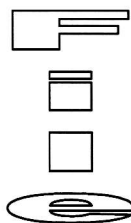




# Rank &



**The Newsletter of the Tunbridge Well Wargames Society.  
October 2008**

## **Editorial**

Here we go again the perennial plea of the R&F Editor for more articles. This is your magazine but if you want it to appear regularly you must contribute toward it. I will take any wargame related articles you choose to send. Don't worry about it being rough I can always polish it up if you want. That's part of being an editor. I'd like to do one more issue this year hopefully in December.

## **Semi-Historical Armies for Hordes of the Things: Alexander Nevsky**

First of a number of short pieces providing new army lists for the splendid Hordes of the Things rules (HOTT). The lists will be based upon armies as depicted in legend or by filmmakers.

These two lists are based on the brilliant movie Alexander Nevsky directed by the great Sergei Eisenstein. It tells the story of the victory of Nevsky over the Teutonic Order in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. This is a pure propaganda movie from the 1930s warning of the German threat. It was banned in Russia during the time Nazi-Soviet Non Aggression Pact and revived when Hitler attacked Russia in 1941. The film is available on DVD from HMV among other places. The battle scenes are awesome, though the acting isn't. It's in Russian but has good sub titles.

## The Lists

24 points chosen from the elements below. No more than 12 points may be spent on elements costing more than 2 points

### **Heroic Russians** (the good guys)

Hero General	@ 4 points	Alexander Nevsky	1
Heroes	@ 4 points	Gavrilo or Buslai	1-2
Knights or Riders	@ 2 points	Mailed Lancers	1-3
Blades or Spears	@ 2 points	Armoured Foot	2-6
Hordes	@ 1 point	Heroic Peasants	2-6

Options: Though not seen in the film you could include up to 2 Shooters depicted as peasant archers. These were a common type in Russian 13<sup>th</sup> Century armies. For a change you could use a female hero Vasilisa, depicted as a mail clad sword wielding girl with a pointed Russian helmet and long pigtails in place of one of the men.

### **Evil Teutonic Knights** (Definitely the bad guys. The film shows them slaughtering prisoners and murdering babies).

"Hero" General	@ 4 points	Evil Grand Master	1
Cleric	@ 3 points	Evil Churchmen	1
Sneaker	@ 3 Points	Traitor soldier or priest	0-1
Knights	@ 2 points	Armoured Horsemen	3-6
Spears	@ 2 points	Dismounted Knights	1-4
Shooters	@ 2 points	Crossbowmen	1-2
Hordes	@ 1 point	Lesser foot	1-4

Options: You could add another "hero" representing one of the senior leaders depicted in the movie.

### Figures

There are plenty of 15 mm figures depicting the Russians with both Essex and Minifigs having suitable ranges. The knights for the Teutons are also easily found though you won't get an exact match for the "bucket" helmets worn in the film. Depicting the Teuton infantry with their unusual helmets may require looking at renaissance or late medieval ranges for a close match. Of course you could use standard 13<sup>th</sup> Century figures. After all who really cares, it's a movie not history.

### **Clive McLeod**

## A Day in the Field

By Andrew Finch

The club hosted a Warmaster Ancients competition on the 20<sup>th</sup> April at Speldhurst hall, ably organised by Clive McLeod. We had a similar competition last year, and it broadly followed the same system, though Clive had made some improvements on the scoring system. We were 10 in total, three of whom were visitors. Club members George Gush, Brian Tayler, Gabriel Copus, Rodney Somerville, Chris Blackman and I took part.

I fielded my Indian Army, made up of archers, archers, and, to be on the safe side, some more archers with a few infantry and cavalry, and a unit of heffalumps. Fortuitous bribery at the start of the competition meant that I managed to recruit some extra archers and a unit of skirmishers, so in the end there were 9 units of archers.

In the first round it was randomly arranged so that the visitors played three of the club members, and then the rest of us paired off. I played Clive in the first round. He was fielding some pesky Sarmatians, which were quite a difficult opponent to fight. Massed thwipping of bows is all very well, but unfortunately the appropriate tactic of retiring ahead of the advancing enemy does not work if they are on gee-gees. In the end my break point was reached and my troops decided they had had enough. There were some unpleasant tin can cavalry around, against which my troops stood little chance, mostly due to having no saving throws.

Round two saw me in combat against Brian Tayler, who had invaded the holy curry fields with some Late Roman troops. Here again there were a large number of tin cans on horses, in some cases the horses were tin cans as well. Here I had better luck as the Romans advanced piecemeal, and their cavalry rather unwisely advanced a long way forward. I decided to take a risk, and threw in my not very good cavalry, and then the heffalumps. Brian was very unlucky in his combat dice, and I had a streak of luck with my dice, so his heavy cavalry and cataphracts were placed into the curry pot for tea. The archers were more effective in this game because they were better deployed and managed to drive several units back, some becoming confused in the process. Some of Brian's troops also got tempted into entering a town, where they never left the taverna for the rest of the game. In this case it was victory to the Indians.

The final round pitched me against Melvin Burton, one of the visitors, who fielded a Successor army, so at last my Indians were up against an appropriate foe. It was a bit distracting seeing all those spiky pikes, though for much of the game they did not move very far. In this game it was also interesting because both of us had picked up territory which allowed a flank deployment, which means that some units are deployed closer to the centreline. Lady Luck decided that Melvin would have first move, and he deployed two heavy cavalry units opposite my left flank.

