive fire is handled abstractly, but it works well and saves a lot of time during gaming. The ground attack rules work pretty good also, so everything that you need to play any WW2 action is available for free!

Our group has created an air to ground system for the Vietnam War called Intruders which is available on our club's site. Hopefully in the future we will see numerous add-ons to cover the Middle

East, Falklands, some of the more famous WW2 campaigns such as the Battle of Britain or the Flying Tigers in China. This system has endless possibilities and all it takes is a little effort at the start to get in some good gaming.



1/300th Aircraft Availability

There are a wide variety of aircraft available for 1/300th scale air combat. Here is a list and some general comments in no particular order.

GHQ

Exquisite aircraft, but they charge you for it. The most expensive line of 1/300th aircraft, but limited selection.

CinC

Similar to GHQ in that these are really little models. Not as expensive and a

little bit better selection.

Collectair (Scotia-Grendel)

Probably the widest selection of WW2 aircraft and a good selection of jets. The quality varies, but generally it's pretty good and for the price it can't be beaten.

Skytrex

Huge selection, but the quality is not very good. If you want modern jets then they have the best selection. Be prepared to have to do some work on them and they

will need a good paint job to look right.

Navwar/Ros Heroics

Again, a huge selection with widely varied quality. Some are decent models while others are hunks of lead.

The best way to view all of these is to go The Miniatures Page at :

www.theminaturespage.com and look under the Manufacturers section which will take you to their web sites.

Air Combat Resources

There are numerous web sites and books out on the subject of air combat. One of the best series is the In Action series from Squadron/Signal publications and available from www.squadron.com. They have books detailing almost every type of combat aircraft that served from 1939-present day. Each book sells for around \$10 and includes all variants, color artwork showing multiple color schemes, about 50 pictures of the aircraft in action, and a good description of the aircraft's development, combat, and up-

grades. Highly recommended.

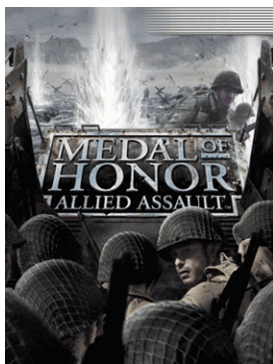
Osprey, the maker of the Men at Arms series, also has a great series called Combat Aircraft of the Aces. These are very detailed books with great color drawings. Also, look for a bargain book at Barnes and Noble called Flying Aces.



The art work is astonishing and it is a great color reference.

The internet has thousands of sites dedicated to combat aircraft. Some of the best are related to air combat computer simulations which allow different color schemes to be downloaded.

Medal of Honor: Allied Assault



I admit it, I'm a big fan of the Half Life series of PC games, so when I heard that the Half Life engine had been adapted to a WWII game, I was pretty happy. The

problem was waiting until I had a system that was fast enough to play it! Finally, I have a Mac G4 that can play anything, so I gave it a try.

This game is about as close as you can come to actually being in the movies

Saving Private Ryan and Band of Brothers. The beach assault, clearing out 88's, hunting for snipers, etc..., are all here. You play a Special Forces officer who is sent on a variety of assignments, ranging from destroying a U-Boat base, to stealing a King Tiger and seizing a bridge in a surprise assault.

The missions are challenging, well thought out, and the film clips for the briefings are well done. Yes, it is a Half Life system where you run around and get extra ammo and health to survive, but the AI here is much more intuitive than in Half Life. Germans throw themselves on grenades to save comrades, they go prone to snipe at you, and wait to spring ambushes.

The beauty of this game is in the set-



tings of the missions. The sniper hunt shows you how difficult it is to fight in towns, while the forests with snow and fog make you realize that you can't see more than 50 feet in that kind of environment. The U-Boat pen is a real treat and the D-Day attack is unbelievable. All in all, this is one of the best PC games I've ever played.

15mm Russian Village by Musket Miniatures

This is part of the Fury on the Steppes series by Musket Miniatures. I believe that they were designed for WW2 on the Eastern Front gaming, but your group needed a good Russian village for Age of Reason, CD3, and Age of Eagles.



and \$20 for the church. However, you do get your money's worth. Each building comes with a detachable roof, separate lead windows, posts, and accessories. My church roof came out of the mold wrong, but some putty evened out the roof pretty good.

