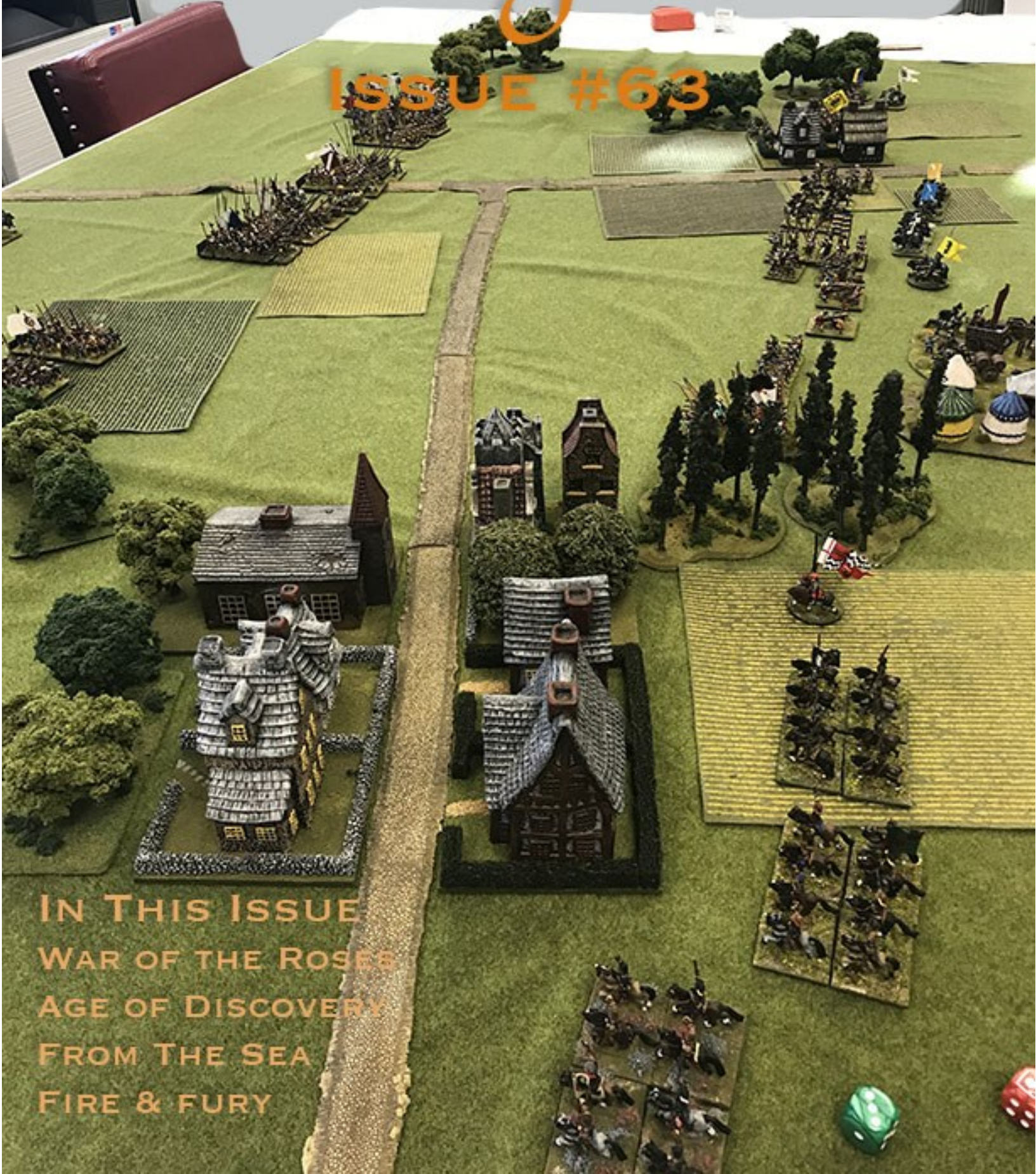


Warning Order

ISSUE #63



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AGE OF DISCOVERY
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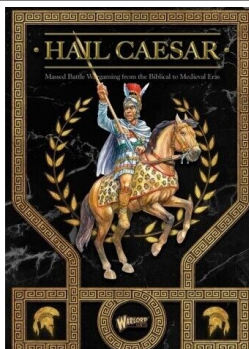


Warning order

Hail Caesar 2nd Edition: 1st Playtest

When we first played the War of the Roses using Hail Caesar we were short a few members of our group, mostly due to the weather. After numerous other delays we finally got back to trying our hand at this interesting period a second time and we would be using the new edition of the Hail Caesar rules. Leading up to the game we posted a few times on the email group for the club about the changes for leaders and how medieval/War of the Roses troops are now handled.

For this battle we were back in our usual surroundings, which is a table at the Trenchworx factory site. This would be a bit smaller than the first game as it would be played on a 6 x 4 table with only five players available. After scaling down the forces the terrain was set up. It wasn't until much later that we determined that the terrain should have been scaled back as well! What looked pretty good at the set up actually ended up creating some traffic jams and difficult to attack areas, not to mention trying to deploy troops.



The Yorkist side had the following units, organized into four divisions:

- (2) medium artillery pieces
- (1) unit of arquebus
- (1) unit of skirmishers
- (6) units of household troops
- (3) units of heavy infantry
- (4) units of dismounted knights/men at arms in small units.
- One cavalry division with one mounted knights/men at arms unit and one unit of light cavalry.

The Lancastrian side was almost identical, but swapped out a unit of heavy infantry for a regular sized unit of archers and instead of an arquebus unit there was an additional unit of skirmishers. The scenario rated the King as a 3, while all of the other leaders were 2s with everyone having a command value of 8. We set up by division, then went over the rule changes.

The biggest change is probably the leaders and their abilities, particularly the command re-roll for the commanding general. After that it was a discussion on how to close ranks, shooting at armored troops to their front, longer range for English bows, and the special abilities of various units. After that, it was onto turn 1. (cont. on p3)



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Special points of interest:

- Two War of the Roses battle reports using Hail Caesar.
- A complete campaign game called From The Sea.
- Two new Engagements scenarios.
- Salt Lake Open 2023 show report
- Multiple battle reports for several periods.

Hail Caesar 2nd Edition-1st Playtest (cont.)



(cont. from p2) The Lancastrians had some issues with their set up, namely the overall commander was on the far right, plus they had to traverse the village and the bridge. It didn't help things that the first command roll was a failure, then so was the re-roll! At least in the center the Lancastrians were able to get Clifford's command moving and towards the walled area of the farm. Both sides had their cavalry in reserve, thinking that they could move quickly to intervene anywhere on the board, which was definitely mistaken!

The action got heated up on the Yorkist right flank pretty quickly. There was an initial exchange of archery fire, then both sides closed in a series of attacks and counterattacks. Just when it looked like the Yorkists were going to prevail, several bad rolls and a Lancastrian counterattack pushed them back to the start line. After a few more turns, the Yorkist

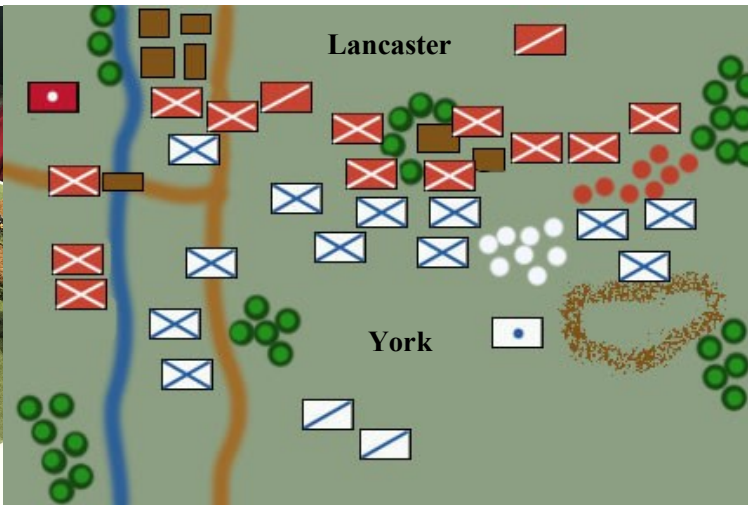
units (who had fewer hits on them) pushed back yet again, creating some holes in the Lancastrian defenses. Oxford's remaining reserves were called forward to check the Yorkist advance.

On the Yorkist left, a promising start soon turned into scattered fighting. Despite the slow Lancastrian advance on that flank, the Yorkists were unable to take advantage of it. This resulted in the Yorkist attack on the Lancastrian just outside the village and being unable to block Lancastrian units coming over the bridge. The Yorkist command on that side also had to keep a wary eye on the center and for the appearance of the Lancastrian cavalry. This simply left the command too spread out, with three areas to cover. The Lancastrians slowly moved up to the river and were setting up for a long range barrage.

In the center the battle really started to

take shape. Both the Yorkist division under the King himself and Clifford's division on the Yorkist side piled into the center, trying to control the walled area next to the farm. There were a series of charges back and forth, with both sides taking a lot of hits, but somehow rallying just enough to stay in the fight. All players were focused on this one area as if either side lost it would greatly change the course of the battle!

Back on the Yorkist right, there were gains being made, albeit slowly. Every attempt to make a breakthrough, then turn towards the center was rebuffed. The grinding nature of the battles meant that both sides were getting close to breaking. A few more attacks and Oxford's Lancastrian division finally did break, but the Yorkists on that flank were heavily damaged and were in no shape to continue the pursuit or intervene elsewhere. (cont. on p4)



Hail Caesar 2nd Edition-1st Playtest (cont.)



(cont. from p3) On the left flank, the Yorkists units were just trying to meet all of the threats. The battle in front of the town was inconclusive, there was an engagement near the center where they were trying to support the King, and they were getting hammered by archery from the other side of the river! While more troops were trying to get to the front, one unit rolled snake eyes on its break test and all of a sudden things went from bad to worse. The Yorkist command moved further away from the river and decided to focus on supporting the center.

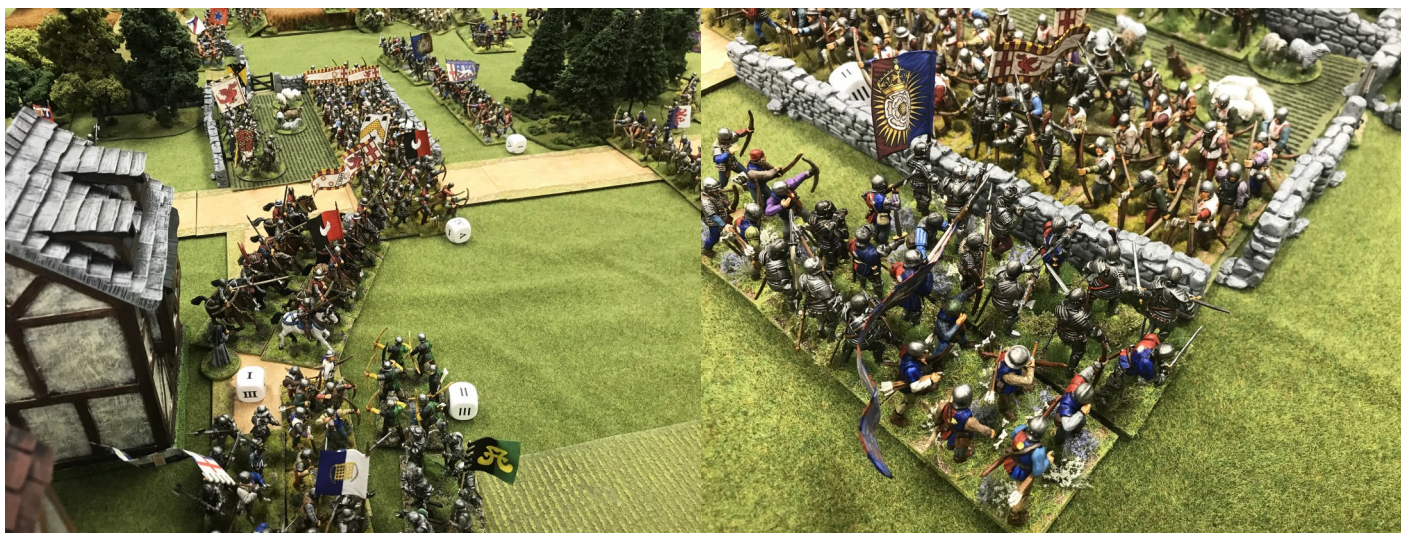
In the center the King's forces actually got across the wall and drove back Clifford's division. There was a brief moment where things looked really promising and the Lancastrian army might get cut in half, but as quickly as that chance appeared it vanished.

Clifford's units counterattacked, destroying one Yorkist unit and driving back the others in support. Looking around it was clear that the Yorkist battle plan had failed and there simply weren't enough units to press the attack any longer. The Lancastrians weren't in good enough shape to decisively win by pursuing the Yorkist units, but they had won the day and the battle.

First, the terrain was too constricting for 28mm troops! The cavalry of both sides never really got into action, where it could have been decisive for both sides. Definitely a lesson to be learned here for setting up scenarios in the future. The other thing that we had a hard time adjusting to, but we felt was a fun aspect of this period, is that units stay in the fight for much longer than other periods. This of course is due to the heavy armor and

saves that the units get. This means that there is usually a 50% chance of a save on a hit, so units that get some good rolls can take a lot of abuse! We discussed how this might affect our tactics in future battles, but we're unsure of what works best at this time.

We still felt that there was too much archery. During the war, it seemed like there was an arrow storm, then everyone plowed right into each other. With the rules it seems like some units can sit on the flanks and fire forever! Hopefully when the War of the Roses army book comes out this is addressed. Overall, the latest edition of the rules worked pretty well. The funny thing is that we really never used a lot of the new leader features nor the Closed Ranks rule! We'll definitely set up another scenario soon for this interesting period.



Hail Caesar 2nd Edition-1st Playtest (cont.)



A few more images from the battle, showing the desperate fight around the farm walls and outbuildings. The Yorkists could not make any headway, despite winning several of the individual melees. The cavalry never got into action due to the traffic jams!

Engagements #53: Counterattack Confusion

Situation: Red has begun their long awaited offensive and have started crossing a major river. Red has several bridgeheads and are now reinforcing these with armor, artillery, and more infantry for the breakout phase of the operation. Blue's command structure has been seriously degraded and local units are conducting various operations with limited control. Red needs to breakout into Blue's territory while Blue needs to destroy the bridgeheads.

Period: Designed primarily for the WW2/Modern period, but could be modified for Horse & Musket.

Table Size: 6 x 4, but a larger table could be used with more terrain added.

Terrain Notes: The open ground is undulating and should have several natural depressions and folds. The hills are gently rising (treat as rough), but do provide a height advantage. The villages at A and B are a combination of wood and stone buildings. The farms at C consist of several buildings that can form strong-points. Woods are light, but provide cover and vehicles should be penalized for moving through them.

Scale: The scenario is designed for any scale.

Red Forces: Red's forces have begun crossing a major river and have three bridgeheads. One of the bridgeheads (at #1 or #3 has a temporary bridge in place while the other has a ferry in operation. Red has the following units available for the scenario:

- (10) Armor units
- (4) Self-propelled guns
- (4) units of mechanized infantry
- (9) units of infantry
- (2) units of combat engineers
- (1) unit of mortars
- (2) AT guns or AT SPGs
- (2) batteries of medium artillery (off-board)
- (1) temporary bridge & (1) ferry

Set Up: Red must first place the temporary bridge, which can go at either of the roads that end at the river (bridges were previously destroyed at these loca-

tions). The road that does not get the temporary bridge gets the ferry. Red then places 15 units in the red areas on the map (representing forces that have already crossed). The middle red area can only have infantry, engineers, and the mortars deployed there. The remaining forces are placed on the opposite side of the river and will come on during the scenario.

