

Firstly thank you to the members who sent me contributions for the newsletter, there is enough for another issue but more articles would be appreciated.

Forthcoming Meetings

SOUTH LONDON WARLORDS

Wargaming and Military Modelling Club

We invite you to come to the best social event of the Wargaming Year:-

The South London Warlords' 'MARGATE '78' on OCTOBER 6-7-8th. 1978
at the WINTER GARDENS, MARGATE.

This will be the very best in wargaming and related activities.

The whole event is designed with the emphasis on active participation by everyone. Apart from the usual open day attractions we are holding the Warlord Tankard, an open Wargaming competition in 25mm for various periods. Also being held is a painting competition, details to follow shortly.

There will be plenty of room for anyone to have a friendly game so just bring your army, troops or board games and enjoy yourself.

This year we hope to repeat or even enlarge the very popular and exciting re-enactment, full dress Militaire and Pageant, Societies who proved so entertaining last year. In addition we are holding short informal talks by well known names of general interest to the modeller and wargamer, (nothing too heavy though!)

THE MAIN THEME OF THE WHOLE EVENT IS AN ENJOYABLE AND
FRIENDLY WEEKEND AMONG AND ABOUT WARGAMERS AND WARGAMING.

Please note: Entrance is FREE.

J. N. Bridge,
Open Day Co-ordinator.

NEXT CLUB MEETINGS

Sunday, November 5th (1st Sunday of each month) : 2.15 p.m. at St. Thomas' Hall,
Vale Avenue, Southborough, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

Monday, November 20th (3rd Monday of each month) at "Cross Keys" Pub,
St. Johns Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

RECENT MEETINGS

JULY : About 40 members present and 12 games played. Including 5, WW2,
1 middle Earth, a ECW game, an A.CW one, Napoleonic and Ancient
also a Renaissance Siege.

Comp. Winners: Vehicle : LRDC Truck A. Waites •

Figure: Flat General H. Taylor

Unit: Russian Nap. Inf. R. Hanson

AUGUST : About 28 present, 11 games.
 3 Renaissance (1 campaign)
 1 Napoleonic
 1 ACW
 1 Napoleonic Naval
 2 x 1:300th Modern
 1 x 1/76th WWII.

Comp. Results: WU Knights G. Charles
 V3 Sp gun on base Hugh Munro
 SF10 Gawd Knows What!
 E/f Kevin O'Sullivan

SEPTEMBER: 30 members present. Games included D & D game, Renaissance, Napoleonic and Medieval, E.C.W. and Macedonians V. Rennans using WRg 6th edition (trial only) rules, also a WWD game.

Comp. Results: SF Goblin T. Lemmon
 V. SF Vehicle T. Lemmon
 WU. Scots Pikes C. McLeod
 Knights A. Franklin

For Sale

31 copies of the magazine W.W.II including 2 folders.

Price £14.80p o.n.o.

See Peter England.

Atlantic Figures

As mentioned in the July issue, Atlantic Figures are now available from various shops, including Miniature Warfare on the Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, who stock the whole OO range. These Italian figures are comparable to Airfix OO/HO figures in material and, generally, size, though naturally they are slightly more expensive, being 94p for a set containing between 50 and 70 pieces. This is still pretty cheap compared with any kind of metal figures, though, and they can also be bought in smaller sets of about 12 to 20 pieces for 22p. They cover many things not included in Airfix ranges. In the Ancient Period they include Romans. Clive McLeod tells me he doesn't think the actual figures are very good but he has a set containing some really superb Siege Towers and there is another with three splendid catapults in it (these larger sets, containing large numbers of figures as well, sell for £3.00 upwards). Then there are Greeks, suitable for the Classical period of Greek warfare, good figures; large sets include a huge one with two magnificent Greek galleys in it: Trojans - fine figures, excellent for Archaic Greek armies too, with chariots etc: and Egyptians - good warriors, quite reasonable chariots too, and a huge range of civilians, pharaohs, mummies etc. with large sets including a Sphinx and an Egyptian temple (the Greeks have a temple set too, and one including the famous Wooden Horse of Troy!). These latter would make very nice dioramas.