The buildings aren't cheap, being around \$12 each for the separate houses

All of the buildings paint up very

nicely and the finished result does look like a Russian village that has been in existence for a hundred years. Highly Recommended.



Attack!

Attack! Is the latest boardgame with plastic miniatures by Eagle Enterprises. This is the same firm that last year put out the Napoleonic, Colonial, and ACW games which feature about 600 plastic miniatures each!



best be described as a Risk/Axis & Allies system. Each side creates armies, conquers regions, and tries to rule the world. The basic game is very simple and can be picked up quickly. The Attack! Expansion adds the Pacific theater, ships, Technology, Political cards, and some advanced rules.

Attack! Is set in the 1930's and can

Our playtest used all of the advanced rules(which are pretty simple), pieces, and cards. The game was fun, fast, and combat is very bloody. Nothing we could play every day of the week, but it's fun every so often. Recommended.



Movies & Wargaming Revisited

by David Daymont

Last issue's movie article generated a lot of comments, both favorable and a few "You have no idea what you're talking about" responses. Giving others a chance to partake in the glory, or a taste of defeat is what this journal is all about. Here is another WFHGS member with his ideas about great war films.

Hidden Treasures of War Movies

Last Issue my brother Mark and I were impressed with Matt's list of war movies that inspire wargaming. The only problem was that he didn't have enough space to include them all and some were definitely missing. So this is just an addendum to his article with some lesser known but great movies to get you in the gaming mood.

Also here's some good news for you, most of these are available on DVD at the moment with the others due out anytime. At the time of writing it was just announced that Victory at Sea is coming out on September 30! And for you pirate fans Pirates of the Caribbean should be out December 2nd. But look forward to Master and Commander coming to theaters in November. This one looks to up for Oscar contention (and come on, Russell Crowe in command of a frigate! should be great). There's also upcoming movies on Troy, 2 on Alexander the Great and a new miniseries by Tom Hanks and Steven Spielberg similar to Band of Brothers based in the Pacific.

Anyway on with the list. The first few you've probably heard of but must've slipped Matt's mind when he was crunch writing the issue:

Battleground

US 1949; 118 min. fullscreen b&w NR

Dir: William Wellman. Van Johnson, Ricardo Montalban, James Whitmore

Only a small handful of films can match this world war 2 classic of the 101st airborne at Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge. Although later chronicled more realistically in Band of Brothers, this is still a great film for skirmish level inspiration.

We Were Soldiers

US, 2002; 138 min. widescreen Color R

Dir: Randall Wallace. Mel Gibson, Madelene Stowe, Greg Kinnear, Sam Elliot

A fantastic film about large unit actions in Vietnam. Declared by the man the film is based on, Lt. Col. Hal Moore, as the most accurate movie about Vietnam it portrays the dogged defiance of the Viet Cong and the determined Air Cav in the battle of Ia Drang Valley ("the Valley of Death").

Patton

US, 1969; 171 min. widescreen 2.35:1 Color PG

Dir: Franklin J. Schaffner. George C. Scott, Karl Malden

Winner of the 1970 best picture academy award (and well deserving of it), this film can inspire any armchair general to get off his butt and lead his troops to victory.

The Patriot

US 2000; 165 min. widescreen color R

Dir: Roland Emmerich. Mel Gibson, Heath Ledger, Joely Richardson, Jason Isaacs

One of the few Revolutionary War films out there, this one (although with some historical inaccuracies) really gives you the feel of the period.

Cleopatra

US 1963; 248 min. widescreen color G

Dir: Joseph L. Mankiewicz. Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, Rex Harrison

Romans! Egyptians! Although Heavy with the drama of the love triangle of Cleopatra, Caesar and Mark Anthony few films capture the battle tactics of Roman troops as well (but see also Gladiator and Spartacus).