Red Orders: Advance quickly to engage Blue's forces and keep them away from the crossings. Once there is sufficient force across the river, exit your forces off the road exits at 2 and 4.

Blue Forces: Blue has three groups that have been scraped together from various forces in the area. Blue's command structure has broken down, so there is no level of cooperation between any of the groups.

Group A: (6) infantry units, (1) unit of mortars, and (1) AT gun

Group B: (3) units of armor and (3) units of mech infantry

Group C: (3) armor units, (2) units of infantry, and (1) AT gun

Blue is supported by one battery of off-board medium artillery.

Blue Orders: Group A: Hold the line marked in blue in the center of the map. If necessary, fall back and hold the villages at A & B.

Group B: Counterattack the bridgeheads.

Group C: Prevent Red from exiting the roads at 2 and 4.

Blue Set Up: Group A starts along the line in the center of the map marked in blue. One unit can start at each of the farms marked at C. All Group A units can be entrenched.

Group B's units come on at either 3 or 4 marked on the map. Roll 1D6 each turn to see how many units arrive until all units are on board.

Group C's units enter at 1 or 2 marked on the map. Roll 1D6 each turn to see how many units arrive until

all units are on board.

Game Length: 12 turns

Special Rules: There are several special rules for this scenario:

1. The temporary bridge can only take 3 units per turn. Red should line up the units behind the bridge in the order that they appear. The ferry can only transport one unit per turn to the other side of the river. Obviously, Red needs to seriously consider where the temporary bridge and ferry should be located, along with which units should start with each.
2. The three Blue groups must stick to their original orders.

Victory Conditions: At the end of 12 turns Red must have exited at least 8 units off the road exits at 2 and 4 to achieve a minor victory. If Red also captures the villages at A and B, then it turns into a major victory. Any other result is a victory for Blue.

Variants: Add airpower to one or both sides to balance out player skill/experience. If Red feels that the ferry is going to really limit their operations for the scope of the game, the ferry could be replaced with a second temporary bridge.

Blue's central position could be enhanced with minefields and fortifications if Red is breaking through this area too easily.

For Modern period actions, replace the AT guns with ATGM teams/vehicles and each side could have a few attack helicopters added as well.

Finally, let Blue's groups have an opportunity to change their orders and coordinate actions to defeat Red's plans.



Engagements #54: Race for the Ford!

Situation: Blue is moving their army to its winter quarters to rebuild after several defeats in the field. The advance guard is moving along a major road with the main army following slowly behind. Thinking that Red has already moved to winter quarters, Blue's progress has been slower than normal. There is a ford up ahead then the junction in the town, which when Blue reaches that means that they will be in safe territory and the current campaign will end.

Period: Designed primarily for the Ancients or Medieval period.

Table Size: 6 x 4, but a larger table could be used with more terrain added.

Terrain Notes: The main terrain feature is the river, which has a ford at B. The river is fairly deep, but can be crossed at any point by infantry and cavalry, which treat it as rough terrain (units must move up to the river bank on one turn, then spend the next turn crossing the river. The turn after that the unit can move normally). One of the banks has a steep incline where defenders should get at least a +1 benefit in melee. Artillery can only cross at the ford. Buildings are wood and stone. The forested areas should be treated as light forest, providing some cover, but only a slight loss of movement.

Scale: The scenario is designed for any scale, but might play better with units larger than skirmish scale (1:1).

Red Forces: Red's forces have reached the ford and are setting up blocking positions. Their job will be to delay Blue until the main army can reach the ford and/or cross the river to attack Blue.

Advance Guard: One unit of light cavalry, one unit of archers, and two units of infantry.

Main Body: Two units of heavy cavalry, three units of archers, one unit of skirmishers, two artillery units, and ten units of infantry.

Set Up: Red's Advance Guard is set up with two units at B, one unit at the ford, and one unit in the town at C. Red's Main Body enters at A in column formations beginning on Turn 2.

Red Orders: Prevent Blue from crossing the ford, then reaching the road junction in the town so that they can then exit the board.

Blue Forces: Blue has been moving rather slowly back to their winter quarters. There is an advance guard moving in front of the main body, but no opposition is expected. The main body is following behind in a stretched out column. The following units are available:

Advance Guard: One unit of light cavalry, one unit of infantry, one unit of archers, and one unit of skirmishers.

Main Body: 10 units of infantry, 2 units of heavy cavalry, 2 archer units, 2 artillery units, and one unit of skirmishers.

Blue Orders: Move quickly to defeat any blocking forces, then secure the ford for the units of the main body to cross. Red can attack across the river (although it may take a while to set that up), so have a force available to counterattack where necessary.

Blue Set Up: Blue's Advance Guard begins at A. The units of the Main Body begin to enter the board at B on turn 1 in column formation.

Game Length: 12 turns

Special Rules: There are several special rules for this scenario:

1. When entering the board, all units of both sides must enter along the road in column formation. On the second turn after entering, units may adopt any formation.
2. Blue's main body is strung out along the line of march. Each turn, roll

1D6 and that is how many units may enter the board that turn. Continue rolling each turn until all units of the Main Body have entered the board.

Victory Conditions: At the end of 12 turns Blue must be in control of the junction in the town at C and have not lost more than 50% of the total number of units in the entire army.

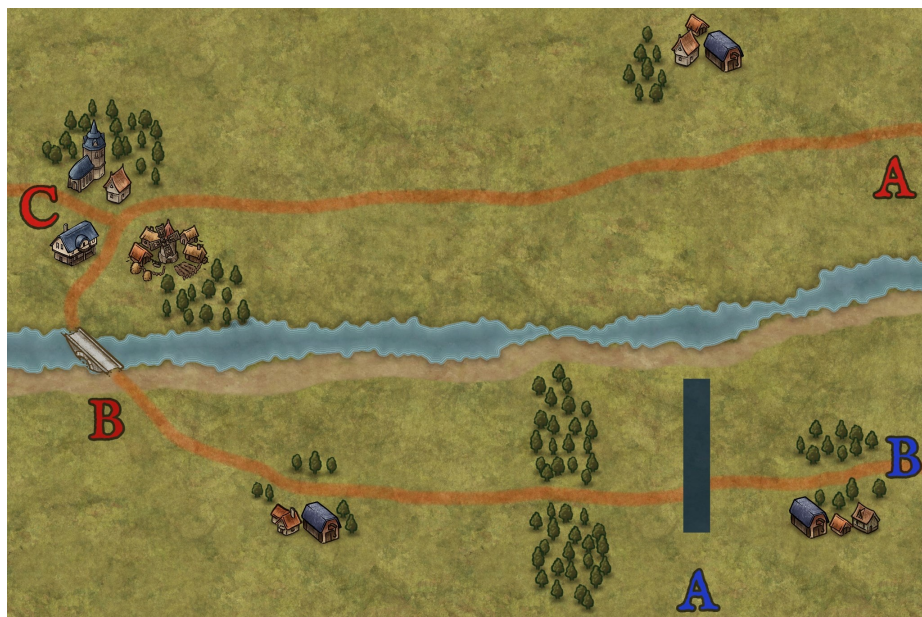
Variants: The easiest variant to add would be to expand the size of the board, then add more units which would allow for more players to be added as well.

You could also change the mix of forces by giving one or both sides more cavalry, an artillery train, or arquebuses for Late Medieval or Renaissance periods.

An interesting variant would be to add several baggage and supply train units to Blue's forces. These would need to be escorted to safety over the ford, which would make for an interesting change in how Blue would defend.

For a more involved scenario, allow B to add fortifications across the river and at the ford, but then allow Blue's Advance Guard to have a few more units.

Finally, the scenario could be adapted to the Horse & Musket period by changing the forces. All archer and skirmisher units should be changed to light troops and/or skirmish capable units. Heavy cavalry could be either cuirassier or dragoons where necessary,



Memoirs of a Miniatures and Board Wargamer Pt. 50

My Evolution of ACW Gaming

One of the first armies I ever painted for miniatures gaming was for the ACW. Why I chose that period is hard to say, especially since at that time I had read maybe one book on the subject! Today, I have an entire bookcase of nothing but ACW books and continue to buy as well as read more about it. At that time (around 1978-79) the Airfix 1/72nd figures were in plentiful supply and having read an ACW article in *Battle* magazine, it was off to the races!

The main issue was what rules to use? I only had a few gaming magazines and it appeared that there were already at least a dozen sets of rules that were already out there. I chose to buy *Rally 'Round the Flag* and it took a few readings to figure out what was going on in terms of miniatures rules! While I had played a few miniatures battles, I owned no sets of rules and mainly played SPI and Avalon Hill board games. Slowly and surely I built up a few brigades, which took awhile as we were still using Humbrol and oil paints back then! The first few games were OK, but nothing to get too excited over.

Another gamer let me borrow a few issues of *Military Modeling*, which for those of you who still remember, had a wargames section in it! Sure enough, there was an ad for a games store that listed miniatures rules, including those under the Newbury series. At this time, Newbury was known as the "not WRG" rules, but they were close. After reading them a few times I tried a game or two out, only to find that they were just as uninspiring. So far, the rules that I had tried were scientific calculations accentuated by die rolls. Everything was a bit too sterile and the games did not play out like a real ACW battle.

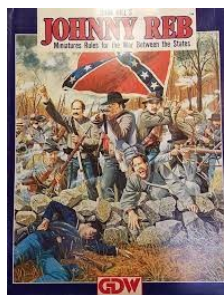
The next step was to try *Stars 'N Bars* from Empire publications. Thinking that Empire was popular since there were a lot of ads for it as well as articles in *The Courier*, I figured that this was what I was looking for. Again, a wrong choice. It wasn't that the rules were bad, it was just that they were different. Then I thought maybe it was the scale I was playing in, so I switched to 6mm Ros

Heroics after an article appeared in *The Courier* about this seemingly new scale. After trying all of the rules I had again with the 6mm figures, nothing really worked.

Fortunately, I was playing Avalon Hill's *Squad Leader* and had seen an ad for John Hill's new set of miniatures rules that were out called *Johnny Reb*. At that time they were put out by a company called Adventure Games and were going to be used with a new range of 10mm figures. Neither the 10mm figures nor Adventure Games survived for too long after *Johnny Reb* came out. However, they were picked up by GDW and that's when things really took off.

I decided that maybe 15mm was the way to go. There were a lot of ads now in the gaming magazines showcasing 15mm and I had just received a catalog from a company called Stone Mountain Miniatures. They had been specializing in 20mm or HO scale for a while, but were now also making 15mm figures. While I waited for my first order I drove down to the local store and bought the last few packs of *Heritage* and *Empire* 15mm ACW figs to get started. These were beautiful figs for the time, but definitely right at 15mm, so they looked a bit smaller than the Stone Mountain figures. After a few months of painting I was ready to go.

The funny thing was at this time there were few if any 15mm buildings! Most



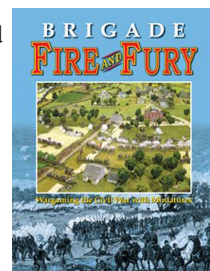
gamers used HO scale train buildings, which were close enough, but it still looked strange. We struggled through our first game, but everyone agreed that this was what we were looking for! For the next several years in between RPGs, *Starfleet Battles*, modern micro-armor, and *Harpoon 2*, our ACW forces continued to grow. We even did *Antietam* in three parts, with well over a thousand figures. For the next 10-15 years *Johnny Reb* battles and campaigns were a way of life. I don't think we went a full year without playing at least 2-3 *Johnny Reb* battles. Then *Johnny Reb III* came out.

At first we were excited. The book looked good, there were new formations, and we thought that ACW gaming couldn't get any better than this. It was only after all of us spent close to six months rebasing everything that we started to see some issues. The biggest issues were that the game simply didn't play the same with the new scale. Couple that with the fact that if you didn't own the rules and really (and I mean really) understand all of the formations and options, you could be at a severe disadvantage. This is exactly what happened when gamers who did not own the rules went up against those who did. All of a sudden, enthusiasm for 15mm ACW started to sink fast.

Long story, but it was at this point where our club split in two, with those who only wanted to do 28mm went their own way while many of us who did all scales went the other. Faced with no permanent place to play, changing lifestyles where staying out until I am to game, etc., we determined that we needed to rethink some things. We were already testing *Age of Eagles* for 15mm Napoleons, so we started looking at *Fire & Fury*, since that is what *Age of Eagles* was based off of.

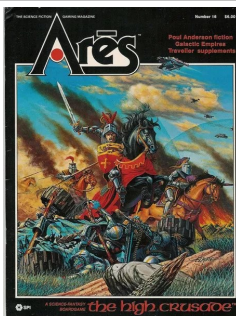
Once we played it we were hooked. Not because we thought it was better than *Johnny Reb*, but that it *fit* what we were trying to do. We rebased all of our figures and haven't looked back since. Will we ever change rules again? I think it is highly doubtful at this stage, even though several of us own other rules such as *Black Powder*. For now, we are continuing to expand our forces for *Fire & Fury*.

The one thing that has seemingly eluded us all of these years is how to represent ACW battlefields on the tabletop. All of the curving streams, roads, hills, etc., really do present a challenge that we never seem to take seriously, even after all of these years! We really need to invest in new rivers, streams, roads, etc., but we just never seem to get around to it. Just too many games and not enough time!



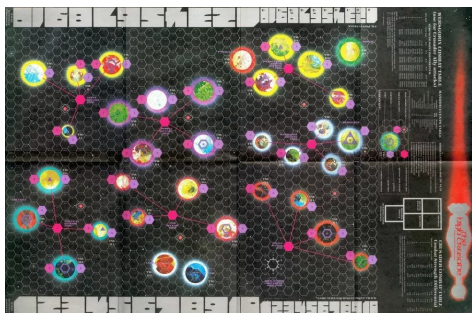
Blast From The Past Pt. 49: High Crusade

Most gamers have either heard of SPI or their popular strategy magazine with a game in it called Strategy & Tactics. In fact, during the 70s and 80s it would have been hard to be a gamer without seeing something about either one at game stores, conventions, ads, etc. What a lot of gamers don't know, however, is that they had a short lived sci-fi/fantasy version of Strategy & Tactics magazine called Ares. The idea was to have some actual science-fiction stories, a board game, reviews, etc., all focused on the growing sci-fi/fantasy aspect of the hobby.



The games themselves were hit and miss, much like Strategy & Tactics. A few of the games have become legend and even one of them is being remade by GMT later this year. One of the more intriguing and well thought of games was High Crusade, based upon the novel of the same name by Poul Anderson. In the novel, set around the time of The Hundred Years War, an alien ship arrives in England. Sir Roger, the protagonist in the book, defeats the aliens, captures their ship, but then thinking they will invade France winds up in an entirely new quadrant of the galaxy! After that, the only thing left to do is go on a crusade against the alien empire, which is what the game is based upon.

As with all magazine games, there is a similarity with the components, mainly due to packaging limitations. Each game has a magazine with the rules stapled in the center, a 22 x 34 map, then one counter sheet of usually around 200 counters. The map here is certainly unusual, with bright, glowing hexes offset with the black colored space background. The charts on one end of the board are readable, but the color choices are a bit odd.



The counters were poorly cut, a bit off center, and clipping them was certainly a challenge. The graphics are very basic, even for the 80s. Overall, the components are functional, but not much more than that.

Now on to the rules, which are really unusual. At this time, SPI was transitioning to TSR, so the style of the rules was changed. Instead of the standard SPI case/text format, it was changed to a heading for a section, then various paragraphs with important rules sprinkled in between! After trying to come to grips with the rules a few times and being confused with various systems broken up and split all over the place, I just set up the game and went phase by phase to learn it.

From studying the map and starting

positions, you can start to figure out what is going on here. The Crusaders start by holding one planet and having a fairly strong force of fleets and ground strength. The

Wersgorix player has forces from that empire scattered across multiple systems in various defense zones. There are also "thrall" races on some planets, that if converted to the Crusader side, can provide additional strength for ground and fleet units. The idea here is for the Crusaders to strike fast, convert thralls, get allies, and build up a huge force to take the war to the heart of the Wersgorix Empire. Naturally, the Wersgorix is going to try to stop this.

To say that this game is a bit chaotic would be a mild understatement! In fact, after receiving reinforcements each side rolls on the random events tables, which can produce some wild swings of fortune. Anything from a spread of heresy to ion storms can occur, making long range planning difficult. The Crusader player then tries to convert thrall races where they have forces on a planet, with churches and cathedrals adding modifiers with the conversion of certain races.

Next up is movement and combat.

For some reason, fleets and armies cannot be larger than 10 strength points. So if you have 25 fleet strength points in a single hex, you need 6 counters; three representing the fleets and three fleet strength counters on the strength track (the strength of all units is kept track of on a separate part of the game map). Movement is fairly standard and is accomplished quickly. Combat, however, is a bit strange.

If the Wersgorix player attacks there is a fairly standard table where you add/subtract the strength of the two sides, then modifiers such as equipment/IQ, leaders, terrain, etc., then one side or the other loses strength points. For the Crusaders, however, the die result is then checked against the rules

to see what the result/event was. This can range from strength losses to failed attacks to all sorts of strange results. Forts, fortresses, and castles can be sieged and the Crusaders can even use nukes! What was really needed here was a few examples of fleet combat,

sieges, open battles, etc., as trying to figure out what's the optimum strategy here is hard to figure out.

There is a short game of 15 turns and a long one of 30 turns, with each having different objectives. The Crusaders try to get some traction by capturing planets, converting thrall races, building castles/churches/cathedrals, and getting enough strength to challenge the forces thrown against them. The last part is hard as the Crusader attacks have a lot of random results. We haven't even discussed the leaders in terms of rank (king, barons, dukes,

knights, etc.) and who can have how many feifs.

Overall, this is an interesting military space game in the form of a medieval crusade!

However, figuring out how to play is a challenge and after about 7-10 turns you wonder if it's worth the effort.



MMP's Grand Tactical Series (GTS) is something of an enigma in the gaming hobby. It's obviously popular, has a devoted following, and the games not only have a lot of replay value, but the system works well.

Which is why the question always comes up about why does it take years and years to get a game out? The answers to that are many, from research time to playtesting to spots on the production track, but when a game does come out, it's always met with resounding joy!

This time the game comes in the first issue of a new magazine called GTS Briefings. The idea is to have a smaller than usual footprint for a GTS game along with articles on GTS tactics. The first game in Issue #1 is Strike: Counterstrike-4th Armored Division vs. Panzer Lehr along the Saar. Definitely an interesting battle and probably one that many gamers have never heard of. Besides the magazine issue you get a map, a few sheets of counters, and the exclusive rules booklet for the game. Yes, there are no series rules in the package, so you will need to print your own from the MMP web site.

The map is done in the now familiar GTS style, which has a color dot in the center hex which goes along with a terrain chart, letting you easily determine what the terrain is in case there are several types of terrain in the same hex. Also, all of the divisional charts on printed right on the map instead of on separate cards. This allows a fairly small, 22 x 34 footprint, which is great for a small two player or introductory game. The counters are in several colors for the various formations, although the bright yellow for 4th armored was a bit surprising! Finally, the exclusive rules has some terrain and weather rules, plus orders of battle for several scenarios.

For what is essentially a magazine game, this is certainly a good first impression.



The articles in the magazine are helpful and the game is just the right size to try out the system or for those who don't have the room to play its much larger cousins! It will be interesting to see the commentary about having to print up your own rules after spending almost \$70 for this game, not to mention the weird yellow for some of the counters.

Fortunately, there is an interesting situation here. The game is set in November of 1944, with the U.S. XII and XV Corps advancing quickly, which threatens to split wide open the boundary between two German armies. The Germans direct the Panzer Lehr division to counterattack into the flank of the U.S. XV Corps along the Saar River. Unknown to the Germans, the U.S. 4th Armored Division has been moving up and they run headlong into each other, triggering a massive multi-day battle.

There are several scenarios available, plus the entire campaign. The scenarios cover the delaying action by the 106th Cavalry Group, the defense of key points by units of the 44th Infantry Division, then the mobile battles when the 4th Armored Division arrives. Basically, there's something for everyone here, ranging from small scenarios playable in a few hours to those involving every counter. The campaign is very accessible as you're really only dealing with two divisions and parts of another.

For those of you unfamiliar with the GTS system, it is an interactive, chit pull game with counters representing companies or batteries for various guns. Each unit has a series of ratings for combat and movement, plus there are leaders who coordinate

the activities of various formations. There are a number of chits that are placed in a cup each turn, then when they are drawn, formations and/or units can be activated to move, fight, or rally.

There are formation chits that activate an entire formation such as a brigade, plus several independent units based upon a leader's rating. Division and Direct Command chits enable certain actions to be undertaken. Each side gets a number of command points to enable second actions during an activation and there are dispatch points that are used to buy formation chits for each turn. This creates a highly interactive game with little down time for players.

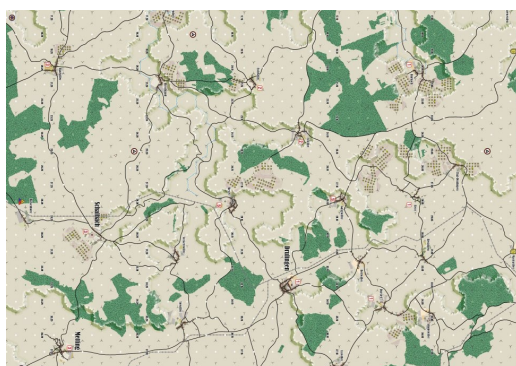
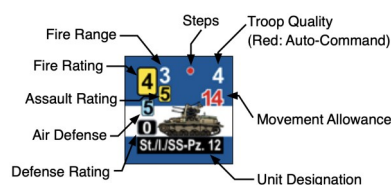
There is a unique combat table for the various weapons that generate step losses, suppressions, and step losses during firing. Assaults are used to close with defenders and force them out of hexes and the assault procedure, while looking complicated, works pretty well. Artillery, which is an integral part of the game, is positioned in what are called "artillery parks", which is unique to this game series. Trying to coordinate movement, firing, assaults, artillery support, etc., is quite challenging. Also, terrain in this series is very critical and players need to really look at the maps. The last thing you want is for your armor to have to bunch up in columns to get through a village or stream in the face of enemy forces!

This is a great introduction to the GTS system and perfect for learning how to play. Everything you need is either on the map or on the single counter sheet, so the footprint of the game is just the right size. Several of the scenarios are fairly small, such as the U.S. Cavalry delaying the advance guard of Panzer Lehr. The terrain, which at first glance seems pretty simple, hides a number of choke points that favors the defender. Both sides will get the opportunity to attack and counter-attack in this interesting battle.

Hopefully, this is not the last of this type of game/issue! These smaller battles are a great idea for gamers interested in the GTS series and MMP should be encouraged to produce more.



Unit Example



Seas of Thunder by GMT Games

Game Review

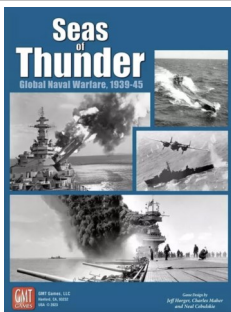
There's not a lot of WW2 strategic naval games out there in the hobby. Of course, there are the two mainstays from Avalon Hill, War at Sea and Victory in the Pacific (and now Admiral's War), which continue to be played today even though they are well over 40 years old. There is a huge naval component in World in Flames which is almost a separate game and of course, there is the Avalanche Press Second World War at Sea games, which are a bit more operational in nature.

Into this limited field comes a new entry from GMT Games called Seas of Thunder. This game covers strategic operations across the globe, from the beginning of WW2 to the very end. With 1400 counters, this is an attempt to allow gamers to change the course of the war at sea by using every capital ship, carrier, cruiser, destroyer squadron, sub, raider, and auxiliary ship that appeared during the war! The game comes in the larger 3" GMT box and is pretty heavy as there



is a mounted map, counters, and more.

The global map is broken into a large number of sea zones, then regions such as the Arctic, North Atlantic, South Pacific, etc. The map is double-sided as if you are playing the full campaign game you flip the map over when you reach a certain turn. There are a large number of ports on the map that are marked to correspond with the "port mats" that each side gets for the various scenarios and campaigns. There are quite a few port mats, with a pair being used for each scenario. There are also two combat mats, a rulebook, and the 1400 counters. The counters are functional, but they're not going to win any art/design awards. Overall, it's a good package that definitely makes you think that this is a "mini-monster"



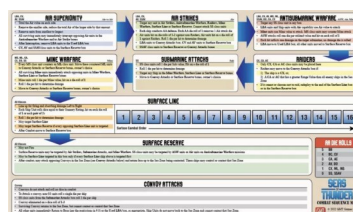
wargame.

The counters, of which almost all (except for a handful of game markers and the 60+ convoy counters) are for ships. Each ship has the name, ship type, turn of appearance, then is rated for gunnery, ASW or Air, damage rating, then the number of sea zones that it can move each turn. Some counters also have a colored

stripe to help sort out those that were sunk before the scenario start date. Nothing fancy to see here, but it would have been nice to have had larger counters. Of course the map would need to be larger, but for this kind of game it might have been a good idea. The huge problem here is how to sort out the 1300 or so ship counters? By turn number? By country, then turn number? Either way there's going to be some time spent during clean up sorting the ship counters out.

While the rulebook is fairly large, the base set of rules is only 10 pages or so! Yes, this is a fairly simple game once you understand the combat procedure. New ships arrive, the Allies move their ships from their port mat to various sea zones, then the Axis moves their ships, which lets them pick and choose where to focus each turn. Movement is pretty simple in that it costs one MP to move out into a sea zone, then one per sea zone moved. If a ship is rated to move 5 sea zones you just count it out and place the ship there. No blocking, weather, etc., to worry about, so this is pretty basic. Where this gets interesting is if you are playing another person, then all of the ships are placed with their reverse sides up, which only shows the nationality of the ships. This will definitely give each side a chance at bluff and deception each turn.

The combat system is VERY interesting. You move your side's ships to the combat mat, which is broken into various categories such as air strikes, ASW, submarine attacks, surface line, etc. Deciding which ship to allocate to which task is particularly intriguing. Then you go from one box to the other, resolving air attacks, mine attacks, ASW, sub attacks, then final-



ly ships in the surface line fire at each other. Ships have various combat ratings, so an ASW destroyer might have a combat value of 1 for surface attacks while it may have a 4 for ASW. Roll that number of D6s and a 1 result (or if you roll two 2s) is a hit, then roll 1D6 for damage. Units are either sunk or moved to the damaged/repair track to reappear later. Once you get the hang of it the various combats can go pretty fast and it's fun.

After that it's on to adding up VPs for the turn, then returning all units back to port. Basically, this is pretty simple stuff and it would go much faster if it wasn't for all of the ships and subs on the board! Yes, even scenario 2 which I played that goes from just before the Fall of France up to Pearl Harbor had a few hundred counters on the board. My guess is the 1941-42 turns probably have close to 1,000 counters on a 22 x 34 map!

Now trying to come up with a global naval strategy to hang on to high value sea zones, interdict the enemy, then protect your convoys and hunt down the enemy's (there's a LOT of convoys on the map) is a huge challenge. The game comes with several scenarios that can be linked together. Each scenario is 3-4 turns long and will take several hours, mainly due to the number of ships that you have to place each turn. The full campaign game which is 25 turns would take at least 60-75 hours by my calculations.

It should also be mentioned that the game's focus is naval combat ONLY. Ground combat, nations surrendering, etc., is handled by having the various ports come under control of one power or the other. Your sole focus is directing global naval operations. At this time, the only game to compare it to would be Admiral's War, but that is cruisers and above, with some token sub counters. This game has everything and maybe too much for some gamers. Moving ships in and out of ports can take hours, even for a smaller scenario. The map needs to be double the size as it can get quite congested in some areas. If you're looking for a strategic WW2 naval game, you should try this out at least once and decide for yourself.

WMA: Bad Day For The Indian Elephants

Battle Report

A few gaming friends who I've known for almost 40 years were looking for something to play on a Saturday and when a proposed Fire & Fury scenario could not be ready on time, I suggested trying Warmaster Ancients. Now for gamers who usually do a lot of ACW, naval, and modern ground combat, getting into Ancients can pose some challenges! Fortunately, Warmaster is a fairly simple system to learn and it provides a good game with plenty of excitement.



Whenever teaching Warmaster, it's good to go through several steps:

- Each player should have an army list, then describe the various stats and how they are used in a game.
- Explain how the command system works and the capabilities of leaders.
- Set up a brigade, then go over movement.
- Go through a simple combat phase with ranged weapons, then melee.
- Finally, clarify which units match the ones on the army list.

After that, it's pretty much let the players set up the brigades or however they would like their formations. While the above steps may seem like a lot, in practice it takes less than 15 minutes and it will save a lot of time during the game. While gamers can usually look at the army lists and determine which are the

best units, until you see them in action on the board against other units such as elephants, chariots, etc., it's a bit challenging to design a strategy for your first game!

We were going to be using the Indians and Successors for this game, with each side having 2,000 points. This does put a lot of units on the board, but everyone who was playing has been in the hobby for 40+ years, so there was nothing here that would overwhelm the players! The Indians are a good army to learn the system with as they don't have a lot of special units and their stats are about as average as you can get. The Successors are a bit different as they have a wide variety of units, so there was some time during the game spent on describing what each of them could do.

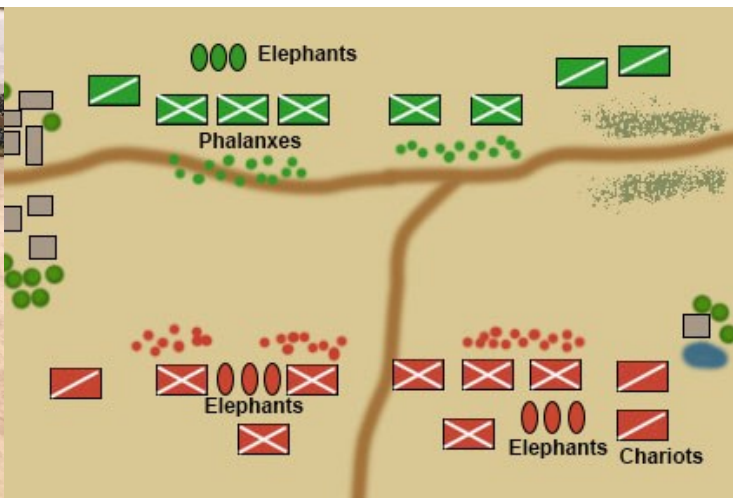
The Indians went with a pretty standard deployment. Cavalry brigades on the flanks, infantry brigades consisting of one archer and two infantry units, then skirmishers out front with the two units of

elephants near the center so that they could move to any threatened sector or area of opportunity. The Successors arrayed all of the phalanx units on their right, clearly trying to overwhelm that side of the board. Most of the heavy cavalry went to the opposite flank while a variety of infantry units (imitation Romans, Thorakites, etc.,) covered the center.

The first few turns were fine examples of the chaos that the Warmaster Ancients command system can cause! While the Indians moved out quickly on the first turn, their two reserve brigades did not. By the end of the second turn the reserves were still back quite a ways. The Successors started their move with the phalanxes, while the skirmishers got set up to cover the advance. The Successor cavalry, however, refused to move. At this point there was some to and fro with the skirmishers, but nothing serious so far in terms of combat.

That quickly changed around Turn 4 when the Indian elephants and an infantry brigade on the Indian left moved into the attack, destroying a unit of Successor archers and engaging other Successor units on that flank. The tried and tested tactic of the Indians, which was to engage enemy units at all times, grinding them down in a battle of attrition (the Indians had a break point of 14 while the Successors was 10) was well underway. On the next turn the Indian cavalry charged the cataphracts and the elephants hit a phalanx unit.

However, here's where the problems began for the Indians. The Successor units refused to die! Each (cont. on p13)



WMA: Bad Day For The Indian Elephants (cont.) Battle Report



(cont. from p12) time it looked like the Successors would lose a stand, have a unit of one or two stands finished off, etc., they would make their saving rolls! The elephants, which usually do pretty well, were thrown back, then destroyed by pursuit over the next few turns. The Successors counterattacked with their phalanxes, elephants, cataphracts, and heavy cavalry, pushing the Indians back.

By Turn 7 one Indian infantry brigade was destroyed as well as one of the cavalry brigades. For the Indian players, this was expected. However, there were supposed to be far more dead Successor units! The Indians on the right flank went into the attack, hitting the Thorakites with heavy chariots, destroying one unit and carrying the attack into the rear area of the Successor line. In the center, however, the remaining Indian

elephant unit simply could not get a second order to launch two flank attacks that may have turned the tide.

In fact, this was the theme in the Indian center and on the right flank. The Indians could not bring their weight to bear, even with the Successor heavy cavalry failing their command rolls for six consecutive turns (we think it is a record!). Everything was laid out for an Indian victory, but the Indian players simply could not coordinate attacks or get a series of second orders.

Meanwhile, the phalanxes pressed their attack, where at times they were rolling around 30 dice per attack, which simply steamrolled the Indian units. The Indians would throw forward units, cause several hits, but then the Successor would roll their saves! All of the phalanx units had lost a stand, but despite numerous

combats, only one had actually been eliminated! In one combat the Indians counterattacked two damaged phalanx units (one with a single stand and the other with two stands left), causing five hits, but the Successors saved four of them! They then counterattacked and finished off the Indians.

By Turn 10 the Indians were in serious trouble and the Successors lined up their attacks carefully, finishing off the 14th Indian unit, which caused the Indian army to break and lose the game. The final score was that the Indians had lost 14 units (plus skirmishers) while the Successors had lost 8. A very good game and while the Indians had some bad command rolls, everyone had a good time and it was close until the final two turns. Next time we may go further back into time with Assyrians vs. Egyptians.

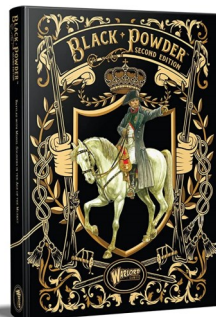


There have been some interesting threads in various gaming forums about what gamers expect out of gaming, how many times should a game be played to get your money's worth, and how many new games are you buying. These are definitely questions that pop up from time to time and I'm sure that many of us have thought about them over the years. I think, however, that it's looking beyond the answers that is the interesting part of this discussion.

The Old Guard (including myself!), many of whom read this magazine, are heavily invested in the hobby. However, it's not what you think in terms of accumulating massive collections, playing ever period known to mankind, and owning 100 sets of rules. Rather, it comes from gaming through the last several decades. By that I mean purchasing figures, reading rules, researching uniforms, and gradually building up enough forces for a game. To the gamers in this group, the *journey* is the fun point of the hobby. If it takes them five years to pay for, research, and paint up enough stuff for a game, so be it.

I know several gamers who simply refuse to get caught up in the hobby's current onslaught of new games that come out each day. They have been painting forces for Fire & Fury, Seekrieg, and many other rules for well over a decade. Do they play other games and have fun with them? Certainly, but they're not going to go home and out of the blue drop \$500 on figs and rules for a game that they just learned. Instead, it's back to painting more units, terrain, etc., for the periods that they've always played. For them, that's their *journey*.

Now this is heresy to many of today's gamers particularly for what we would term the New School. Lavishly illustrated rulebooks, boxed sets of figures (many with painting guides), and a ton of terrain, from ready made grass mats to any scale of building imaginable are all waiting for them at their fingertips. Cost is rarely an object and the only obstacle is how long will it take to break the figures out of the box and get them onto the table for a game.



Combine this with all kinds of new paper soldier sets coming out, gamers using Lego for armies, and there are now several new kinds of "top down" counters for playing games that are a cross between miniatures and board games. I haven't even mentioned the highly successful Command & Colors type block games that have expanded into Ancients, Napoleonic, and even Samurai. You quickly come to the realization that the New School of gamers are on their own *journey* as well. Before, these *journeys* would often intersect, with gamers starting out in one period or the other expanding out, painting huge armies or getting into board games on some topics if they were miniatures gamers.

Now however, there is little to no intersection of each gamer's *journey*. If you're into skirmish gaming, then companies have seen that and they are going to keep pushing out rules, boxed sets, etc., to keep you in skirmish gaming for quite some time. Same with block games, paper soldiers, or if you're into board games there are so many coming out each day that you probably don't have time to even think about trying out something new in the hobby! Gamers associate with like minded gamers more than ever now, so the chances of doing something new or going off in a new direction is probably the lowest that it's been in quite some time.

That's not saying that gamers aren't having fun as they clearly are! Gamers are spending more money on their hobby than at any other time in the hobby's brief history (40-50 years) and game companies have put out more products in the last five years than probably in the 40+ years before that combined! Yet, it seems that a lot of gamers in the New School and Old Guard are missing out on various aspects of the hobby. They are so ensconced in their *journey*, that there's no time for a brief detour or an unusual encounter along the way.

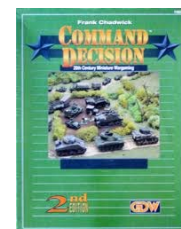
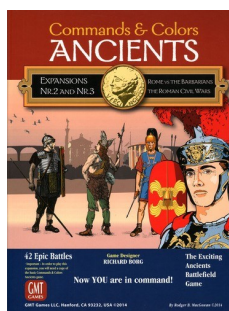
It's interesting that when my gaming group plays at a convention, at the local store, or when I post images from a recent game on various FB groups, the games draw a lot of interest. This is usually followed by comments and/or questions about how long did that take to

paint, it must have cost a lot, those rules look complicated, there's no way I could get started in that, etc. Yet, the games that they always return to after talking to us cost more (WH40K for example), their rulebooks are at least double the size of most of ours, and many are better painters than some of us! In the past many gamers would hang around asking us questions and maybe even a few would ask to try a game in the near future. We've even had some success in past years with converting some gamers to historical miniatures or becoming members.

That's not the case any longer. They usually return quickly to their games, never to be seen or heard from again. It appears that there simply is no desire or time to change their *journey*. Now through the years there's been numerous articles, forum threads, etc., about growing the hobby, welcoming others, and so on. But what if the other gamers want little to do with your side of the hobby? This is currently happening and I don't really expect it to change too much in the coming years. I'm sure that there are groups or others who may be seeing different results, but we have a pretty good cross section of gaming in this area and things have changed.

In the past, we were the New School, pushing games like Command Decision and Johnny Reb while more established groups were still playing Rally Round the Flag and Tractics or Tank Charts. We still exchanged ideas, talked about the latest figures, and several would join in with the other's games. Of course, back then there weren't a lot of games to choose from! Today, there is just so much that for example, you could just do Dark Ages skirmish gaming or Warlord Games epic scale battles for the rest of your hobby life and not interact with any other gamer outside of that area of interest!

There's really no crisis here or anything to get upset about. There is a growing divide in the hobby, but if everyone has fun then things are going great. It's just that the odds of another gamer being interested in going with you on your *journey* is getting lower by the day.



Iskra by Three Crowns Games

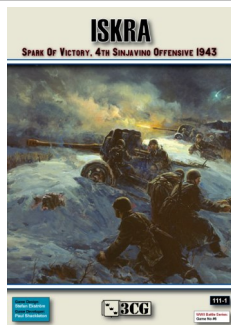
Game Review

Although I am definitely an East Front aficionado when it comes to wargames, seeing a game that is set around Leningrad is exceedingly rare! Along comes Iskra with the subtitle Spark of Victory, 4th Sinjavino Offensive 1943 from Three Crowns Games.

This is part of their WW2 operational series and in line with what is called the A Victory Lost (AVL) type chit pull games. Since I already owned many of the games in this series, including Tolling of the Bell and Stargard-Solstice from Three Crowns, there was no hesitation in this purchase!

The game covers the 10 day offensive in January 1943 where the Volkhov and Leningrad Fronts attacked in an attempt to join up and relieve Leningrad. Unlike most games in this series, units are mainly regiments and brigades, so the command rules are a bit different than other games in the series.

The components will be familiar to anyone who has played a game in this series. First, there is a 22 x 34 map covering an area that existed as a German held gap between the two Russian fronts. The winter colors for the snow and frozen water areas works well, with the turn track and various boxes for the chits and available airpower placed on the edges. The only thing I don't care for is the font



used for the named places, but that is a small annoyance. The counters are well done and thick! They fall out of the sheet pretty easily, but clipping them was a challenge. There are two player reference cards that also double as the front and rear game covers for the zip lock bag that the game comes in. Finally, there is a no frills rulebook. The components may not win any awards, but they look good and work well for the game.

For the uninitiated, the AVL series of games are basically hex and counter war-games with the standard terrain chart, attack/defense/movement ratings, and an odds based combat results table. Where this series differentiates itself from other WW2 games is the chit pull system for activation. Units and HQs are color coded in various ways to represent formations, with several white striped units to represent independent forces in the area that can be attached at any time to the various HQs. Each game has a slightly different take on the HQs and their command ranges, with some only able to command their color while others may be able to command any unit in reach.

For this particular game, the Germans have several commands that are easily identifiable by their color stripe. When one of the German command chits is chosen, each unit in range of the HQ for that color can move and attack, plus a number of independent units as well. The Russian forces are a bit more complicated as they have two different fronts. When a chit is pulled for that front, they can activate up to three divisions (each division usually has three regiments) or brigades.

The games in this series are balanced out by the number of command chits that each side can draw each turn. More or less chits is the result of supplies provided for an offensive, a breakdown in command, etc. In an average turn for this game the Germans might get 5 command chits, the Volkhov Front 4 or 5, then the Leningrad Front 2 or 3. This makes the game highly interactive with little down time for either play. The play can also generate a lot of tension as one side may need a command chit to desperately plug a hole while the other may need it to exploit a breakthrough in the defenses.

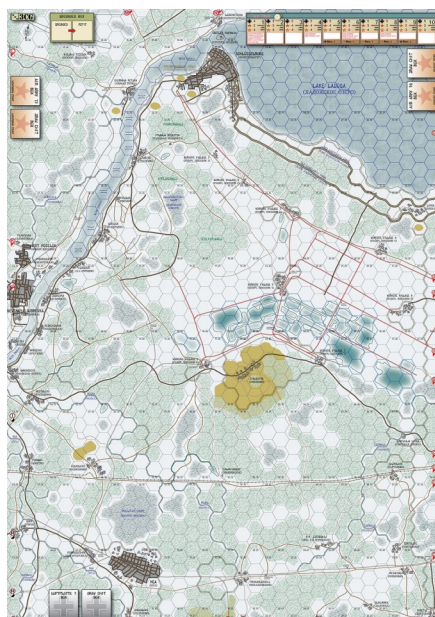
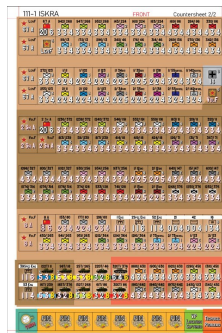
Iskra begins with the Russians starting off with some limited attacks, then the remaining command chits are dumped into the cup. More Russian and German units then arrive at the end of Turn 1. On Turn 2 things start to move slowly as the Russians probe the defenses and the Germans are trying to move reserves around to meet the various threats. It's at the end of Turn 2 where things really get moving as a horde of Russian units arrive and

move to their jump off positions, putting a lot of pressure against German positions. The Germans are really spread out, with the various units of each command intermixed across the board. It's pretty challenging for both players as the Russians look for an opening while the Germans are trying to decide what and where to defend.

As the turns go by, the Germans need to decide when it is time to abandon the northern end of the map. There is simply no way to defend everything and with most of the commands being spread out, trying to maintain some sort of cohesive defense is pretty challenging. While the Russians do have some armor brigades, their use is limited with all of the forests and swamp in the area, so they need to stick to the roadways. The random events are also pretty hard on the Russians from my first play, but that could even out over time. The biggest issue for both sides is of course the chit draw, which can open up and deny opportunities every time a chit is selected!

This is one of those games where both sides will play better the second time around. For a first play, the way reinforcements arrive or HQs change means that the tactics of both sides are a bit haphazard. Once you understand where reinforcements are coming from, the terrain, where HQs need to be, etc.,

things will get even more interesting. The chit pull system is also fantastic for solitaire play. This is a very interesting situation and challenging for both sides. If you like WW2 and/or chit pull games, then this entry into the series is pretty good and hopefully Three Crowns will keep expanding the series into other fronts.



F&F: Expanded Brawner's Farm

Battle Report

Back to the ACW for a week and with only four of us being available this time, we decided to go with something that was small enough to get done in one evening. After looking around we came across a Fire & Fury scenario for the first day of the Second Battle of Bull Run, also known as Brawner's Farm. This version, however, had a "what if" attached to it, which is A.P. Hill and Sigel getting into the action earlier than what historically occurred. This would make it a nice, 4 player game that was only about 8 turns long.

We discussed how to simulate the unfinished railway cut that figured into the second day, but not so much for the



first. We used a few sections of 28mm road to mark the locations and treated it as rough terrain. We had cut the battle down from an 8 x 5 to a 6 x 4, which is all we had to work with this time, so we focused mainly on the points of contact.

Both sides had roughly the same amount of units, although the Union had a bit more artillery available for the battle. There were a number of exceptional brigade commanders on the table as well as Stonewall Jackson in addition to a lot of veteran and crack units. Clearly, moving units would not be a problem in this battle with all of the positive modifiers! After getting things sorted out, i.e., figure stands into brigades, labels on command stands, initial positions, etc., we were ready to go.

The big decision for the Confederate side was what to do on the first turn. Hill's command was definitely going to go forward and try to get into a good position before Sigel could deploy all of his forces, but what to do about Jackson's command? Historically, several units went out and ran into the Iron Brigade, which started off a huge fight, then everything morphed into the full 2nd Bull Run. We figured that if it was good enough for Jackson, then it was probably good enough for us!

The one thing that Jackson had going for it was the way the 2nd edition of the Fire & Fury rules work. With all of the modifiers, getting a 10+ on the movement roll for the first turn was a good possibil-



ity, which is exactly what a few units did. This enabled them to move within rifle range and fire on the Union columns, which opened up the battle. The Union forces tried to get themselves sorted out by changing into line and setting up a

reserve behind the first lines, but they were in danger of being defeated in detail in the first few turns.