These units then proceeded to trample on some of my feeble troops. When my first turn happened, I deployed my not very good cavalry on my left flank as well, and tried to get round his rear with them. He deployed his skirmish cavalry to prevent a greater incursion, and this was where the units stood off for the rest of the game, with my cavalry trying to break through, and his skirmishers always managing to break away. In the centre my archers spent much time shooting at the advancing enemy, and held them off for quite some time, though the pike blocks advanced inexorably. The heavy cavalry got into a few fights with my left flank, and caused many casualties, and in the end I threw the heffalumps at them, with mixed success. I did in the end manage to destroy one unit and reduce the other to below half strength. The pikes did manage to contact my lines, and then my fate was sealed.

In the final assessment, the winner was Alex Janaway, followed by Melvin Burton and George Gush. The ranking of the rest of us was Brian Tayler, myself, Rod Somerville, Chris Blackman, and Gabriel Copus. The three winners were awarded prizes of various sorts, and we all enjoyed the day immensely. The revised scoring system worked well because it avoided some silly results.

The revised Skirmish rules which appeared in the WMA Army List supplement do serve to put some limits on skirmishers, so they no longer as difficult to kill as they used to be. In summary they can only run away after shooting if they score hits on the enemy (regardless of whether the enemy saves) - in cases where you are faster or the same speed as the skirmisher. The number of hits is tuned to how far the enemy moved and the relative speeds of the enemy and yourself. In addition, you cannot just evade 1 cm, which is a bit of a pain in a game. Evasion is now at least 5cm.

Editorial comment.

I intend to run another 1 day WMA event in the New Year with the committee's permission. As usual I will have plenty of troops to spare. The club provided substantial prizes so it is worth entering. It will be free for club members.

**Ed**

## **Running a Demonstration at Games Day**

Games day is an annual wargame event run by Games Workshop (GW). They hold the event in late September every year at the NEC centre in Birmingham.

In previous years it has been attended by around 9,000 GW aficionados and is a major event in the GW calendar. The show is divided into three large halls. They have a large number of demonstration games which have been constructed by their staff from the Nottingham head office or from the shops around the country. There is a excellent painting competition and the award of a large sword is the ultimate prize to the chosen winner. The quality of the figures and the many demonstration games are both very impressive. There are displays from all aspects to the GW world including computer games, Warhammer Ancient Battles and the other GW spin-offs.

The Games club network are allocated an area to put on a display. Clubs are invited to attend and put on a demonstration or participation game. As we are part of the network we receive an invitation every year.

GCN send me a formal invite early in the year as planning the day takes a great deal of time. A proposal has to be submitted outline the idea of the game and details of what will be brought on the day. They want to have some idea if the project is viable and achievable. Once agreed they send out a pack of information that needs to be followed and tips for the day. There are lots of rules about health and safety and security which are strictly followed.

They can provide up to 6 free passes (the entrance fee is around £25) and free parking. Free lunch and games day figure are given to each volunteer. You must wear a volunteers T-shirt provided also provided free of charge.

On the day!

The demo game needs to be transported to the NEC, unloaded and set up before 9 am. The car park is miles from the entrance so you can unload quickly. They don't give you long to get in and set up before you have to move the car. Access is allowed the day before but I never felt happy to leave it unattended in the centre over night. In the past I stayed in a local hotel to avoid a very early start to what is a very long day. The public is allowed in at 10 am. The halls are usually packed, you can look at previous shows on the GW web site which give you a good idea at the sheer size of the event

There is a strict departure schedule as like the Angel centre the event must be out by a certain time. Once again this involves bringing a car round and packing it as fast as possible.

We have previously managed to get a group of more than six as more hands help spread the load, the cost of extra tickets is spread among the total group.

I have run games at two shows (2005 and 2006) - the shows are very impressive but be prepared for a lot of hard work!

### **Colin Stone**

I expect that Colin would be happy to give more information if anyone wants to run a demo at next years event.

### **Ed**

### **Down Memory Lane**

As 2008 marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of TWWS I thought I'd take a trip down memory lane and look at a rank and File newsletter I came across recently. It's vol 10 number 3 April 1981.

Not unusually the editor is asking for articles and apologises for the length of time since the last issue. Who was editor in 1981?

The newsletter goes on to mention the recent open day at West lent College when we had 700 people through the door and made £100 profit, Denis redhead organised this event. The report goes on to say that it will be unlikely that we can use WKC for the open day in future, dos anyone know of another venue. Is this when we started to use St Gregs?

Where are they now? From the newsletter the following club members won the painting competitions in January, February and March 1981

R Allan  
K O'Sullivan  
D Hopkins  
J Morgan  
A Powell

I knew Kevin O'Sullivan but what happened to the other members?

David Short and Mike Kirk both contributed articles to this newsletter, does anyone remember them. If any of the above are still members please accept my apologies.

The March 1981 meeting attracted 50 members and 12 games took place. A Zulu War game run by Mike Usher caught the editor's eye, there were also 3 Renaissance games, 2 Ancient, 4 WW2 and 2 Modern games. Special mention was made about the "new" 15mm figures being used in some games. The number of members attending and the variety of periods played compares favourably with our current meetings, apart from the absence of Sci-Fi games 27 years ago. From this newsletter George and Andrew Finch also get a mention plus our Treasurer for many years Hugh Taylor.

Aside from George and Andrew I would be interested to know what happened to these club members from 1981. If you know about them come and let me know at the first Sunday meetings or write a few lines for the newsletter.

Tim Freeman