The rest of the range are World War II figures. I was excited to find that they included Italian Alpini and Bersaglieri, since I rather favour the Italians and no-one else makes any suitable figures, but I was very disappointed in these sets, which I believe are among the first Atlantic made. The figures are very small (like early Airfix ones), wear a sort of non-descript British-type battledress which seems wrong, and have some pretty odd supporting equipment such as a very post-war looking snow-scooter. The Alpini, though, do contain useful ski-troopers, and pack animals. The other WWII sets are very much better, and the figures are, if anything, a little larger than Airfix

and fit in well with Warrior and Hinchliffe lead WWII figures. The Red Army set has a madly out-of-scale MMG, about the size of a medium field gun, but provides some useful figures in fur hats and one or two in great coats, to vary the Airfix offerings. Similarly, the other WWII sets provide extra figures not available elsewhere - for example, the Afrika Korps set has men in sun-helmets which you won't find in other DAK sets. There are British infantry, Americans and Germans, all quite good, and two sets not produced by any other firm, Frogmen and Indian Army, the latter nice figures suitable for Desert or Far East use.

The sets are attractively packed in boxes (for the 94p and upward range) which have a folding book-type top giving coloured pictures of figures and details of the army shown (not in the wonderful fractured English which is used to distinguish their cheaper sets). To quote from the old British set "In Malasia jungles, in Birmania and New Zealand, they foughted very courageously against the overflowing Japanese...." (!) The British set includes, incidentally, a separate Bren gun in each sprue of figures. The range also includes Wild West figures.

George Gush

REPORT:

One-Day Napoleonic Campaign 25th June, 1978

For the benefit of those not present, I had better explain that this game was more or less an attempt to fight a large-scale Napoleonic action without having excessive numbers of troops in any single battle, giving Commanders a chance to make some strategical or grand-tactical decisions as well as exercising purely tactical control on the table top. Forces were initially moved on the map by commanders-in-chief (Paul Colebrooke for the French and Graham Charles for the Allies - British, Austrians, Spanish, Portuguese, Brunswickers etc.), each seeing only his own troops, with information and contacts with the enemy being signified by the Umpire (George Gush): when a battle occurred, commanders of forces within 5 hexes' distance could decide to "march to the sound of the guns" and would join in the action, after a suitable delay, from whatever direction they were coming on the map. Those who did not decide to do this were not subsequently allowed to enter that same action, a rule intended to stop C in C's overruling subordinates' decisions on this matter, but not entirely satisfactory in its operation: it led to some of the Allies never being engaged at all (including the incredibly powerful Household Cavalry Brigade), though these troops did manage to capture several towns, each of which counted 1,000 points to the possessor at the end. Otherwise, troops killed or routed off table counted their points value lost, prisoners half value, troops retreated from table full points, but couldn't fight again in campaign. The latter rule would be important when troops who had won a battle marched on to join in another, but on this occasion this didn't actually happen, the original battles going on too long to allow it, a result partly of perhaps using rather too large forces for the number of generals available, and partly of the way things worked out, with a few large battles rather than a large number of smaller ones.

A good time seems to have been had by all commanders - about 16 played altogether - but if we do another of these operations, the map rules will be somewhat modified, as will the numbers, profiting by the lessons of this one.

One advantage of a wargames club is that it does allow one to try out this kind of thing, and fight what would be a respectable-sized battle if scaled up. The forces engaged, contributed by many club members - to all of whom many thanks - comprised:

	<u>No. of figures actually used</u>	<u>No. of men etc. represented under WRG rules</u>
French : Infantry :	978	48,900 men
Cavalry :	276	11,040 men
Artillery:	31 guns	62 guns
Allies : Infantry :	1,003	50,150 men
Cavalry :	307	12,280 men
Artillery:	36 guns	72 guns

The difference in numbers is accounted for by the higher quality of the French, who included a whole division of la Garde, while the Allies included a whole division of raw Spanish troops. The sides were almost exactly equal on WRG points, at about 13,300 each. Both sides were organised as six infantry divisions and six cavalry brigades of varying size and power.

The campaign resolved itself into four major battles. At Holsten, at the South of the map, Graham Charles' Anglo-Portuguese division and Cavalry Brigade, and Tony Shoebridge's French Division with the 1st Cuirassier Brigade, fought each other to an incredibly bloody standstill. A short distance to the North, at Carlsburg, the Spanish Division and Cavalry, under George Gush, were joined by Chris Nicholson with his British Division to take on Michael Lucas with his own Franco-Saxon division and a Polish lancer brigade, supported by Nigel Wells with a German division and the 2nd Cuirassier Brigade. For a time the Allies did quite well, but the Spanish quality was bound to tell: much of their force collapsed, and their general pusillanimously withdrew the rest, leaving Chris still holding out valiantly, but Carlsburg in French hands. In the extreme north, west of Pils, Malcolm Dove's Anglo-Brunswick division, supported by a British cavalry brigade and an Austrian light cavalry brigade sneakily sent through the Massif Central to descend on the enemy flank and rear, fought Russel Hanson with his own French division and a line cavalry brigade. This produced the one clear-cut Allied victory of the day, an overwhelming one, but Russell held out so long that the Allied forces involved were unable to intervene elsewhere.

