



All Guns Blazing!

Newsletter of the Naval Wargames Society

No. 217 – November 2012

EDITORIAL

Included in this Edition of AGB is the first instalment of the Kaiser's Korsairs. Over a few AGBs the details of a past game will be presented. Stuart has offered to run the game again. I'll register my interest for that. Can you run amok in the sea lanes as the captain of a cruiser and make it safely home to Germany? Or could you do better than Admiral Craddock originally or his reincarnation Jeff Crane did a few years ago. David Manley filled the sea boots of Admiral Patey RAN. Perhaps they should both take the helm of a commerce raider this time around.

The British Government's plans to mark the centenary in 2014 of the start of the First World War are beginning to come out. The four-year programme will take the form of:

- national commemorative events to mark the anniversary in 2014 of the start of the First World War, the first day of the Battle of the Somme (2016) and Armistice Day (2018). Other anniversaries across the period will also be marked in different ways.
- the opening, in 2014, of refurbished First World War Galleries at the Imperial War Museum London.
- a grant of up to £1m from the National Heritage Memorial Fund to support HMS CAROLINE, the last surviving warship from the First World War fleet. She will now have a secure future in Belfast, where thousands of people will be able to visit her and learn about her unique role in the First World War.

What will NWS do to mark the centenary? There is the obvious – arranging recreations of the naval engagements as near to the anniversary as possible. And yes I think we should pursue the obvious at Salute, Colours etc. Surely, we can come up with something a bit special also. Suggestions please.

Rant from the crows' nest.

October saw the anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar come and go without anyone knowing. The Royal Navy had a wreath laying ceremony on The Victory, celebratory Dinners in the messes and there were voices raised, suggesting that the day should be a public holiday. But that was about it. Why don't the British blow their own trumpet a bit more? Rob Morgan sent me some details of how the French commemorate Almiral de Guichen. Who? I hear you say. Exactly. For a country with a long and glorious maritime history why do we act as if it never happened? Australia appears to make more of Trafalgar than the Brits do. The Australian town of Trafalgar, Victoria, (population 2,200) holds an annual Battle of Trafalgar Festival, with a Trafalgar Day Ball held on the Friday or Saturday closest to 21 October each year.

The suggestion has been made that AGB could include a "For Sale" and "Wanted" Section. Why not? If you drop me a line I can include the details in AGB, no problem. A NWS market place where members can buy and sell models, books, games etc. To start the ball rolling, Stuart Barnes-Watson has the Battle of the Yalu 1/2400 for sale. A very rare set that will only end up on eBay otherwise.

Welcome to new members Kevin Lord, in Ottawa and David Knight in Stirling.

Somewhere in the World, the sun is over the yardarm.

Norman Bell
normanpivc@gmail.com

Type 42 Destroyer HMS EDINBURGH left Portsmouth Monday 24 September, on her final deployment, to conduct routine operations across the Atlantic.



Family members wave from the shore as HMS EDINBURGH departs from Portsmouth harbour

It marks a historic milestone for both the ship and the Royal Navy as it will be the last time a Type 42 destroyer deploys on operations as they make way for the new-generation Type 45 destroyers. Sister ship HMS YORK decommissioned on 27 September 2012, therefore HMS EDINBURGH is the final ship of her class operating in the Royal Navy, marking the end of 30 years of service for the Type 42. HMS EDINBURGH is scheduled to undertake a range of tasks across the length of the Atlantic in support of British interests worldwide. Her tasking will see her supporting counter-narcotics efforts in the West African region as well as providing reassurance to UK territories and dependencies worldwide.



HMS EDINBURGH passing the Round Tower on her departure from Portsmouth

On completion of her tasking in the South Atlantic, the ship will undertake a number of high-profile regional engagement visits in the Caribbean and the USA. She is due to return to Portsmouth in March 2013

Last Jutland warship to be preserved for the nation

HMS CAROLINE, the last surviving warship of the Battle of Jutland, will be preserved for the nation as a result of an agreement to gift the ship to the National Museum of the Royal Navy (NMRN).



HMS CAROLINE at Alexandra Dock in Belfast [Picture: Crown Copyright/MOD 2012]

Following negotiations between the Ministry of Defence, the Northern Ireland Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment and the NMRN, the Minister of State for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans, Mark Francois, has announced the gifting of HMS CAROLINE to the NMRN. The

move will allow the museum to bid for external funding for her restoration and preservation. HMS CAROLINE, which decommissioned as the Headquarters of the Ulster Division of the Royal Naval Reserve on 31 March last year, will remain in Belfast where she has been berthed since 1924. Her continued presence in the city, at Alexandra Dock, will provide a welcome addition to the maritime heritage of the province, providing Belfast's Titanic Quarter with another world attraction.



HMS CAROLINE was part of Admiral Jellicoe's fleet in the Battle of Jutland during the First World War [Picture: Crown Copyright/MOD]

Naval enthusiasts will think it critical that the ship is preserved and made accessible to the public. The announcement is great news as it means the beginning of the process of bringing HMS CAROLINE back to her former glory.