Seven Samurai

Japan 1954; 207 min. fullscreen b&w NR

Dir: Akira Kurosawa. Toshiro Mifune, Takashi Shimura, Keiko Tsushima

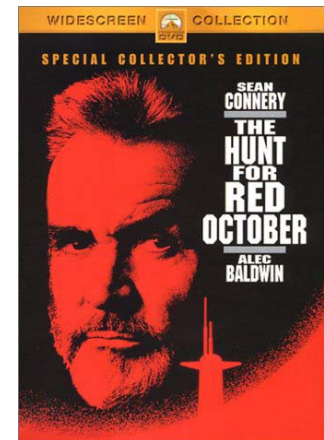
I was surprised Matt missed this one as it can drive anyone to run out and pick up some Old Glory Samurai at any moment. Sure its old and has subtitles, but so what! This movie is one of the best movies EVER! Certainly no other samurai movie comes close.

The Hunt for Red October

US 1990; 135 min. widescreen color PG

Dir: John McTiernan. Alec Baldwin, Sean Connery, Scott Glenn, James Earl Jones

Subs and more subs. A book so good that a scenario based on it is included with the 3rd edition of Harpoon. Although the movie is very Hollywoodized its a great mood setting for dimming the lights and pulling out the blue sheet for your naval minis.



Thirteen Days

US 2000; 147 min. widescreen color PG-13

Dir: Roger Donaldson. Kevin Costner, Bruce Greenwood, Steven Culp

Much like Red October, the urge to command the fleets comes quickly after viewing segments of this film dealing with the Cuban missile crisis blockade.

Sink the Bismark!

UK 1960; 97 min. widescreen b&w NR

Dir: Lewis Gilbert. Kenneth More, Dana Wynter

But unlike the previous two, this one really gets the blood going. Based on

Movies & Wargaming Revisited (cont.)

historical fact this movie is (in my opinion) the quintessential world war 2 naval movie (sorry Matt but Midway doesn't cut it near as good as this one). Big fleet actions and early carrier attacks by the British as they go after the greatest battleship the Germans ever put the sea. Don't hesitate to view this one.



The Lost Battalion

US 2001; 120 min. fullscreen color NR

Rick Schroder

Although not taking place in the trenches this movie nonetheless is an excellent take on the novel and well done by A&E.

The Rough Riders

US 1997; 120 min. fullscreen color NR

Dir: John Milius. Tom Berenger, Sam Eliot, Gary Busey, Brad Johnson

A miniseries made by TNT it has a great climax on San Juan Hill.

Now here are a few lesser known films and the new rash of mini-series that are still great for inspiration:

Piece of Cake

UK, 1994; 300 min. fullscreen Color NR

Dir: Ian Toynton. Boyd Gaines, Neil Dudgeon, Nat Parker, Tom Burlinson

Miniseries from Masterpiece Theater about a squadron of Spitfires from the Phony War through the Battle of Britain.

Not as beautifully filmed as it could've been but some of the best air combat since Battle of Britain.

The Vikings

US, 1958; 118 min. widescreen 2.35:1 Color NR

Dir: Richard Fleischer. Kirk Douglas, Tony Curtis, Ernest Borgnine, Janet Leigh

If it has vikings in it, I'm happy. Not an award winner but how many films are made about vikings? Don't mention the dreadful "the Longships"!

Damn the Defiant!

UK 1962; 101 min. widescreen color NR

Dir: Lewis Gilbert. Alec Guinness, Dirk Bogard, Anthony Quayle

A classic film of battles on the sea during the time of the mutiny by ships crews due to the harsh treatment by the commanders of vessels.

Sharpe's Rifles

UK 1994; 100 min. each fullscreen color NR

Dir: Tom Clegg. Sean Bean, Assumpta Serna, Brian Cox, Daragh O'Malley

A series of 14- 2 hour episodes following the 95th rifles in Portugal and Spain during the war with Napoleon. Not all are rewarding but overall this is a fantastic series about Richard Sharpe and his rise in rank while commanding a rifle company under Wellington.