In the centre, across the River Cointreau (a small, fordable waterway) raged the greatest battle of the day. The strangest French division, under Clive McLeod, faced the strangest Allied one, the Austrians under John Hurst, each with a cavalry brigade: the Austrians were supported by Michael Bowen, with a British division, while on the French side, Napoleon Colebrooke decided to throw in the Garde, horse and foot, giving a massive battle finally won decisively by the French, who derived particular benefit from their cavalry advantage - this is where the absence of the Household Brigade was really felt.

From this information submitted by the various commanders, the overall results appear to be:-

<u>FRENCH</u>		<u>ALLIES</u>	
<u>Towns controlled:</u>		<u>Towns controlled:</u>	
Tuborg	1,000 pts	Pils	1,000 pts
Kronembourg	1,000 pts	Artois	1,000 pts
Carlsburg	1,000 pts	Heinekin	1,000 pts
Half of Holsten	500 pts	Karling	1,000 pts
Biere	1,000 pts	Half of Holsten	500 pts
Basse	1,000 pts	Guns etc. captured	200 pts
Guns etc. captured	90		
		plus score	4,700 pts
plus score	5,590 pts		

FRENCHALLIES

Losses:

At Carlsburg	947 pts
At Holsten	970 pts
At Pils	1,400 pts
At R. Cointreau	721 pts

Losses	<u>4,038</u>
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At Carlsburg	1,386 pts
At Holsten	1,210 pts
At Pils	520 pts
At R. Cointreau	2,194 pts

Losses	<u>5,310</u>
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<u>Overall Score</u>	1,552 pts
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<u>Overall Score</u>	MINUS 610 pts
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French Victory! Rejoicing in streets of Paris! Coronation of Emperor Paul I!
Sir Graham Charles KCB, CMG appointed deputy-governor of Fever Island, British
West Indies!

Vive l'Empereur!

George Gush

The Limitations of Wargaming

by Niel Faulkner

One of the numerous sources of inaccuracy in wargaming is that it places the player in a far better position to direct his forces than was ever available to a real-life general. Not only has the player immediate access to all or most relevant information on which to base his decisions (he can see the whole wargame), but once the decisions are made he can be sure they will be carried out (he actually moves the figures).

Real warfare is very different. In fact, most campaigns and battles are won not so much by the side that employs the superior strategy and tactics, as by the side that makes the fewest cock-ups. Battles are essentially contests between two quantities of massive incompetence and inefficiency, and the side most successful at containing it wins. Indeed, military brilliance is rare - most generals are as thick as two planks (which is why they are in the army). And even when somebody outstanding does attain important command, the chances are that what he plans on paper will not be successfully executed by his subordinates. It follows also from this, that there is a very large degree of sheer luck in determining the outcome of a military operation.

Take an example: the campaign and battle of Antietam in the American Civil War. In the late summer of 1862, Lee led the Rebel Army of Northern Virginia into the North. He lost his opponent advancing behind a mountain range, and then divided his army to seize a handful of strategic objectives - the idea was to reunite and descend on the enemy later. However, at this stage, a big dose of luck was to enter the scales and tip the balance completely against Lee. His whole strategy collapsed when a Rebel officer lost a copy of Lee's plan, which was then found by a group of Federal soldiers lying on the ground (they would probably have ignored it but for the fact that it was wrapped round a bunch of cigars!).

At this point, McClellan, commanding the Yankee Army of the Potomac, knew Lee's Army was scattered across the Maryland countryside. If he had attacked it vigorously, the Army of Northern Virginia would not simply have been defeated but wiped out, bit-by-bit. And that event would probably have ended the war. Enter: military stupidity. McClellan simply failed to grasp the magnitude of the opportunity offered him and Lee's Army was given time to regroup.

But that was not all. When McClellan bumped into Lee at the Antietam Creek, he had 90,000 men with to oppose 30,000. If he had attacked immediately, it is hard to see how the army of Northern Virginia could have survived. When McClellan did attack - on the following day - Lee had 40,000; it would prove to be just enough.

It should not have been, of course. With a more than 2 : 1 advantage, the Yankees should still have crushed the Rebels. But the attack was bungled: units went in, all over the place, all through the day - corps, divisions, brigades, and even regiments, failed to co-ordinate their attacks.