Sure enough, Jackson's leading brigades charged right in on the second turn...and were turned back with horrendous losses! The Union commander on that side had some hot dice, inflicting a two stand loss/charge checked result twice in a row! Now the battle was really on as the Confederate brigades tried to recover and the Union forces were scrambling to extend their position. On the Confederate left the Union cavalry attack was beaten off, so the Confederate brigades began to maneuver to attack Sigel's force as it began to deploy.

There was a brief moment where it looked like the Confederates just might break through. This occurred in the center of the board where Starke from Jackson's command had an opportunity. The Union line was getting stretched thin and Starke's brigade got set up (cont. on p17)





(cont. from p16) to launch a series of charges. The first charge went in and drove a Union brigade back and there was a brief moment where the Union army was about to get cut in two. However that moment passed quickly! The reason? The same Union Commander had another series of super high rolls which caused the Confederate brigades to take losses and fall back.

On the Confederate left, A.P. Hill went on the attack, driving the Union forces back. There was a traffic jam of Union units being driven back into those who were still trying to deploy. Again, there were several opportunities where the Confederates could have broken through, but then the dice intervened and they were pushed back. Not to be deterred, the Confederates regrouped and went in again. This started a series of back and forth battles, with each side

gaining, then losing momentum.

Over on Jackson's side, the Union decided it was time to counterattack. Their brigades went forward and crashed into the already damaged Confederate brigades. Several of the Union brigades had suffered losses as well, so there was a series of running fights with each side adding up a large number of modifiers for being disordered, spent, low on ammo, etc. Most of these fights just inflicted stand losses here and there, turning that side of the board into a huge attrition fest!

The middle of the board and on the far end with A.P. Hill and Sigel proved to be much of the same thing. There were charges, counterattacks, then each side regrouping. By turn 6 every brigade on the board had taken losses and no one was really going to be able to make any

breakthroughs. While the game still had two turns to go, both sides were spent and it was clear that the Confederates were not going to be able to hold the road, so the game was called as a Union victory.

Both sides had numerous chances to end the game early, but then some real extremes in die rolling occurred, which caused frightful losses to one side or the other. It also didn't help that several units from both sides were out of ammo (our house rule is that when you roll a 0 you need to roll the D10 a second time and on a 6 or higher the unit is marked out of ammo). On some of the later attacks in the game there weren't a lot of positive modifiers for either side! In the end it was a pretty fast game that was a lot of fun to play. We do need, however, to keep working on our 15mm roads and rivers for the next time to make things a bit more realistic.



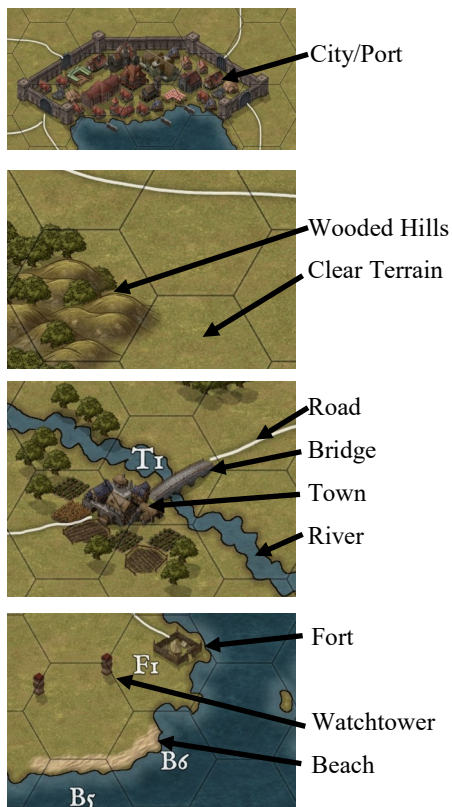
Introduction

From the Sea is a set of miniatures campaign rules for simulating an invasion and/or raid during the Ancients, Medieval, or Horse & Musket periods. The invading force must get ashore, organize their units, then move out to quickly take towns and most importantly, the city with a port. Once that is accomplished, follow on forces can quickly be moved in to expand the invasion or in case of a raid in force, move further out into the countryside.

The rules are designed to work with any set of miniatures rules, whether that is using Saga to represent a series of smaller actions or Hail Caesar, where there are massive forces used for large battles. From The Sea includes the map, counters, rules, and a series of optional rules to make the campaign as simple or as complex as is needed.

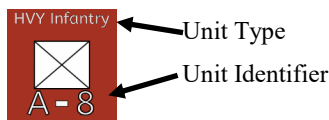
The Map

The map in From the Sea represents a generic coastline, with a large walled city that also functions as an important port in the region. There are several possible landing sites, but there are forts and watchtowers placed to defend the area.



Units & Scale

A set of counters is provided to be used with the campaign. Players have a wide range of options for determining how to organize the forces for their campaign.



Beachhead
Marker



Supply
Depot



Force Markers

These are used in conjunction with the holding boxes.

Note: The counters provided are not an artificial limit, so you can make as many counters of different unit types as needed.

The first item in setting up the campaign is to decide which rules will be used and what the size of the units are. If you are playing a skirmish game such as Lion Rampant, Ronin, or Saga, then each unit would be a small force of figures. If you are using for example, Hail Caesar, then a Heavy Infantry unit might be a 32-40 figure unit of Macedonian pike. If you or your gaming group has access to a large amount of figures and you wish to do a fairly large campaign, each counter could represent multiple units. The other alternative is for each counter to represent a number of points if the rules that you will be using are points based.

Naturally, you may need to create a unit roster to keep track of their strength as the campaign progresses. When using the scale of one counter equals one unit, a roster may not be necessary if the rules you are using do not take individual stands as casualties into account.

Finally, there are Force Markers (A-E) that can be used to prevent unwieldy stacks of counters on the campaign map. Simply exchange a Force Marker with a stack of units and move those units to the designated holding box for that marker.

Sequence of Play

Each campaign turn is governed by a strict sequence of play. Go through each phase in order and once all of the phases have been completed, one turn has passed. Then begin a new turn.

- I. Initiative Phase
- II. First Player Phase
 - i. Receive Reinforcements
 - ii. Movement
- III. Second Player Phase
 - i. Receive Reinforcements
 - ii. Movement
- IV. Fight Battles
- V. End Phase

Initiative Phase

At the start of each turn, both sides rolls 1D6 and the side with the higher result has the choice of going first or second in the turn. In the case of a tie, the side that had initiative in the previous turn keeps the initiative.

Player Phases: Reinforcements

During each player phase, the first part of that phase is to check and see if there are any reinforcements arriving that turn. For the Invader, reinforcements arrive in "waves". Check the Reinforcements table to see what wave number is available this turn as well as how many units can arrive. Units are then placed on either of the two available beachhead markers. Including the 1st Turn, when units arrive at a beachhead, they roll 1D6 and on a 4-6 they are allowed to move one hex for that turn.

The Defender can also receive reinforcements and rolls on the Reinforcement table twice each turn. For each unit that is received as a reinforcement, 1D6 is rolled and that unit appears in the corresponding movement zone just off the map. Reinforcing units can then enter the map, move to a different zone, or wait in their current zone to enter the map at a later time.

Note: More or fewer rolls can be made on the Reinforcements table to balance out the skill levels of players.

Movement

During each player's phase, units can be moved on the map. The movement allowances for units are as follows:

Infantry 2 hexes

Cavalry 3 hexes

Artillery 1 hex (then roll 1D6 and on a 4-6 they can move an additional hex)

For the campaign, all hexes cost one movement point. There are a few terrain features that can affect movement:

The River: The river on the left side of the map, which is crossed by two bridges. Crossing the river at a bridge is one movement point. To cross the river at any other point costs +1 movement point. Artillery units crossing a river at any point other than a bridge must move up to the river on turn, then stop. On the following turn the artillery unit can cross to the other side of the river, then must stop again for the turn.

Roads: Units moving along roads can move an additional hex if their entire movement takes place on the road.

Off-Board Movement Zones: Units in the off board zones can either a) remain in their current zone, b) move to an adjacent zone, or c) enter the board at the road entrance attached to that zone.

Ex., Blue has two infantry units in movement zone B. Blue decides to move one unit to zone A and the second unit will enter the map on the road at R3, moving up to three hexes that turn (movement allowance of two plus one additional hex for moving along a road).

Watchtowers: There are several watchtowers positioned next to forts and beaches on the map. They are assumed to possess small garrisons whose task is to delay any enemy advance off the beaches. When moving into the designated hexes (marked with a star in the example below), a unit's movement stops for



the turn. If starting the movement phase for the turn in one of these hexes, a unit's

movement allowance is reduced by one for that turn. Two turns after a beach-head marker is placed on any of the beaches next to the watchtowers, the watchtowers are assumed to have been destroyed.

Force Markers

To prevent large stacks of units on the map or just for organizational purposes, force markers have been provided for both sides. There are holding boxes on the player reference card at the end of the rules that correspond to each force marker. Simply place the units into one of the holding boxes and replace them on the map with a force marker. The force marker moves at the movement rate of the slowest unit in the force. Units can be picked up and/or dropped off from the force at any point along the force marker's movement path.

Contact With Enemy Forces

When a unit or force enters a hex that is occupied by enemy units or force markers, those forces have two options; first, remain in place and both sides will conduct a miniatures battle at that location. Second, the non-moving force can attempt to withdraw. If they are successful, the side who is currently moving can continue movement, including pursuing the withdrawing force.

To withdraw, roll 1D6 with any applicable modifiers, then apply the results immediately.

Die Roll	Result
1-4	Successful
5	Successful-lose 1 unit
6	Withdrawing force eliminated

Modifiers-The side with the most cavalry units can modify the die roll up or down 1.

If successful, the withdrawing force moves one hex away from the advancing enemy force. If the enemy force still has movement left, it could possibly move into the withdrawing force's hex and another withdrawal roll could be made, unless that force wishes to stand this time and force a battle.

Note: Depending upon the size of forces used for the campaign, players may want to change the eliminated result to the loss of a certain number of units.

Combat

If a force does not wish to withdraw when an enemy force enters its hex, then a battle will be fought. All movement for both sides for that turn needs to be completed first, then any hex where both sides have forces will need to have a miniatures battle to decide who will control that particular hex by the end of the turn. Each battle that will be fought needs to follow this sequence:

- I. Set Up The Terrain
- II. Defender Sets Up Their Forces
- III. Attacker Sets Up Their Forces
- IV. Fight Battle
- V. End of Battle/Pursuit

Terrain Set Up

There are several ways to accomplish the terrain set up; the first is to have a third party or umpire set the board up. The second is to have each side select a number of terrain features, then roll for placement by both sides. Another option is to have a series of pre-drawn terrain maps, then randomly determine which one will be used for the battle.

The first priority is to determine the size of the tabletop, which will greatly depend upon the forces being used and the size of table available to the gamers. An attacking force of 8 units against a defending force of 5 units for example, could easily be fought on a 6 x 4 table or smaller. However, if there are 20+ units against 15 units for example plus a town, an 8 X 4 might be needed.

The next step in terrain selection is to look at a map and see if there are any terrain features that must be present. This would include towns, rivers, hills, forts, the port, etc. These terrain features must be included in the battle set up. The towns and forts are sizable constructions and this should be reflected on the tabletop. The only river on the map is impassable except at the marked bridges, so for a game it would be an obstacle for both sides.

Once that is determined, both sides then secretly choose a number from 1-10. The number chosen by both sides is then added together, then divided by 2. The result is the number of die rolls made on the terrain table. Each player alternates rolling and placing terrain.

Roll 2D6 to determine which terrain piece(s) should be placed:

<u>Die Roll</u>	<u>Result</u>
2	24" stream (fordable)
3	Large section of woods
4	Farm & outbuildings
5	Field/crops with fence/walls
6	Small section of woods
7	No terrain is placed
8	Brush/rocks (rough)
9	Field/crops with fence/walls
10	Small section of woods
11	Small village
12	Pond

Players will need to determine before the campaign begins on how each terrain piece will be represented. A small section of woods might be an area 6 x 6 if using 15mm or if using 28mm it might be two or three trees. The idea is to make an interesting tabletop to conduct your miniature campaign battles.

Once the terrain is set up, the starting positions for each side need to be determined. If a battle has a particular terrain feature associated with it (i.e., port city, river, town, etc., the side that was already present in that hex would be the defender. If a force did not move that turn and an opposing side entered the hex during its movement, that side is the defender. The side determined to be the defender should be allowed to select the area of the board that they will defend, according to the miniatures rules that will be used for the campaign.

If both sides entered the same hex during movement, then roll 1D6 and the highest rolling side can choose which side of the board that they will set up on.

The Battle

Players are free to use whatever miniatures rules they are comfortable with to fight the campaign battles. Since there are so many sets of miniatures rules for so many periods, it would be impossible here to list all of the ways that a battle could be fought or end. Once one of the following occur, the battle is concluded and there is a possible Pursuit Phase. After that permanent losses are determined.

1. The attacker seizes the scenario objectives.
2. One side or the other breaks, reaches a certain casualty percentage, or is forced to withdrawal.
3. One side determines to end the battle and withdraw.

Pursuit & Permanent Losses

Once one side or the other ends the battle, there is a chance of additional losses from pursuit by the winning side. Roll 1D6 and add the following modifiers to get the pursuit result.

<u>Die Roll</u>	<u>Result</u>
1	Effective Withdrawal-no losses
2	Rear Guard Action-lose 10%
3	Running Fight-lose 15%
4	Harried Pursuit-lose 20%
5	Loss of Control-lose 25%
6	Flee For Your Lives!-lose 40%

- Winner has >2:1 force ratio: +1
- Winner has >4:1 force ratio: +2
- Cavalry superiority: +/- 1

Losses from pursuit are in addition to losses that occurred during the battle.

Ex. One side has just lost a battle while losing 3 units, but still has 8 units left. The winning side has 17 units left after the battle, meaning that it gets the +1 modifier for the winner having a <2:1 force ratio. However, the losing side has more cavalry units, so they get a -1 modifier which cancels out the +1 for force ratios for the winner. The winning side rolls a 5, which means that the losing side loses an additional 2 units (25% of 8).

The losing side must retreat to an adjacent hex that is a) not occupied by enemy forces and b) closer to a friendly supply source.

Supply

For the invading forces (Red), any route of hexes that can be traced free of enemy forces back to a beachhead is in supply. If a town is captured, place a supply marker on it to signify that it is now also a friendly supply source. Defending forces (Blue) can trace a line of supply to the port city itself, any town, or

any road hex. Defending forces will therefore rarely be out of supply.

If a force is out of supply, then depending upon the miniatures rules that you are using, there should be penalties applied to that force. For example, movement rates could be reduced by 25%, a morale modifier, or even limited archery and/or artillery during battles. Again, this will depend greatly upon your set of rules, but this should be agreed upon by both sides before the campaign begins.

Port City

The main objective of the campaign is to take the port city. The entire city (except the dock areas adjacent to the sea) is surrounded by walls, gates, towers, and defenses. When attacking the port city, there are two ways of representing this. The first is to fight the battles hex by hex until either all defending forces are eliminated or all hexes of the city are under the control of the invaders. This could potentially be a long, drawn out affair.

The second and perhaps easiest path forward is to represent a part of the city's defenses and play a siege game. Once the invaders breach the defenses and enter the city it can be assumed that the campaign has ended with the invading force victorious. Players are of course free to represent the city however they feel and even add optional rules about counterattacks, repairing the defenses, effects of a long siege, etc.

Victory & Ending the Campaign

The invading side can win the campaign automatically if at any time they successfully occupy the port city. The defending side wins if the port city is not occupied. With the defender continually getting reinforcements, the campaign could reach a point where the invaders simply have no chance to take the port city, at which point both sides decide that the campaign has ended and the invaders have gone back to their ships.

Note on Forces

The counters provided do not adequately cover all units that could be used in a campaign or certain force ratios, such as chariots, elephants, archers, crossbowmen, etc. Players are free to make new counters or add these units to existing forces to represent what they have.

Optional Rules

These optional rules are designed to add more realism to the campaign and players are encouraged to add their own as well.

Assaulting the Docks

In the basic game the invader cannot simply enter the harbor and land a force at the docks, thereby assaulting the city from the sea. If **both** forts have been taken, the invading force can land an assault wave directly at the docks, attacking any defending force that is positioned there.

Leaders

Players could add leaders to their forces and assign bonuses to them such as +1 movement or positive modifiers for combat. Also, units could not move without a leader, which would consolidate all of the units of both sides into a few manageable forces for map movement and combat.

Weather

A simple weather table such as this could add some interesting effects to the

campaign. Roll 2D6 at the start of each turn to determine the weather for that turn.

<u>Die Roll</u>	<u>Result</u>
2	Storms-No movement or combat for the turn
3	Heavy Seas-No assault waves arrive
4	Rain/Mud-All movement -1
5-10	Clear
11	Rain-no movement penalties, but combat may be affected
12	Storms-No movement or combat for the turn

Advanced Supply

Landing an invasion force, then keeping it supplied throughout a campaign that could culminate in a siege would take a large amount of supplies. While the basic campaign system is fairly simple, this would add another layer of complexity as well as some bookkeeping.

Each turn the invading forces would get one supply unit that has a movement

of 2. For an attack or a turn of siege, a force (any number of units that are involved) would use a supply unit. Forces must be within two hexes of a supply unit to be considered in supply for that combat or siege turn. This will mean fewer large battles in the combat and moving the supply units to get into position will take some time. Players could also experiment with adding extra supply units or obtaining them when capturing towns and/or forts.

Sieges

The basic campaign rules covering the attacks on the port city are fairly simple. Players could add siege rules that would wear down the defenses and cause losses to the units of both sides that would precede an assault.

Random Events

Players could easily design a table of random events for the campaign. Each turn, the table would be consulted with results like additional forces arrive, units force march this turn, treachery, rivers are flooded, etc., which will add some chaos to the campaign.

Set Up & First Turn

To begin the campaign, follow these steps:

- Set up the defending forces
- Organize the invading forces into multiple waves.
- The invading force selects a beach to land the first wave.
- Place a Beachhead marker (up to two) on the beach or beaches where the invading forces land.

The invading side is considered to be the First Player for Turn One and the initial invasion is assumed to be taking place during the Reinforcements Phase of the First Player's turn. During the Movement Phase, roll 1D6 for each unit that landed this turn. On a 5 or 6 the unit can move up to two additional hexes and on a 3 or 4 the unit can move one additional hex. On a roll of 1 or 2 the unit remains on the beach. Each unit **MUST** be rolled for and moved before rolling for the next unit.

Defending Forces Set Up

1. At each fort: (1) Hvy Infantry, (1) Med Infantry, & (1) Garrison
2. At Town 1: (1) Hvy Infantry, (1) Med Infantry, (1) Lt Infantry, (1) Lt Cavalry, (1) Hvy Cavalry, & (1) Militia
3. At Towns 2 & 3: (1) Hvy Infantry, (1) Lt Infantry, (1) Militia, and (1) Lt Cavalry
4. Watchtowers: See Rules
5. Port: (3) Hvy Infantry, (1) Med Infantry, (2) Garrison, (1) Militia, (1) artillery, (1) Hvy Cav, and (1) Lt Cav

Invading Forces Set Up

The invading forces will need to be broken down into "waves". Each wave has a numeric value that represents the amount of units that can arrive at any beachhead. On the first turn the invading player(s) can place one or two beachheads on any beach hex on the map. Units can only

arrive at an established beachhead. Each infantry unit (Hvy, Med, or Lt) counts as 1 unit. Light or heavy cavalry and artillery count as 2 units.

1st Wave: 20 units

2nd Wave: 15 units

3rd Wave: 15 units

4th Wave: 10 units

5th Wave: 5 units

Forces Available:

(16) Hvy Infantry

(8) Medium Infantry

(6) Lt Infantry

(6) Lt Cavalry

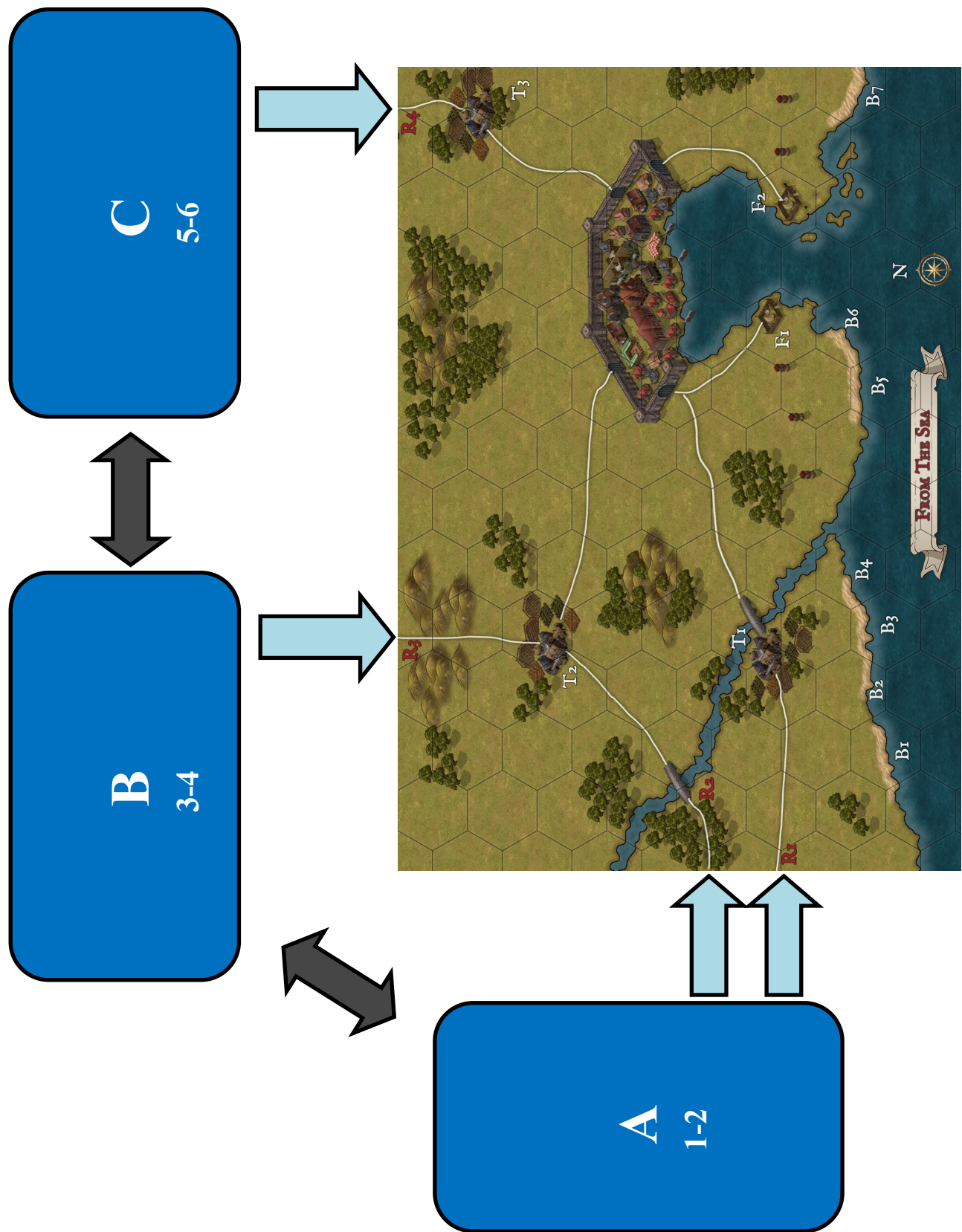
(6) Hvy Cavalry

(4) Artillery

Special: On the 1st Turn, all units that land roll 1D6 and on a 4-6 that unit may move one hex.



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<div>Sequence of Play</div> <div>I. Initiative Phase</div> <div>II. First Player Phase</div> <div><div>i. Receive Reinforcements</div><div>ii. Movement</div></div> <div>III. Second Player Phase</div> <div><div>i. Receive Reinforcements</div><div>ii. Movement</div></div> <div>IV. Fight Battles</div> <div>V. End Phase</div>	<div>Reinforcements Table</div> <div>Invaders</div> <div>1st Wave: 20 units</div> <div>2nd Wave: 15 units</div> <div>3rd Wave: 15 units</div> <div>4th Wave: 10 units</div> <div>5th Wave: 5 units</div> <div>Defender (2D6)-Roll Twice Per Turn</div> <div><div>Die Roll</div><div>Unit</div></div> <div>2-3</div> <div>Artillery</div> <div>4-5</div> <div>Hvy Infantry</div> <div>5-6</div> <div>Med Infantry</div> <div>7</div> <div>Lt Infantry</div> <div>8-9</div> <div>Lt Cavalry</div> <div>10</div> <div>No Reinforcements</div> <div>11-12</div> <div>Hvy Cavalry</div> <div>Roll 1D6 for each reinforcement to see what zone (A, B, or C) that it arrives at.</div>	<div>Combat-Terrain Selection</div> <div><div>Die Roll</div><div>Result</div></div> <div>2</div> <div>24” stream (fordable)</div> <div>3</div> <div>Large section of woods</div> <div>4</div> <div>Farm & outbuildings</div> <div>5</div> <div>Field/crops with fence/walls</div> <div>6</div> <div>Small section of woods</div> <div>7</div> <div>No terrain is placed</div> <div>8</div> <div>Brush/rocks (rough)</div> <div>9</div> <div>Field/crops with fence/walls</div> <div>10</div> <div>Small section of woods</div> <div>11</div> <div>Small village</div> <div>12</div> <div>Pond</div>
<div>Movement Allowances</div> <div>Infantry</div> <div>2 hexes</div> <div>Cavalry</div> <div>3 hexes</div> <div>Artillery</div> <div>1 hex (then roll 1D6 and on a 4-6 they can move an additional hex)</div>	<div>Combat Sequence</div> <div>I. Set Up The Terrain</div> <div>II. Defender Sets Up Their Forces</div> <div>III. Attacker Sets Up Their Forces</div> <div>IV. Fight Battle</div> <div>V. End of Battle/Pursuit</div>	<div>Combat-Pursuit</div> <div><div>Die Roll</div><div>Result</div></div> <div>1</div> <div>Effective Withdrawal-no losses</div> <div>2</div> <div>Rear Guard Action-lose 10%</div> <div>3</div> <div>Running Fight-lose 15%</div> <div>4</div> <div>Harried Pursuit-lose 20%</div> <div>5</div> <div>Loss of Control-lose 25%</div> <div>6</div> <div>Flee For Your Lives!-lose 40%</div> <div><div>• Winner has >2:1 force ratio: +1</div><div>• Winner has >4:1 force ratio: +2</div><div>• Cavalry superiority: +/- 1</div></div>
<div>Withdrawal Table</div> <div><div>Die Roll</div><div>Result</div></div> <div>1-4</div> <div>Successful</div> <div>5</div> <div>Successful-lose 1 unit</div> <div>6</div> <div>Withdrawing force eliminated</div> <div>Modifiers-The side with the most cavalry units can modify the die roll up or down 1.</div>		

Holding Boxes

A	B	C	D	E
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Turn Track

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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AOD: French Early Wars of Religion

Battle Report

It's been a while since our last Age of Discovery (rules for the Renaissance period) and even longer since we did a Wars of Religion game. The early French Wars of Religion are right at the upper end of the scale for the rules, although they do go as far as the Thirty Years War. The rules, however, do a good job of simulating the chaos of a Renaissance battlefield, but seem to be greatly different once a lot of units have firearms.

During this period, you had two entirely different types of armies on the battlefield. For the Catholics, there were lots of pikes present, including units of Spanish, Swiss, and French. The Swiss were still pretty good (morale grade 3 with 4 being the best in the rules), but nowhere near what they were 20 years earlier. The Spanish had improved, while the French pike was not very good at all (morale grade 1). There was, however, the heavily armored cavalry with lances, backed by some light cavalry, so the army had some striking power. Finally, a few pieces of the always unreliable artillery.

The Huguenots, by definition, were already moving in warfare's new direction. There were some reminders of the old army such as the German pike units, but they were nowhere near as good as they used to be. Instead, there were masses of smaller, arquebus armed units that roamed the battlefield along with German reiters who galloped in, fired, and fell back. The gendarmes were now armed with pistols, so even cavalry in the Huguenot army was changing. They also had light cavalry and a few batteries of artillery.



So this would be a battle of contrasting styles. One army with masses of pikes, backed by heavily armored cavalry against a host of smaller infantry units supported by pistol armed cavalry. Each side divided its units into three "battles", which are then deployed according to a die roll that shows which side deploys in what order. The Huguenots went with cavalry on the flanks (manly reiters), pikes spread across the front for support, then all of the arquebus in the center of the army. The Catholics were going to hold on one flank with the poor quality French pikes and light cavalry, then decide things on the left with the heavy cav and push hard in the center with the pike.

Age of Discovery uses a movement system where a die is tossed at the start of each turn which shows how the various battles are moved. In some turns it alternates evenly while in others a side might go twice in a row. This combined with the fragile morale grades of the units

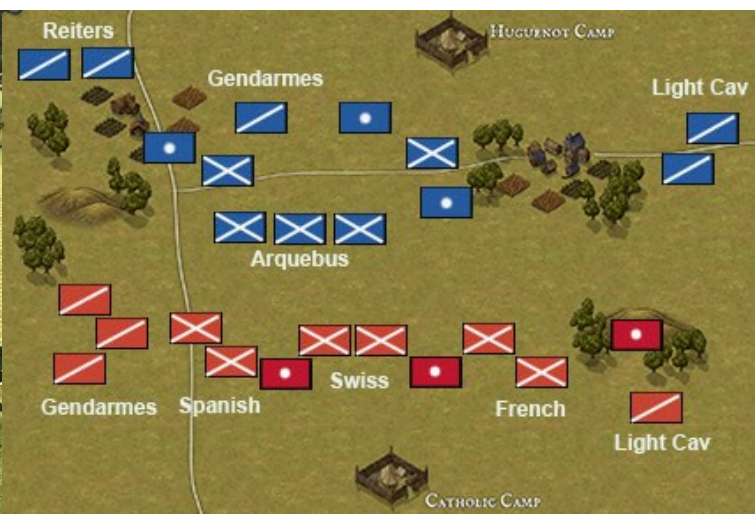
usually creates a large amount of chaos and tonight's battle was no exception!

Right at the start, the artillery, which rarely hits anything, scores several hits on both sides, disordering units here and there. This held up the advance in some places while creating traffic jams in others. On the Catholic right the Huguenots broke through the light cavalry and things looked bleak until a medium artillery battery checked the Huguenot advance by routing a unit after a single hit! All across the board the units of both sides were advancing and the first long range firepower duels began between the Huguenot arquebus and the arquebus stands of the pike units.

On the left flank the Huguenots had a problem mixed with opportunities. Their



German reiters could not charge the Catholic heavy cavalry and would need to flee if they themselves were charged. Each time they tried to flee, however, they failed and were disrupted, (cont. on p27)





(cont. from p26) then sent flying with half the unit gone from being hit by lances. They were also unable to take advantage of their pistols and twice had an opportunity to charge into the flank of the Catholic heavy cavalry, but failed to move. By the end of turn 4 the Huguenot left was in serious doubt.

By now there was a lot of firing going on across the center of the board. There was one major difference, however. The larger pike armed units with attached arquebus ignored hits on their own arquebus armed troops while the smaller Huguenot units kept failing morale. What was clearly happening here was the pike armed units kept slowly advancing, taking their casualties in stride, but the smaller units of both sides were fleeing the battlefield!

On top of all this, the artillery on both

sides kept scoring hits! In fact, there were probably more casualties in this one battle from artillery fire than we've seen in the last 10 years! The Spanish and Germans did get into a pike battle where it seemed the Spanish would have the advantage, but in both cases the Spanish were pushed back with heavy losses. Each side kept firing into each other at close range, doing a lot of damage and disordering units.

By this time, several units were in the process of routing off the board, while many more were disordered. Just when it looked like a unit would break through and possibly threaten the other side with being split up or the loss of their camp, they would get hit by something and fail the resulting morale check! Both sides kept pushing in the center while on the flanks each side was trying to either a) salvage the situation, or b) trying to get

their units back under control. Several times it looked really good for one side, only to have things collapse in a series of failed die rolls.

When we decided to call the game it was determined that the Catholics had the advantage. The left flank was clearly theirs, while in the center the pikes were pressing forward, albeit slowly. Both sides had a few units rout and few, if any units were untouched.

A very fun, but crazy game! There were some high points and low points for both sides. The German reiters had a miserable time, squandering every opportunity presented to them while the Catholic pike units did just enough to win. Also, the pistol armed Huguenot gendarmes never got into the fight! We'll have to revisit this era again and see if things turn out differently the next time.





(cont. from p28) still completing a turn. The Mig-21s AA-2 Atoll missiles aren't very good, but this one flew true and did some serious damage to the Crusader, which fell apart immediately and crashed!

Now the game was really on! The odds against the Crusaders just went from 6 against 4 to 6 against 3 pretty quickly. The Migs continued to maneuver in and out of the Crusaders paths, trying to get some good shots, but the Crusaders were now on alert and were not going to give up easily. Both sides got off some very poor head on or high angle shots, but no damage to either side. The Crusaders were by now desperately looking to get back in the game.

As is usual with a lot of aircraft maneuvering in a fairly small space, opportunities present themselves most often by

accident. A lone Crusader found itself behind a Mig-21 who was trying to maneuver for a shot. The first missile fell off the rail and went into the ground (we use the optional missile launch rules—many Vietnam era missiles didn't always fly right!), but the second one flew straight and true, ripping the Mig into pieces.

The Migs came back, getting off some high angle cannon attacks and even one of the Mig-17s had a pretty good shot at a Crusader, but missed. This one action seemed to sum up the night for the Migs. Some good opportunities that resulted in poor attack die rolls while the defensive rolls of the Crusaders were pretty good. At one point during the battle there were 6 aircraft in the same hex going in 4 different directions! Both sides were trying to get into position as it was felt that one more loss by either side might force a

break off and end the game.

Once again, with all of the confusion in the maneuvering, a Crusader got a good look at a Mig-21 and hit it with a AIM-9B Sidewinder, causing serious damage. With one Mig shot down, another damaged, and the Mig-17s unable to do anything, the Migs called it a night, leaving the A-4s to proceed to their target unmolested for the loss of one F-8.

While the second game was fun and a lot more competitive, we discussed the need for more space. A reduction from 5 inch hexes to 4 inch hexes might do the trick, but that is a project for another day. We also talked about doing an airstrike with SAMs, AAA, etc., that might make for a fun evening. We still need to work out some way to get the Phantoms onto the game board, which is a challenge.

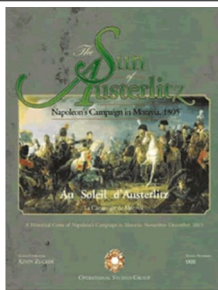


Sun of Austerlitz by OSG

Game Review

Operational Studies Group and designer Kevin Zucker, have long been the kings of Napoleonic gaming. Starting in the 70s, then when several of their titles were published by Avalon Hill, to today's offerings, OSG has attempted to cover the Napoleonic Wars by producing games on every campaign and battle. While that sounds great from a certain viewpoint, the issue quickly becomes which games belong to which series and what is the current version of the rules!

Sun of Austerlitz isn't the newest OSG game as it has been out for quite some time. I recently reviewed Napoleon in the Quadrilateral, which uses the same system, which caused me to backtrack to this game. Sun of Austerlitz is part of what is termed the "1X" series, which is at the top end of the series produced by OSG. The scale is 3200m per hex, 2 days per turn, and 1,000 men per strength point. We're talking about some fairly good sized forces with most counters representing 1-3000 cavalry or 3-8,000 infantry. The game is not just about the Battle of Austerlitz, but the entire campaign leading up to the battle.



very well done, although you really need to print off the consolidated rules for the series, which are available on several web sites. This revised set of rules is essential to being able to play the games.

For the uninitiated, the 1X series of games cover famous Napoleonic campaigns that place you in overall command of the forces for those campaigns. This is not a tactical series of games where you're concerned about several units assaulting a section of woods outside of a village. Instead, you are moving and fighting with leaders who command various combat units, which are usually brigades. The combat units are placed on a leader's track, so there are hardly any counters on the map! Some leaders can command other leaders, so only that leader's counter is on the map. The other leaders and their combat units are placed on tracks, not on the map. For many gamers this definitely takes some getting used to.



What you are left with is a huge, beautiful map with very few counters on it! On top of that, the counters are flipped over, so all that either player sees is the national flag or colors of the opposing sides. This leads into using what are called vedettes, who scout out in front of the forces and try to find out the strength of enemy forces. The effect this has is to force players to make plans without knowing what the true size of enemy forces are. It is about as close as you can come to being the commanding general during the horse & musket period as it gets in gaming terms.

Each side has an operations center, which is sort of an overall HQ. These centers collect and issue movement commands to leaders, which allows them to maneuver on the map. You also have to worry about where you're supply sources are at, as



the longer the supply line the more problems that your forces will have. Also, each time that your forces move, they have to roll for attrition. A force of 25-30 strength points (SPs) moving 25-30 hexes will be lucky to get there with losing less than 3 or 4 SPs. While simple in concept, trying to balance all of these things during the game is actually quite the challenge.

There are a few smaller battle scenarios that are essentially just a few turns with all forces in place for a major confrontation. These are good to learn the basics of movement and combat, plus to

try out the optional combat rules. On top of that there is the campaign, which has three starting times. The first covers the full campaign, with the Russian and Austrian forces strung out over a wide area, but with a lot of the French forces still gathering. The second start date has the French moving towards their objectives, while the third start date is where both sides are fairly close to each other, readying for the big showdown.

The campaign system is why you basically buy the game or are interested in this series. There are many, many games about the Battle of Austerlitz, but this game covers the French approach, the gathering of strength, then moving out to force a big battle with their Russian and Austrian opponents. Trying to figure out what to do is a huge challenge for both sides! There is a huge map with just a handful of counters on it and moving your forces, finding the enemy, and keeping units in supply is a constant struggle. The game, however, does a great job of simulating a Napoleonic era campaign.

There are a few issues in that this game series is not for everyone as it is at a fairly high level for the era. The rules and the set up can be a challenge as well as understanding how things are organized. The optional combat rules can add another layer of complexity and playing solo is really tough, because hidden forces are key to the game. If you're into Napoleonic campaigns, then this is definitely for you. Casual gamers, however, might see this as too much work.



Sun of Austerlitz comes in a fairly small box, which was surprising as Austerlitz was one of history's most important battles and the impression is that it was fairly large as well. You get one beautiful 22 x 34 map of the area, a rules booklet, exclusive rules booklet, several organizational displays, and one counter sheet. The interesting thing is that 1/3rd of the counters are variants for another OSG game! This leaves you with a much smaller amount of counters than you would think. Overall, the components are

It has been a long, long time since Salt Lake City has had any kind of miniature wargames show. There were a few back in the 90s that were really well attended, including one year having Scott Bowden of Empire fame and another year GDW attended. With all of the gamers now in the area, someone figured it was time for another show, thus the Salt Lake Open was born.

As mentioned in the article about our War of the Roses demo game that we did for the show (featured on p36-37), we found out about the show rather late in the planning stages, but we were still able to make it to the show and get the game set up. As with all first time events, there

the way at the Doubletree hotel.

When we arrived, the main hall had quite a few tables already set up for the Bolt Action and Flames of War tournaments. The terrain for the tournament games was actually pretty good, particularly some of the ruined city tables. There was also room for the Star Wars Armada and Blood Bowl tournaments, so it was a weird combo of themes. The Bolt Action and other tournaments were definitely organized and everyone was quickly set up and playing. One of the good things about the show was that they were able to pull off a number of tournaments and keep everyone playing.

As with most shows and cons, once things get going, it becomes hard to move around and ask questions to those who are busy playing. We went into the show knowing that if we actually completed our War of the Roses game, then we had succeeded! We fully expected people to ask questions, numerous stops to explain things, and basically show off historical miniatures gaming to those who were interested. In those terms, I think we succeeded as our table was pretty busy for most of the show.

Wandering around, there were a lot of people playing in the tournaments. Most of them seemed to have had a \$30 entrance fee, but there were rumors that the WH40K tournament at the other venue was around \$100, which makes for some pretty serious gaming if it was true! The one thing that we did pick up on during the day was how



-it-alls, but this show was certainly one of the friendliest that we've attended.

There were a few dealers there and Trenchworx sponsored the meet and greet on the Friday night. For those of you who don't know, Trenchworx is one of the leading companies in 1/56th (28mm) WW1 and WW2 vehicles, plus they do pieces for Warlord, Reaper, and many other companies. The items that they had for sale and the pieces in the exhibits were truly amazing. They were also carrying the Knuckleduster range of rules and minis, plus they put on a game or two.

Now as many of you know, gamers cannot exist for long without snacks and drinks! Unfortunately, there was nothing at the facility. We took a break halfway through our game to go down to a local convenience store and bring back some things, but in the future, a venue with some food/drink items would be good. However, it is Salt Lake City and for



was some good and bad. For one thing, the information about the Friday events was a bit confusing. There was going to be a meet and greet, free drinks, including beer (it was held at a Budweiser facility), and that was it. Later, we found out that there was some gaming on Friday night, which we knew nothing about!

We arrived Friday and the event facility staff person arrived with the key about an hour late! With no idea how many people were going to attend, I'm sure the organizers had no idea how much space that they would need. Just waiting outside with well over 100 people, then walking into the main hall instantly told me that there wasn't enough room! The show had been split, with the mainly historical tournaments at the Budweiser facility and the WH40K and Age of Sigmar tournaments across



those who have never visited here, there's usually 50 places to eat within each square mile!

Overall, it was a good start. More information, maybe some event sign ups, posted times, etc., should be added. The venue was a good start, but it seemed like something a bit larger was needed. The other thing is that while there were a few open games, there really was no area to set up more than the few who got there first. An ACW game that was planned for the show simply didn't have a table, so the gamer joined our game instead. Hopefully, these are just growing pains and things will get better. The area is long overdue for something like this, so we look forward to it continuing.

Colonial Rules Playtest

Battle Report

From time to time we get asked to playtest a set of miniatures rules. Some of them such as Age of Eagles and Age or Reason 3rd edition, go on to be published. Others may still get published, but we can clearly see that all of our comments, suggestions, etc., were ignored! Surprisingly, those rules don't seem to have done well in sales. That's not saying that we're the final word in gaming, but we've been around the block in the hobby for 40+ years and have a good sense of what a set of rules needs.

As many readers of this magazine know, we have been big supporters of both versions of Battles For Empire for quite some time now. The Fire & Fury aspect of the rules, coupled with the colonial theme makes it a popular game with the club. We were recently approached to try a possible 3rd edition of the rules, which featured some changes and an alternative way to do movement and rallying. Not ones to shy away from a play-testing challenge, we went to work on it.

The first thing you need to know about playtesting is that you don't get a completed set of rules! They are more like ideas set in the framework of what the rules might look like. This was the case here where we would use the 2nd edition for most things, but the charts would be new. We also decided to try out the alternative movement/rally system, so I needed to purchase some blank dice and mark them with the needed symbols.

While the first and second editions had the scale where units are companies, this version would feature battalion sized units, but with the same basing as the previous editions, which was great as no



one really wants to re-base figs for a playtest! Also, just from a casual glance at the charts, we could see that melee was going to be a quick and dirty affair, unlike in previous versions where units tended to get worn down.

We decided to keep things simple and go with a fairly basic scenario. A British punitive expedition in the Sudan has bitten off more than it could chew and is falling back to its base along the coast. Along the way they will pick up several Indian units who are garrisoning a fort. The British cavalry brigade has been skirmishing all morning and has just entered the board near the fort to rejoin the British infantry brigade coming down the road. The Mahdist forces are on two sides of the board, waiting for the right time to attack.

Now, any time a British square is involved in the game, things get tough on the native side, which was the case here. Definitely historical, but playing the native side and going up against it is certainly a tough challenge! The British

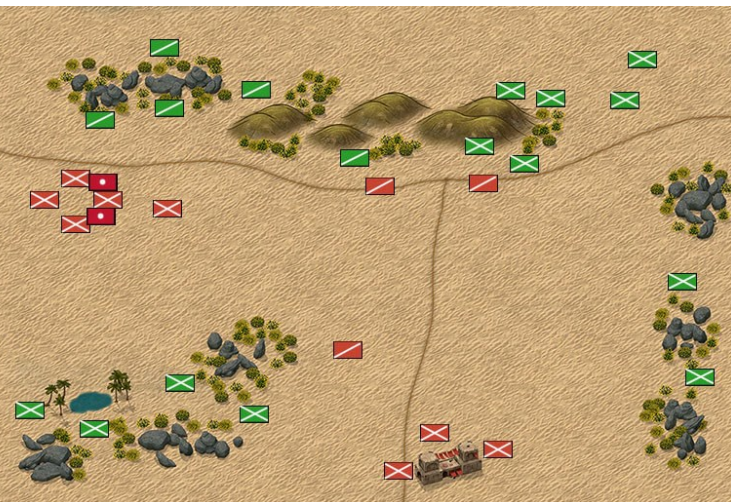
entered the board in square and the Mahdist players started wondering aloud how they were going to attack it.

For the new movement system (basically, it's designed where you don't really need the chart), each unit is given four dice, then you add or subtract dice depending upon if there is a leader attached, under fire, number of hits on the unit, etc. The dice are marked with three infantry and three cavalry symbols, so you roll the designated number of dice and move that amount. For example, a Colonial infantry unit with a leader attached would roll 5 dice and if three of them come up with an infantry symbol (native infantry move 4" while Colonial troops move 3") that unit could move up



to 9". A number of successes are also needed to rally. We found that after a few turns we didn't need the chart and it created a pretty chaotic environment, which sort of fits the colonial era.

The British cavalry charged into the advancing Mahdist units and had some great rolls, eliminating (cont. on p33)





(cont. from p32) two units. We found out that the new melee system is VERY decisive, especially when cavalry defeats infantry. Also, when units take hits and go shaken, trying to rally, particularly for native units, is pretty hard to do. The firing system was basically unchanged, which was good while we learned the sections of the rules that did change!

The Mahdists did have a large contingent of mounted troops, who maneuvered to attack the square. Despite getting close to the square several times, they simply had no answer for the British firepower. In these situations, what is needed in game terms is a bit of luck and the Mahdist players had little of that this night! Once things started going downhill for the Mahdist mounted brigade they snowballed. First one, then a second unit were eliminated as the British rifles and

artillery continued to pound anything near the square.

In the middle of the game board, there was a fascinating series of charges and countercharges as the Indian lancers and Egyptian cavalry waded into the Mahdist units near the hills. While the Indians did get pushed back once or twice, they were always able to rally to get back into the fight. The remaining Mahdist units didn't really want to charge the Indian held fort and the Indians didn't really want to come out and fight! This led to a stand-off on that side of the board.

Back near the square, Mahdist infantry units tried to launch a coordinated attack with the mounted units on the other side, thinking that if just one could reach the square, there was a chance of something taking hold that might break the square. That was a short lived dream, however,

as the firepower of the square started to cause Mahdist units to go shaken. Then they couldn't rally and more hits started to pile up, then units fled the board. It was a valiant effort, but doomed to failure and the game was called as a British victory.

Despite the lopsided win for the British, everyone had fun with the game and the Mahdists did have their chances. The playtest was successful in that there was some very good discussion, comments, suggestions for rules changes, etc., which is really all that a playtest group can do. We thought that the game was different enough that it should really be marketed as a fast play set of colonial rules, different from Battles For Empire. We'll see what develops and what the final result is when the rules (and if they) get published, which is hopeful.



Age of Eagles: Approach to Montereau

Battle Report

I think that this has been mentioned before, but doing historical battles is both a blessing and a curse! For one, getting the terrain to match up with anything close to what the actual battlefield was is next to impossible. Second, the games seem to last far longer than you would think and everyone glosses over how many troops are usually involved. However, there is that sense that all gamers need to do historical battles from time to time and it's great when you can actually pull them off.

For this affair, we went with Montereau in 1814, which followed directly



after Napoleon's dazzling campaign in early February, which saw his forces turn on the Prussians and Russians, dispersing them. Napoleon then turned his attention to the Austrians, who had pulled back and awaited an attack. We would play the first 10 turns of the attack and then if time permitted, see the Imperial Guard arrive along with more Austrian reinforcements.

We've learned long ago that with Age of Eagles and Fire & Fury, that you really only need to place the main roads as those are the only things that give a movement bonus. It also helps on cutting down the table clutter. All of our buildings for this period are on bases, so we had to leave some of the buildings out on the edges of the battlefield empty, so this is something we need to work on for the future. The good thing is that the river, crossings, Montereau, forests, and main roads were in place.

The battle began with Victor's and Pajol's corps entering on opposite sides of the board, which is the prelude to the Imperial Guard coming down the road at some point (turn 10). The Austrians were

caught with most of the force deployed north of the Seine River, but with some strong forces still on the opposite side. The Austrians began to direct these forces to the north side as quickly as possible. The other factor here is that the Austrian artillery and commands were all out of place, so getting this sorted out would be a challenge.

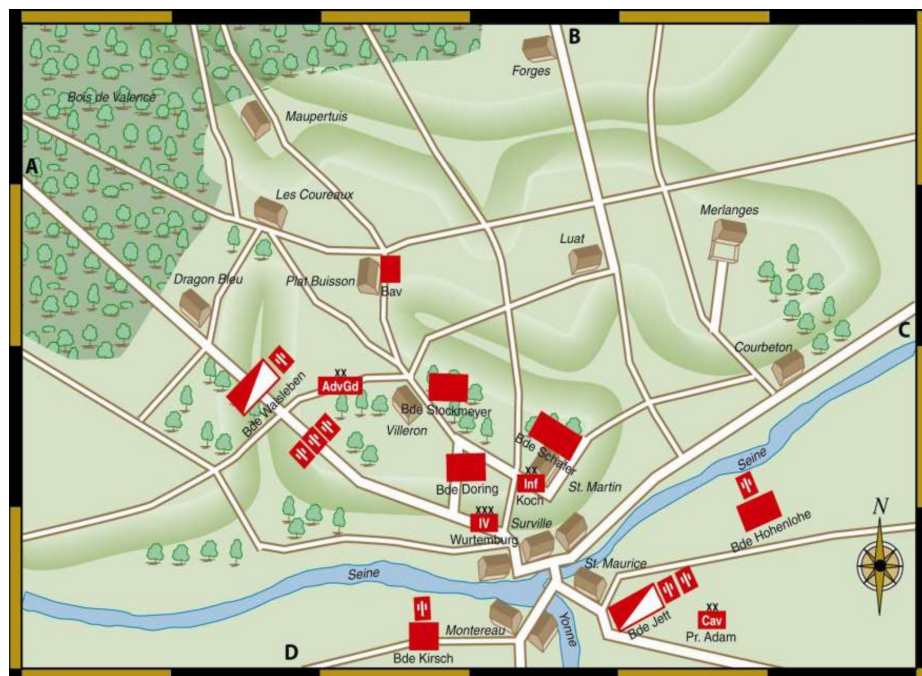
The first step for the Austrians was to get things straightened out and form some kind of sensible defense. With two players on the Austrian side, we decided to each take one half of the board. The Austrian infantry turned towards the road entrances while the artillery was brought up in support. A traffic jam formed at the river where the Austrians were trying to cross from the other side of the Seine. One rule that we had been playing wrong forever, was the rule regarding units in the Reserve Zone who don't have to pay for formation changes, terrain costs, or moving through units. How we missed that all these years is mystifying, but it greatly helped the Austrians here!

The French emerged from the forests on the Austrian left and on the right the French infantry and cav split to envelop the Austrian defense. At first, things didn't go great for the Austrians as the initial charge by the Austrian hussars



was thrown back. On the Austrian right, the French artillery deployed and started bombarding the Austrian positions. The one thing that helped the Austrians at this stage of the game was the French cavalry kept rolling 1s on the movement table! After the first three turns the Austrians were holding and the French were getting set up to attack. The main thing for the Austrians was to hang on until turn 10 when reinforcements would show up.

Then things started to go bad for the Austrians. A series of attacks on the Austrian right saw the French break into the line of villages in the area. On the Austrian left, the Austrian hussars drove the enemy back and put the French attack into disarray. The French, however, recovered quickly and counterattacked. The French started to close in on the villages and despite some (cont. on p35)





(cont. from p34) losses, the French were still in pretty good shape.

The Austrian hussars on the left were the stars of the show so far, withstanding multiple charges, counterattacking, and generally being a thorn in the side of the French. Now, however, the French infantry moved forward, overrunning an Austrian held village and forcing the Austrians back in the area. With the pressure on the right, the Austrians were slowly being forced back into a crescent, anchored on the several villages in the middle of the board.

The French kept up the artillery bombardment, then tried a series of cavalry charges in the center of the board. The Austrians held, then counterattacked, forcing the French cavalry to fall back on its supports. Despite the pressure, the Austrians were still holding on. The

troops who were across the Seine were now deployed to shore up some threatened areas as the French attack continued on.

The French and Austrians were now fighting a series of hand to hand combats in the villages not too far from the Seine River bridges. Most formations were now reaching Worn status and there was a growing feeling on the Austrian side that things were not going so well! The French continued to inch forward, displacing their batteries so that every other turn there was a bombardment of the Austrian positions, for which the Austrians had little answer at this point. The Austrians around turns 9 and 10 did get themselves into a defensive semi-circle to await reinforcements, but then again, the French were going to get some as well, including the Imperial Guard!

With the set up and play time, we were already well over 3 1/2 hours into it and just completed the first phase of the battle. As always, we were a bit ambitious in thinking that we could play the whole thing, but we were only halfway. The Austrians had done about as good as they could, but the French were definitely making progress when the game was called, plus the Guard was coming down the road with quite a lot of artillery! The end for the Austrians was in sight.

We really liked this battle and had a lot of fun playing it. Plans are already under way to try it again, take photos of the end of the first phase, then pick things up again later where we would play the second half of the battle. This could be a way forward for us concerning the larger battles and it's something worth trying at least once!



Hail Caesar Demo Game at the Salt Lake Open 2023

When the Salt Lake Open was announced, our gaming group paid little attention to it. Bolt Action, Flames of War, WH40K, etc., were all games that we really don't play! That's not saying we haven't dabbled in them over the years or that 1 or 2 members doesn't join in on a game or two, but as a group we just don't play any of those games. Then the Warlord Games representative asked us to put on a game as we play Hail Caesar, which is one of their flagship products.

All of a sudden, things changed pretty quickly! While we have some huge armies for Seleucids vs. Romans, the thinking was the War of the Roses, with its heavy armored infantry, archers, flags, etc., might be more appealing to first time gamers or those who play fantasy/sci-fi. Extra charts needed to be printed out, a bit more terrain, and certainly a few more units to get enough for 7-8 players had to be completed in just a few months!

The day of the show arrived and at that time we did not know if we would be running one or two games as information was surprisingly hard to come by. On top of that, the person with the keys to the venue was 50 minutes late, so while we thought we would be set up by a certain time, actually we were just getting into the building! Then we found out that the venue was on the 2nd floor, so all of our stuff had to go by elevator and stairs.

We were allocated some space in a side room, away from the main hall, which was good and bad. Good because the main hall was pretty crowded, but bad because fewer people saw what we were doing. We were also in the same room as the Blood Bowl championships and while everyone was very nice about things, it was a bit cramped in the room. Finally, by about 10:15 am we were all set up and ready to go.

This was going to be a straight up bash as with cons, shows, big events, etc., there really isn't time to let everyone set up their own forces. This can create a bit of grumbling here and there, but in the interest of time it's about all that can be done. After a brief refresher with the rules, handing out the charts, going over units and stats, etc., we were ready to get the first turn under way.



The Yorkists had fewer commands, but two of the divisions were fairly large and they moved out first, while the Yorkist right flank slowly moved up. The Lancastrians responded by trying to move up to the road running down the middle of the board and setting up a defense line there. The Yorkist left had absolutely abysmal luck getting over the bridge and it looked for a few turns that one decent Lancastrian charge might end the game early by plowing into the densely packed columns! One Yorkist household unit finally got into line across the bridge, just in time to defeat a light cavalry charge.

In fact, the cavalry of both sides were pretty inconsequential in this battle and we've seen this a few times so far in our War of the Roses games. The knights are powerful units in the charge, but the defenders can usually withstand the charge, then inflict some damage, leaving them vulnerable to archery fire from surrounding enemy units. The artillery didn't fare so well, either. Units were blocking their field of fire, too many missed shots, and basically they were more of a nuisance than anything else.

By turn 7 most of the forces were in close proximity to each other and this is where things got really chaotic! Seeing that archery fire was doing little to no damage due to the high armor saves, both

sides decided to wade in and settle things with swords and axes! Combat erupted across the length of the board, with one side, then the other gaining the advantage at times. More and more units came up in support, so the casualties really started to accumulate on the various units.

No one really had time to use the Rally command and many units were shaken, so it created this no man's land in the center at times, then fresh forces would pile in to continue the fight. On top of that, we had about 8 blunders, which produced some interesting swings of fortune!

Finally, the Yorkists broke the Lancastrians left flank and turned towards the center. With no reserves left and most units teetering on the edge in terms of casualties, the Lancastrians conceded. We had played 14 turns in about 5 hours with 7 players, so not too bad for such a large game.

The game did its job, attracting a lot of onlookers and generating a lot of questions. There were a number of things that we could probably improve upon, including possibly making some handouts that talk about the rules and the miniatures. Also, we had too much terrain that limited the reach of the cavalry, but it's hard knowing how things will look on the day of a show in terms of space and players. We also need to read the rules better! Everyone forgot about a lot of the special commands, the English Bowman marksmanship rules, etc. We'll do better next time!



Hail Caesar Demo Game at the Salt Lake Open 2023 (cont.)



Several more images from the big War of the Roses game at the Salt Lake Open. There were about 20 units per side and we had up to 8 players at times, but the turns were surprisingly fast and smooth. For next year we need a bigger table and more room for all of our stuff!

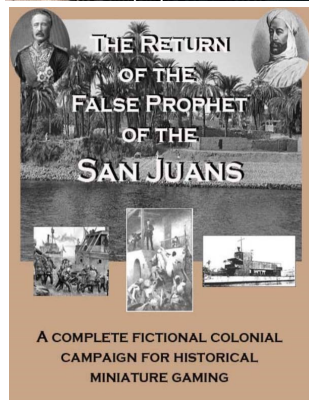
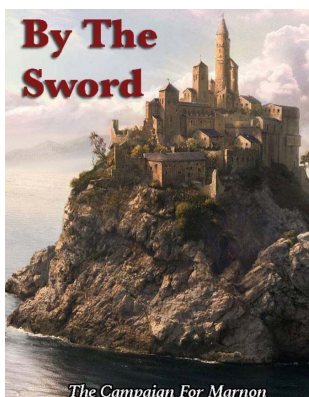
WASATCH FRONT HISTORICAL GAMING SOCIETY

Meets every other Friday night in the SLC, Utah area. We play a wide variety of games in 1/300th, 10mm, 15mm, and 25mm, including Hail Caesar, Age of Reason, Age of Discovery, Age of Eagles, Fire & Fury, General de Brigade, Warmaster Ancients/Medieval, TSATF, Phantoms, Mustangs, Battlegroup Panzergrenadier, Saga, Ronin, BKC4, board wargames, and more...

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As our hobby has exploded in the number of games, rules, figures, etc., that are now available and how many gamers are involved in the hobby, we're also seeing a large number of individuals with no self awareness. This was always inevitable as what used to be a fairly niche hobby is now expanding rapidly due to the rise of GW type games, huge numbers of board games (both wargames and Euros similar to wargames), and gamers tired of what they usually play looking for new territories in the hobby. The instant gratification that is so prevalent in our society today has definitely invaded the hobby in many ways, from game companies offering (naturally for a price) everything in a box to play a period or game, to gamers posting on various forums and social media as if they are the experts on various fields of history or games. Where in the past new and/or potential gamers would come to your game or a con, ask some questions, get started in the hobby, then at some point either decide to look for something else, or they become a valuable contributing member to a club. Not so much any more.



Take for example the gamer who thought that MMP's Grand Tactical Series had terrible rules, the company could get more sales if they fixed them, and then set about on a quest to rewrite the rules. Now, nobody asked him to do this and he never asked for any feedback either on his new version of the rules. The games in the series have all hit their pre-order numbers, so the company is probably happy with where things stand. There are also thousands of posts about the rules, future games, etc. All of sudden, someone comes along (not even sure if he's played the games in the series) and tells everyone that the rules suck, here's a new version, now throw all of yours away and play this! His posts were deleted and he went away angry, not understanding why no one wanted to join him on his crusade. Other gamers spend a ton of time trying to convince GMT Games (one of the most successful wargame companies) how to run their business, what prices to charge, and to stop work on other games so that they can focus on the one game that they pre-ordered!



This doesn't include the large number of posts on FB groups, forums, etc., of badly painted miniatures where gamers are hoping to get as many positive comments as those posts showing some truly incredible work, then they get angry about it when no one likes their posts or comments favorably on them.. Heaven help the gamer who suggests how they could improve things! My maps in this magazine are very basic, but they do the job. There's no way that I would post them to some of the FB groups on fantasy mapmaking, then proceed to tell others how they should be making their maps! The lack of self awareness is staggering at this stage and I've only touched on a few examples that I've encountered over the last few months. Most gamers are pretty harmless and many are extremely patient as well as helpful. However, that patience is getting a real test right now! Hopefully, things will improve and many of these gamers can take a step back, survey the gaming world, then smartly decide whether or not to post various things.