Horatio Hornblower

UK 1999; 100 min. each fullscreen color NR

Dir: Andrew Grieve. Ioan Gruffudd, Robert Lindsay, Dorian Healy, Michael Byrne

What more can be said about this amazing series based on the novels by Forester. Exciting, dramatic and just plain fun, don't miss these or the future installments currently in production.

Roughnecks: Starship Troopers Chronicles

US 1999; 97 min. each fullscreen color PG

The breakthrough in computer animation has enabled the story based on Heinlein's book to be done justice. Although never completed (it was canceled before the last 3 episodes were made) it is much better than the movie and a necessary viewing for anyone playing sci fi.

Here are some others to add to the list of must sees:

The Crossing

US, 1999; 100 min. fullscreen color NR

Dir: Robert Harmon. Jeff Daniels, Roger Rees, Sebastian Roche

U-571

US 2000; 117 min. widescreen 2.35:1 color PG-13

Dir: Jonathan Mostow. Matthew McConaughey, Bill Paxton, Harvey Keitel

We Dive At Dawn

UK 90 min. B&W

Dir: Anthony Asquith. John Mills, Eric Portman

Khartoum

US 1966; 136 min. widescreen color NR

Dir: Basil Dearden. Charlton Heston, Laurence Olivier, Richard Johnson

The Far Pavilions

UK 1984; 303 min. fullscreen color NR

Ben Cross, Amy Irving, Omar Sharif, Sir John Gielgud, Christopher Lee

Red Dawn

US, 1984; 114 min. widescreen Color PG-13

Dir: John Milus. Patrick Swayze, C. Thomas Howell, Lea Thompson, Ben Johnson

The Four Feathers

US 2002; 130 min. widescreen color PG-13

Dir: Shenhar Kapur. Heath Ledger, Wes Bentley, Kate Hudson, Djimon Hounsou

Age of Reason Scenario Replay: Ottomans vs. Austrians

One of our favorite rules sets is Warfare in the Age of Reason. 90% of our battles fought with these rules are close run affairs and the rules seem to have captured that historical flavor of the period. In preparation for the forthcoming AOR supplement and the campaign that should be in it, we decided to get back into AOR after a six month break.

The scenario was a meeting engagement between an Ottoman and Austrian force on a randomly rolled up battlefield from the first edition. We like the first edition's randomly generated terrain maps as they have a lot of interesting terrain on them! Unfortunately for the Ottomans, the die roll produced a river splitting the board with numerous forests and villages. Definitely not the kind of

terrain for a light cavalry and irregular force!

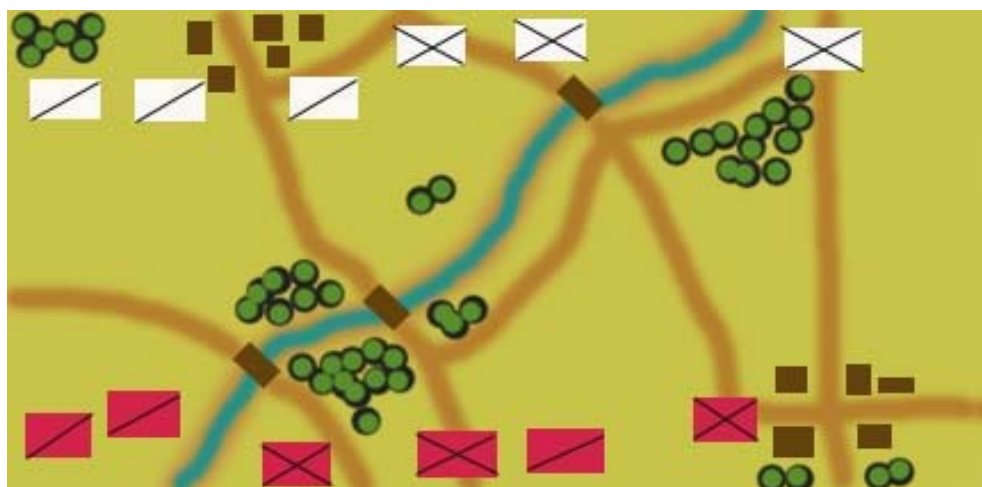
Both armies had about 30 strength points, broken up into three cavalry and three infantry brigades. The Ottomans had plenty of cavalry units, but most were classified as irregular and could not charge formed units frontally, which added some complications to the battle plan.