And chance played a part again at the end of the battle. The last major Yankee assault was turned back by 5,000 Rebels arriving on the field just as Burnside's corps was about to plunge into the weakened and faltering Rebel right. In short nobody did anything clever which had a significant impact on the outcome of the Antietam Campaign : Lee's strategy was good, but he could not carry it out because some anonymous idiot lost a copy of his plan; on the other hand, McClellan lost three chances of destroying the Army of Northern Virginia because he was a thoroughly inept Military Commander.

In conclusion, I would urge wargamers to consider the following comments on the nature of real warfare, which, if true represent a major criticism of wargaming as accurate battle-recreation.

1. The main command effort of an army is devoted to simply controlling what is a vast and complicated military instrument. At the best of times, it is a very blunt and unwieldy one; at the worst, it is just a chaotic and meaningless bustle of individuals. Just to keep the thing pointing in roughly the right direction and actually moving is an achievement. All this means, that very little time and energy is left for imaginative strategy and tactics.
2. And even without this, most generals are not capable of imaginative strategic and tactical thinking anyway. For two reasons. First soldiers are rarely imaginative and often stupid. Second, very few generals ever have more than an inkling about what is actually happening beyond what they can see (and even what they see is subject to misinterpretation); i.e. even assuming the necessary mental equipment, generals do not have the knowledge necessary to do brilliant things.
3. Things go wrong by sheer, unavoidable fluke - very often. This is not the same as military stupidity. Often, of course, plans go wrong because somebody somewhere gets it wrong. But there are plenty of other occasions when plans get messed up and nobody is really to blame. Such occurrences are hard to allow for in Wargaming.

THE BIG BATTLE LEAGUE

There is a possibility (definitely not a certainty yet) of the TWWS taking over the country of Havano in the modern (post WWII) campaign run by Roger Comber, in which there is a whole (imaginary) world, each country run by a different club or group. They meet in hired halls for occasional 'World Games' (i.e. map movement, diplomacy, production etc.) and hold huge battles on hall floors when two countries clash. The campaign has been semi-dormant for about 9 months while the rules are re-written, but it is expected to restart about September this year. Countries' armies are based on actual models held so we would need a lot of (particularly) jet fighters, missiles, etc. (1 : 72 scale) and modern tanks and artillery (ground forces mainly 1 : 72 - 1 : 76 but 1 : 87 Minitacoles also allowed). The battles and 'world-games' are held in the London area. We would need, if we go in (and there is nothing definitely decided yet) a number of people willing to play, organise production, and control map-moving etc. plus a larger number who would only need to take part in actual battles but, hopefully, would contribute models etc.

We hope to get special "Havano" camouflage and markings on specially-built models, but WWII ground forces and modern air-craft can also be used in their real colour-schemes and markings. Anyone interested can get further details from George Gush.

BOOK REVIEW

Air Battles in Miniature Mike Spicle PSL

At £4.95 this is a very expensive book for its size (160 smallish pages, no colour illustrations) but it is very interesting. Not only is it the best of the very few books written about air war-gaming, but it has a great deal of interesting and unusual information for anyone interested in air warfare generally. It is written in a very lively and amusing style and must be one of the most readable wargames books ever. It contains general discussion of the problems and possibilities of air wargaming, and details of a very original tactical game played in the vertical plane with kit 1 : 72 aircraft made up as two separate halves, of ground-attack games, and of how to fight campaigns based on the Battle of Britain and on Malta. These are very interesting indeed, and there is no doubt that Mike Spicle really knows his stuff and has lots of original ideas, though the unscientific may find, as I did, that he doesn't always explain things quite fully enough. Recommended read to anyone interested in air warfare.

George Gush.

Postscript to Atlantic Models note above:

Beware the WW2 battle sets which contain out-of-period snap-together tanks etc. However, the Afrika Korps are even better than described, the set containing separate headgear for all figures, with a choice of sun-helmet, steel helmet, or peaked service cap. A paratroop set purchased at 'Miniature Warfare' revealed that the paratroops are early small figures and a bit nondescript, though useable, but the set also included, in addition to the full advertised number of paras, as many figures again, this time police, complete with motor-cyclists, guard-dogs and handlers and other interesting models. As they are on the same sprue as the paratroopers, it seems possible that you always get this bonus in the Paratroop set !

DON'T FORGET: ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26TH, AT KING CHARLES' HALL, WE HAVE AN OPEN WARGAMING MEETING FOR MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY OF ANCIENTS AND PIKE AND SHOT SOCIETIES, AS WELL AS OTHERS INTERESTED IN THOSE PERIODS- AN OPPORTUNITY TO MEET AND CHAT WITH VISITORS FROM OTHER CLUBS, AS WELL AS TO PLAY FRIENDLY OR CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES