

**Rank and File**  
**Journal**  
**of the**  
**Tunbridge Wells**  
**Wargames Society**  
**Issue Summer 1991**

## Editorial

Andrew Finch

Since the last issue we have had a meeting of the Club Committee and some of the matters we discussed should be brought to your attention.

Peter England has volunteered to organise the Open Day for 1992, and I hope that you will give him all the support he needs to make this another success. Once again, many thanks to Graham Charles for the work he put into organising the event in previous years. You will be hearing from Peter soon about what help he needs.

We have also decided to hold a bring and buy stand twice per year at the Sunday meetings in October and March. There will be no charge for the use of this stand to club members. Open day vouchers can be used as payment and will be redeemed by the Treasurer at the meeting.

We are also examining the possibility of having some of the Tuesday meetings in the back of the Hall. If we do this, it would be a regular hiring, without the restrictions which exist when we use the pub (age). More information will follow on this.

On the third Sunday in October we will be holding Club DBA championships on the Swiss Chess principle (not a knockout pyramid - you keep playing all day).

I have received a letter from one of our members, Lance Flint, who served with our forces in the Gulf. His letter is reproduced in this issue. I hope to hear more from him on in the future.

I have had little response from you to my call for articles for the journal. My address is put into each issue so if you don't see me you can still post your contributions. Come on now...!

## Dates for your diary

01.09.91 September meeting

15.09.91 Arthurian campaign in Hall

06.10.91 October meeting - **Bring and Buy**

20.10.91 Club DBA Championship in Hall

03.11.91 November meeting

08.12.91 December meeting - **AGM - Painting Competition**

## George Gush

### • April 1991:

About 26 present, including several visitors from other clubs. There was a large private sale of fantasy games, books and figures - we have since decided to do this regularly. It is an attraction, and sellers might do better if club members know when they would need to bring their money along.

Games in the hall included "Hyde Park Corner", a 1/76th WW2 Desert game involving map movement off table. This has possibilities, I think, though there were one or two faults in the set-up and the game itself was affected by having players who hadn't used the rules before. I hope to try it again sometime, after suitable modifications. There was another large 1/76th WW2, this time using Command Decision rules, an attack on a very impressive Dark Ages fort run by the Shermans in 25mm, Russell Hanson and others had a 1:3000 scale Naval Game, set in WW2 and featuring Chris Avery's very nice home-cast aircraft. "One-eyed Jack" (Dave Cooke of course) had a large napoleonic-type skirmish involving Smugglers versus the Revenue Men.

In the back room there was a board game, "Merchant of Venus", in which stacks of monopoly-style money were changing hands, and yet another 1/76th WW2 game, this time a tank action, Germans against British. WW2 certainly dominated this month.

### • May 1991:

About 27 members present. The back rooms were given over to the fantasy persuasion, with advanced Heroquest and Aliens III. There was a Warhammer 40,000 game in the main hall, using very rugged bark terrain, but otherwise the games were historical - or were they?....a General Quarters game in 1:3000 had the British trying to sink an Italian aircraft carrier!

An unusual scale, 1:200, was in use in a Russian Front tryout game; if I wasn't already loaded with 1/76th armies I think I would be tempted by this; obviously it gives you more space to battle over than 1/76th, and the models are nicer than 1/300th (especially the infantry who are much more visible and more worth painting than the tiny 5mm chaps). What are now more or less regular events continued... the Dark Ages game run by the Shermans, and the 1/76th Command Decision game organised by Tim Freeman and Ian Foster. Less often seen at a Sunday meeting though a familiar feature of Tuesday evenings were the 15mm French and Austrian armies of 1859 belonging to Clive McLeod. His "Furia Franchese" rules for this war have just been published and are simple Don Featherstone style ones which always give a good fast-moving game. The final game was run by Mark Summers and was a Medieval one using the "Early Warfare" rules. A one day Arthurian Britain campaign was announced for 15th September at the Hall.

### • June 1991:

This saw our twice-yearly painting competition. There was a good entry. Class 1 (Fantasy and Sci-Fi) was won by Alan Butler's Regiment of Orcs (I think 25mm scale though it is a bit hard to tell with an Orc) with Chris Blackman as runner up. Class 2 (Historical Wargames Units) was taken by Bill Pavely's 12th Century Samurai in 25mm, with my ECW pikes as runners-up. Class 3 (Other historical entries) was won by Stuart Hooker's Churchill tank. I am sad to report that the runner up was "El Gusho", entered by Tony Wyatt and comprising a Landsknecht figure which was a grossly libellous caricature of your respected Secretary and thus deeply offensive to all right-minded persons. Heads will roll in the committee for this!

Could I remind all Club members that the next painting competition will be at the December Meeting; the classes as above. WE give not only trophies but also £5.00 Open Day Vouchers as prizes, so it is well worth winning. Don't forget to bring your entries along.

There were 32 members present in June, and the emphasis had swung away from WW2, which was confined to the usual Command Decision game. Napoleonics were back in style with two 15mm and one 25mm battles in the hall, followed by Science Fiction which controlled the back room with two games, one a micro scale game using terrain tiles which was new to me. The Shermans continued to fight their way through Arthurian Britain, which looked like a pretty heavily fortified place!

Chattanooga.  
(1) Redcaps. (2) Culloden. (3) The Boers. (4) Prussia beat France. (5) Trafalgar. (6) Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers Europe. (7) The Torpedo. (8) Sentinel Hill, north of Battle village. (9) The Irish Brigade who fought for Franco in the Spanish Civil War. (10) Lookout Mountain.

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## Notes from the Gulf

### Lance Flint

As some of the club members may know, I am a Corporal in the Corps of Royal Engineers, currently (May 91) serving in BAOR with 23rd Engineer Regt. It is something of a unique formation as my squadron, 39th Field, provide the army with its only close support armoured engineer troops.

In this role we deployed to Saudi Arabia to support 1st Royal Scots battlegroup in the 4th Armoured Brigade.

I will not witter on about my personal experiences but intend simply to list some of the details about the Iraqi forces that we came upon, mainly after the war. Experts in modern equipment will have to accept my lack of detailed up-to-the-minute knowledge as well as any errors made out of ignorance. As a follow up article I hope to give some details of Iraqi camouflage schemes and markings for modellers.

Although the following observations are in no particular order, any comments are made from a user/wargamer's point of view.

- 1) Brought up to believe that T55/59/62 have smoothbore barrels ? not Iraqi tanks. They were still standard 100mm and 115mm calibre (I could not find any 105mm British L7 barrels.)
- 2) A high percentage of modified T55's had laser ranging, side skirts and multiple smoke dischargers.
- 3) Of the 70+ tanks recovered intact, none had been in action and all had different amounts of ammunition for the main armament, but all with a wide mix of natures, including smoke.
- 4) Storage for personal kit on Soviet tanks is non-existent. Many turrets were full of bedding rolls and furniture with no external space for personal kit.
- 5) Allied vehicles had a serious identification problem at night and force policy was to show a single red light to the rear to avoid "blue on blue". This usually meant a tail light or jury rigged torch with filter. Iraqi T62s and some T55s had a permanent rear facing turret light with a number overlaid to identify the exact vehicle as well as small lights on either hull front.
- 6) The MTLB was a quite impressive vehicle, large, very low, fast and manoeuvrable with a "Panther" turret for the 7.62mm.
- 7) Some of the Chinese APCs equipped as ambulances were well kitted out and appeared brand new; several were found full of ammunition!
- 8) The BMP1 had no auto-loader, the SPG-9 ammunition was crammed in all round the turret ring and was a swine to get out of the racks. Two of the four "Saggers" were stowed in such a way that they would have to be passed outside the vehicle to the gunner!
- 9) We found one ACRV 2 along with some 251s and 253s, they all make huge targets.
- 10) Some BRDM 2s had a spare tyre towed on the turret roof! The weapon layout was appalling, any attempt to remedy a stoppage or fault with a weapon would result in shredded fingers for the gunner and a long time delay.
- 11) Huge amounts of Jordanian manufactured ammunition was on all vehicles as well as stockpiling the trench systems.
- 12) Nearly all the information plates screwed to weapons, driving controls, etc. were in perfect English! This included Soviet and Chinese equipment as well as training/technical pamphlets.
- 13) Several SA13 and ZSU23-4 were found completely intact and fully supplied with rockets/cannon, one ZSU had taken a direct hit in the radar dish area of the turret: had the AA units shut down their radar sets early on?
- 14) Considering the time the Iraqis had for preparation the field defences were appalling. There was virtually no revettment or overhead protection, many trenches being only 2' deep, but they were full of ammunition, including chemical RPG7 rounds.
- 15) However, the tanks were very well dug in and provided with anti-hollow charge wire screens on their frontal arc.
- 16) Evidence of their lack of food was found in the form of an butchered camel in one of the positions and, after the shock of capture, the way the Iraqis begged for food. It was a sad experience to see grown men run up to our vehicles and then scramble over the tins we threw down for them.

Ed.) That's all for now. If anyone needs any more information, do not hesitate to write. (I have the address -

## Computer Wargaming - a review

Andrew Finch

I recently reported on a number of tank simulators available for various computer formats. I would like to just add another to the list. This is not a recommendation at this stage, I have only seen it in the shops. Electronic Arts Distributors are marketing "Sands of Fire" which is a tank simulator set in the Western Desert in WW2. You can play either side with a number of different tanks in this programme it appears. The object of this article is to cover Naval Wargames this time. I think that the computer is an ideal medium to cover such battles, because you can recreate the "Fog of War" ideally, with hidden units really hidden until they shoot you to bits.

For WW2 players **Action Stations** is very good. It is based on D.Zimm's naval wargames rules and covers a variety of famous naval actions. Ship data is provided for all the major navies for the period 1924 to 1945 with a number of smaller navies and projected vessels included. There was a rumour that a programme would be released to create additional data. It is probably possible with an effort and some skill to actually produce the data oneself. The files are all simple text/numbers data.

The display on the screen must be regarded as a bit disappointing in these days of high resolution VGA technology, but once you get into the game this matters not one jot. The map is used like a naval captain's chart to note the location of the enemy (those detected) and to plan the best fire solutions. Gunnery can be handled by the computer if you prefer, and you can also play a two player game if you want.

There is a scenario builder with the game so you can set up whichever battle you want. It is also possible to alter a number of parameters covering tactics and crew class.

This game concentrates on battle by gunnery in the classical sense. There is no long range carrier warfare here. The only aircraft available are for spotting.

There are also a number of Submarine simulators around. Some are better than others. I recommend **Silent Service II** from Microprose and **688 Attack Sub** from Electronic Arts. The games both view the world from the Sub Commander's eyes, with various scenarios to play through. Silent Service also lets you play a campaign in the Pacific from 7/12/41 through until 5/8/45. This is most enjoyable and can become extremely hairy in places. The campaign game gives you enough fuel to go from base (which may change hands in the early part of the war) to a theatre of action in the Pacific. You then move the sub on the map until a contact occurs. You could be encountering anything from an unprotected merchantman to the Yamato with full escort.

One of the best releases in recent years must be Harpoon though. This is based on the wargame already available, but offers much much more. In this you play Blue or Red in modern warfare. There are full fleet databases for the Battlesets (see below). You can attack what you have discovered, but how to discover that pesky sub before he sinks your ships? Is that contact an attack fleet or is it just a group of missile boats? Just when you have run out of AA missiles the enemy airstrike comes into radar range and its you they are after. This programme offers so much and even more. The basic Battleset deals with the North Atlantic, North Sea and Greenland, during a hypothetical Soviet attack. You can play either side as you wish, and you can save the game whenever you want so that your strategy can be altered.

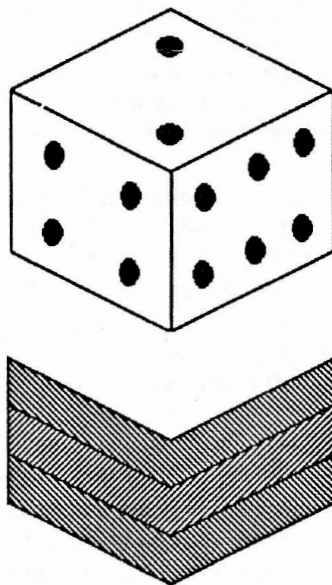
Additional Battlesets are available for North Atlantic Convoys (in WW3, yes, three), and the Mediterranean. Each has a different database for the navies involved (which has come in for criticism from some quarters in that you cannot put vessels from one set into another). The fourth set will cover the Indian Ocean and will include the Gulf. Also available is a Scenario Editor so you can create a Scenario, based on a Battleset, using the data included. You have to set out the objectives and ship courses for both sides and can include optional routes and varying start positions, even varying strengths. This allows games to differ from one time to the next (you may experience this puzzle in their own Scenarios, now you know why).

This game deals with Air and Sea Power. The producer, 360, are also producing a game called Patriot (a land version of Harpoon) due in February 1992. For WW2 freaks, it is rumoured that a WW2 version of Harpoon is being produced (at the earliest in 1992). If Patriot is anything as good as Harpoon (and usually things are better than earlier versions) they are on to a winner.

My next article in this series will be devoted to Flight Simulators.

Ian Foster

- 1) What are military policemen called?
- 2) Where was the Young Pretender defeated by the Duke of Cumberland in 1746?
- 3) Which forces occupied the hill of Spion Kop?
- 4) Who beat whom at the Battle of Sedan in 1870?
- 5) Of which battle fought in 1805 is 21 October the anniversary?
- 6) What does the acronym SHAPE stand for?
- 7) Robert Whitehead invented which weapon in 1866?
- 8) Where was the Battle of Hastings fought?
- 9) Which Irishmen wore blue shirts?
- 10) Where was the "Battle above the Clouds" fought in 1863?



The above image is the beginning of the draft for the cover for the magazine. The next stage is to add a crown above the die, and two soldiers (the File) on either side. For this purpose I need to borrow good black and white pictures of soldiers. Who can help me ? We may also provide club badges (lapel pins or tie clips {?}) with a similar motif (but without the soldiers probably). Is this motif acceptable to you ? — your comments are awaited !