The Austrians deploy in front of the village on their right flank.

The Ottomans planned to seize the lower bridge, hold the center, and delay on the left. The Austrians planned to delay on the lower bridge, seize the center bridge, then try for a stalemate on their right flank. Both sides had most of their cav on the extreme flank with their infantry ready

to seize the bridges. The Austrians were able to begin with one brigade of infantry on the opposite bank because of the layout. With everyone's units deployed the battle was about to begin.



Austrians are white and Ottomans are red. Each symbol represents a brigade.



The Battle Begins

On the first turn the Austrians moved their cavalry up cautiously, getting ready to support a massive charge. The one infantry brigade across the river began to take up a blocking position while the other two infantry brigades moved towards the center bridge.

The Ottoman cavalry also moved out to engage the Austrian cavalry,



Ottomans move to block the center bridge.

while the Ottoman infantry began to block the left and center bridges. On the far right flank, the Ottomans began to deploy for an attack on the bridge.

On turn two the Austrian and Ottoman cavalry began a series of charges, retreats, and rallies that would last several turns. The Ottoman infantry on the right flank began to skirmish with the Austrians holding the bridge. Both sides began to deploy their units around the bridges.

By turn three each side was ready to make it's move. All forces were in position to carry out a series of attacks.

Age of Reason (cont.)

The Austrians tried to cross the center bridge, but were repulsed on their first attempt. The Ottomans were likewise not having much success seizing the bridge on their right flank. By turn five the Austrians had cleared out the center bridge area, but could not expand their bridgehead. The Ottomans, using a series of cavalry charges and with fire-power by the Janissaries, were able to wipe out the center bridgehead.

By now the cavalry battle was over. The Ottomans had the initial advantages in the first encounters, but were unable to succeed because of horrendous die roll-



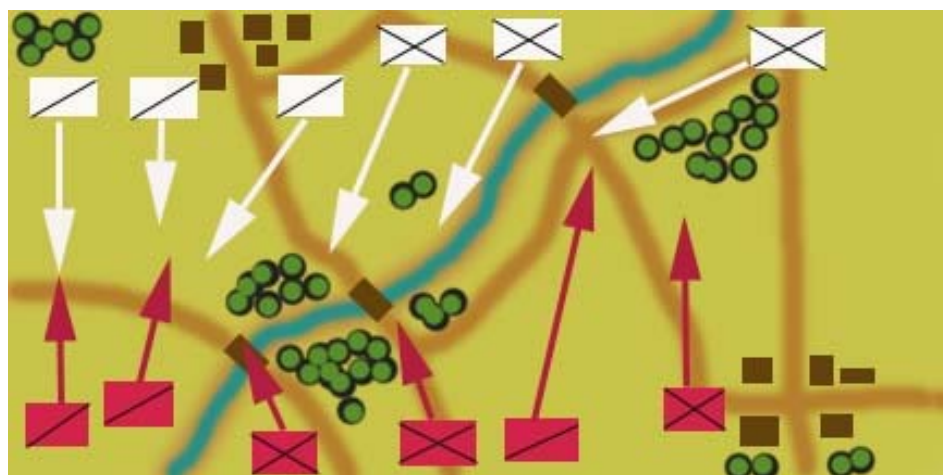
Austrians redeploying to meet the Ottoman light cavalry threat.

ing. This allowed the Austrians to put more and more units into the melees and finally the numbers began to tell. The Ottoman cavalry broke and was forced back beyond the river. A few Austrian cavalry units ventured a little too close to the bridge area and got shelled by the Ottoman artillery, suffering severe losses.

Both sides were still determined to take the bridges, so new attacks were organized and plans made for the defense of any bridge that was still in friendly hands.

The Ottomans launched an all out assault on the right flank on turn six. While one Austrian infantry unit was engaged by light troops and Janissaries, the other brigade came under heavy attack by cavalry. Forced to form square, it was hit by two cavalry brigades and broke. The victorious cavalry pursued right into a new square and were thrown back with losses. The loss of the first infantry unit now put the Austrians on the defensive as they were being pressed on three sides.

The Austrians still had a lot of combat power in the center and the left. They began to move forward to seize the two bridges before the end of the game. Both sides had lost several flags and guns, so the chance of withdrawing was a factor.



Finale

The Austrians tried one more attack over the center bridge, but it was repulsed. The game was finally called due to time, but both sides were pretty much back to where they had begun and the game was called a draw. Both sides were almost at the point where they had to start rolling for withdrawal and with

the amount of flags and guns lost, the first side to roll would probably have lost.



The terrain played a critical part in this game. Once across a bridge there was no room to maneuver, so it became a replay of Burnside's Bridge on three fronts. Both

sides tried to launch coordinated attacks, but were unable to succeed. Playing with and against the Ottomans is radically different than other Seven Years War armies as they have plenty of light troops and good quality cavalry, but the regular infantry is poor quality and the irregular nature of the army means it needs to be used in open terrain. A good scenario that provided some unusual challenges.

WFHGS Club Update

This is just a summary of what our group has been up to since Issue #7. Our group currently has 11 members and we average about 7 for our meetings every other Friday night. We prefer to do our gaming as a large group, so we don't often get a chance to play-test many new rules because we need a lot of figs for 7-10 player games.

We also do some gaming on off weeks, usually focusing on board games. There are still some of us who enjoy a good wargame with paper and cardboard! Since Issue #7 we have played Panzergrenadier, Napoleon in Europe, Paths of Glory, and Wilderness War.

Paths of Glory covers World War One while Wilderness War covers the French and Indian War. Both games are based off of the Paths of Glory system. The maps have point to point movement and the units are large formations. Both games are driven by event cards and are very challenging. While playing both of them, Jeff and I felt that the game had a lot of replay value as there were numerous strategies that could be used.

Panzergrenadier is an entire series of games by Avalanche Press which focus on tactical level actions of WW2. We've tried a North Africa scenario and one from the Battle of the Bulge. Both games were fun and the game system works well.

As seen by our featured article, we are now working on air to air combat games, particularly for the WW2 and Vietnam periods. I've been working for months on doing an English Channel convoy action, so I had to create an ocean mat and about 30 aircraft bases with ocean scenery. Also, we needed some ships, so I chose the 1/600th range from Skytrex along with some 1/600th plastic ships from Airfix. There should be pictures of



some of these battles in upcoming issues.



We are still excited about the Arc of Fire system. We ran a very successful South African scenario which featured a lot of armor on both sides. The WW2 action is reported on the next page, but this system can be used success-

fully for any small unit actions from 1900 to the present day. Dennis has a bunch of modern vehicles such as Soviet tanks in 15mm, that we may try a hypothetical action in the Serbia region.

Our Age of Eagles armies for the Napoleonic period continue to grow. I have



finished off a few more Russian divisions and Gary acquired an Austrian collection that will be put to good use. We should soon have enough forces to have 8-10 player games.

We have tried two new rules systems over the last few months. The first was Dogs of War, which is a modern skirmish system. Players usually command one or two squads as this is a very detailed one to one set of rules. I found that the combat system is very good, but game play needs some work.

The second game was a playtest of Piquet: Les Grognaards. As it has been stated many times in the gaming community, you either love these rules or hate them. It did give a pretty good game, but strange things happened continuously. A little too chaotic for my tastes, but I think it generated enough interest for a second try.

On the non-historical side of things,

several of us had a chance to play War-machine. This game is set in a fantasy world with steam powered machines coupled with magic. To sum it up: this game rocks! Not something I could play every week, but it is fun. Nothing but death and destruction as far as the eye can see. The initiative, magic, movement, and combat systems work very well. The game is professionally done with great miniatures and you only need the \$40 boxed set to start. A very worthwhile investment.

We also played a huge Renaissance game with the Age of Discovery rules that was fun. There's nothing quite like seeing the colorful armies of that period.

Another favorite that we played in between issues was Katana. This is a



very bloody set of rules for 25mm skirmishes, but everyone has a good time.

We are still working on a number of



projects, including building up our WECW forces, more Warmaster stuff, adding terrain, rebasing figs for AOE, and buying everything in sight! On top of this, we are still experimenting with WW2 rules in several scales, talking about doing ancients, and trying to decide which period to focus on next. Too many periods and not enough free time!

Arc of Fire Scenario Replay

This was our fourth game using Arc of Fire for WW2 actions in 25mm. It was also the second game of the night as the first one ended on the second turn when the Germans, in a bizarre moment of gaming history, lost all of their armor and the game!

The scenario premise was that a German recon squad was holed up in a stone walled cemetery behind enemy lines. A hastily formed German battlegroup was tasked with breaking through to them and rescuing the trapped squad. The Germans had a Tiger tank, two MK IVs, two

halftracks, and two panzergrenadier squads. The Americans had two Shermans, one M3, and a halftrack with a 57mm anti-tank gun. The Americans also had two squads of paratroops and a regular infantry squad with bazookas.

The German plan was to drive the Tiger up the right flank, hopefully drawing most of the American anti-tank assets over to that side. Then, the two Mk. IVs would escort the panzergrenadiers

as they tried to break through the center. The Americans had planned to keep fire on the cemetery while they determined the German point of attack. Several groups were set up to quickly respond to any axis of advance.

The game opened with a cautious German advance, moving from point to point with one of the armor units watching at all times. By the third turn the Germans were ready

to make their assault. Meanwhile, the German squad was taking heavy fire from the surrounding hills. What started out as a small skirmish to test each side's strength now became a full fledged firefight.

The Tiger began to advance up the right flank, passing the farmhouse on the left. The two PZ IVs then broke out into the center of the board and immediately came under fire. Both sides continued to have a long range armor firefight, but finally one of the PZ IVs was

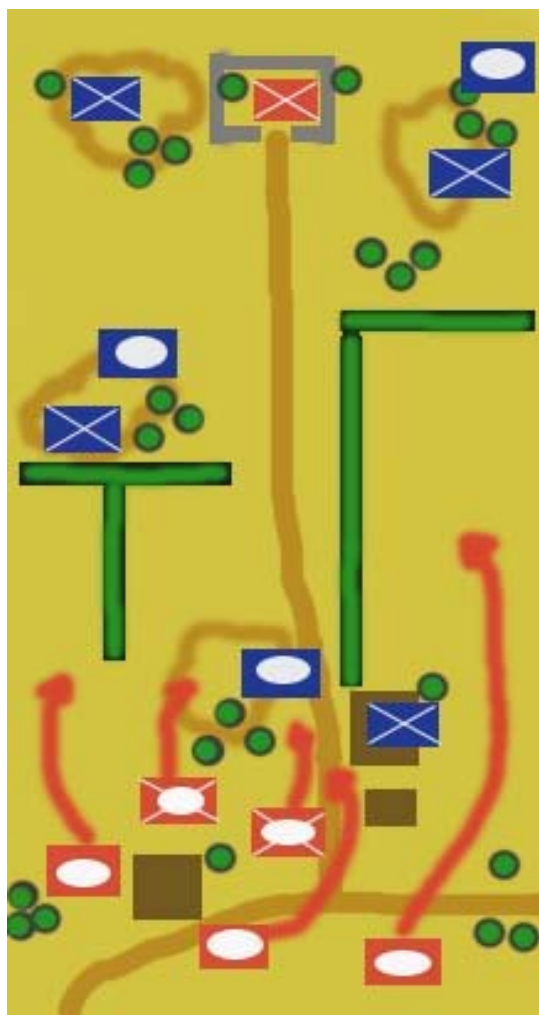
knocked out, followed quickly by a Sherman.

The panzergrenadiers dismounted near the center hilltop, hoping to move into the trees and provide covering fire. They were met by an ambush and took heavy casualties. The defenders at the cemetery had been doing pretty good, inflicting several casualties on their besiegers, but then started to lose the firefight due to the sheer amount of firepower now coming their way.

The Tiger was trying to advance, but found itself under attack by

Airborne troops and anti-tank assets. The Germans were now desperately trying to reach the cemetery, but the defensive fire was murderous and accurate. The panzergrenadiers were being slaughtered and the Tiger tank was finally knocked out by several close assault attacks. The remaining PZ IV was still under fire, but with no reserves they had no hope of reaching the remains of the trapped recon squad. At this point the game was called.

Arc of Fire works well for WW2 skirmish games. The action is fast and furious, plus the results seem within historical tolerances. If we had the time, we would have used hidden movement for both sides, which would have drastically changed the scenario. However, for a game that was thrown together in about five minutes, it played pretty good and all of the players had an enjoyable game.





WASATCH FRONT HISTORICAL GAMING SOCIETY

Meets every other Friday night in the Slat Lake City area from 7p to midnight. We play Seven Years War, Napoleonic, ACW, WW2 with Arc of Fire and CD3, naval, air combat, Samurai, medieval, renaissance, and fantasy combat.

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Does anyone know what this trend towards larger figures is all about? Since January there has been a run of 35mm, 42mm, and 54mm wargaming figures hitting the market. With the price of the figures, difficulties in finding terrain that will fit them, etc..., I can't think that there's too much of a market for this for any company to be successful. Why skirmish in 54mm when you can do it more easily in 25mm? My suspicions are that many designers and companies have run out of ideas or are bored with doing the regular 25mm and 15mm scales. Why not finish off figure ranges that you've already started? I think that figure companies need to start listening to their audiences a little more. Gone are the days that you can just put anything out on the market and it will sell because that's all there is. Gamers are looking for specific items and will gravitate to those companies who provide it for them. There is too much competition for the gamers' dollar to just be randomly throwing out new ranges in bizarre scales.

Also, the number of new companies that are putting out high quality terrain has increased. Some of the new painted buildings from The Miniature Building Authority now means that there should be no excuse for having awful terrain on gaming boards anymore. I still feel that terrain is one area where many gaming groups have a long way to go.

WFHGS Back Issues and Publications

With this being Issue #8, perhaps it's a good time to list what the back issues had in case anyone wants to download a particular issue. Here's a summary of the previous seven issues:

#1: Our first issue and it shows! A CD3 scenario, movie reviews, and some product reviews highlight our first effort.

#2: A much better effort. This issue features several articles on the upcoming Age of Reason fleet rules, an Age of Discovery battle report, product and movie reviews, plus a historical tour of an ACW fort.

#3: An Age of Reason and CD3 battle report, the second part of a feature on scenario design, A feature on the Pig Wars rules, another historical tour, movie and product reviews, plus our first update by the NUTS group.

#4: Axis and Allies feature article, a huge NUTS update on Historicon and Gettysburg, Age of Discovery battle re-

port, a Camden scenario, and product/movie reviews.

#5: Featured article is Age of Eagles with a battle report, a NUTS update, a huge CD3 scenario in North Africa, and product reviews.

#6: Interview with Tod Kershner, Age of Discovery battle report, a NUTS update, a historical tour of Basing House, article on Kampfgruppe Commander and product reviews.

#7: Interview with Dale Wood, wargaming and film, a Sword and Flame battle report, a Katana battle report, another massive North Africa CD3 scenario by the NUTS group, and product reviews.

Also available on our web site are a number of products designed to help gamers.

Assegai! This is a complete Zulu War campaign system with maps, counters, and cards. Can be played as a board game as well.

Intruders: This is a Vietnam air to ground supplement for the Phantoms rules.

Crux of Battle: This is an optional command and control system for Renaissance era games. Although designed for AOD, it will work for other rules systems.

Beyond the Salle: This is a Seven Years hypothetical campaign in Germany.

There is currently a large Italian Wars campaign system in the works. The maps, counters, and charts are finished, but the rules are still in the playtesting phase. Keep checking the sites for updates.