HMS CAROLINE's badge [Picture: Crown Copyright/MOD 2012]

HMS CAROLINE was designed as a fast cruiser and built by Cammell Laird in Birkenhead in 1914. In 1916 she was a unit of Admiral Jellicoe's fleet when it met the German High Seas Fleet in the greatest maritime clash of the First World War. The battle, in the North Sea off Jutland, resulted in thousands of casualties on each side. While the British losses were greater than those of the Germans, the battle was a strategically decisive victory for Jellicoe as the Kaiser's fleet never again seriously challenged the Royal Navy to a major surface action.

In 1922 HMS CAROLINE was placed in reserve and became the headquarters of the Royal Naval Reserve in Northern Ireland two years later.

LEGO at Sea?

It's a very long time since I took a look at this ubiquitous children's modelling material (given what I'm about to suggest, 'toy' seems the wrong term to use!) but my wife's school has just acquired a set or two, and a quick glance led me to a couple of ideas. Three pieces seem particularly useful to the ship modeller, though in the mountain of items that LEGO produces, there will I suspect be far more. The LEGO shops are dotted around the UK and I picked up what I needed from the Cardiff shop (nice people, knew how to deal with eccentric ship modellers, etc!), and at a remarkably cheap price.

In their 'pirate' and eighteenth century range, the company makes a bell-mouthed musket, in rigid plastic- as all the pieces are- 43mm long overall. It's the 25mm of 'barrel' which interested me, and which has its specific maritime uses! Cut from the 'stock' with a craft knife, this gives you a perfect early nineteenth century funnel. You can leave the trigger and lock pieces of the moulding in place if needed for stability in fixing. That's if you decide to use the funnel on a flat ship deck, with no existing mast hole drilled. My first suggestion for the LEGO funnel's use is on a model made by 'Peter Pig' (available in the USA from 'Brookhurst Hobbies), USS Fuchsia is No.17 in their 'Naval Riverine' range, and costs £3. Lose the kit's metal funnel, and in this case trim the musket barrel at the base to 20 or 22mm length. It will fit neatly into the deck hole provided. Cement in place, vertically for an early funnel rather than raked, and you have a simple fast conversion to a light steam warship of the 1830's or 1840's. To finish off the model, add a pair of the company's ship's boats, one each side, deck holes are provided, and a ship's light gun on deck. I cemented an old 1/1200th mast with spar and furled sail forward, it looked right.

The same range has a small 'pistol' and this will give you, when trimmed, a 10mm funnel, with a very wide top. It serves nicely to replace the funnel on the 1/1200th scale 'Mars' blockade runner from the Navwar ACW range, taking it back twenty years or so to become a paddle steamer of the 1840's. That's just one example; it can be used as the short funnel of a monitor too.

Some of my earlier modelling notes on 'Science Fiction' warships can also provide use for these two new funnels, the shorter barrel can be used as a gun muzzle of course, a sort of advanced ship-mounted carronade or naval blunderbuss. Or a shore battery. Other 'Peter Pig' 'one-shot' or 'no-shot fired in anger' warships which can certainly be enhanced by using these 'funnels' are the CSS Manassas, the CSS Nashville, the useless Federal warship Keokuk, and the USS Chillicothe, which admittedly did get about a bit more in action than the others. The 1/1200th USS Galena in the 'Navwar' range looks superb when one of these funnels is added.

The third item I found useful for funnels is a pair of grey plastic LEGO binoculars 12mm high and 8mm wide. One side of them is cut away slightly in order to fit on the standard round LEGO sprue, so these are best used in pairs- two separate items, and either way up, broad end or narrow end as funnel top. This way they look if only slightly separated, like the funnel layout of the unusual Russian Coastal defence ship 'Navarin'. Very attractive too. There was an old 'Games Workshop' listed 'dwarf battleship' with this particular arrangement of funnels a few years ago, I recall. Though as an alternative you can cement a single pair of binoculars as a pair of 'broadside' standing funnels- if you have a deckhouse of 7 or 8mm height close behind them, in this case they are best cemented broad end upwards! Try them on USS Signal or Little Rebel. The binoculars also have a gun barrel option, for Science Fiction models, by the way.

The plastic takes paint easily, and to my mind it's well worth dropping in to the LEGO shop if you've got one near you, after all I found these quite by chance, you may well find far more!

Rob Morgan.

I've just been made aware of a new designer of models on Shapeways specialising in 1/1250 modern Russian ships. Possibly expanding to 1/700 as well:

<http://www.shapeways.com/shops/decapod>

I'm hoping he will be releasing his Petya in 1/700 (having got fed up waiting for the Skytrex one for the last 10 years) :)

Regards,
Dave Manley

Is anyone near Tiverton?

In the April 18th issue of 'Illustrated London News' for 1936, I was looking at in relation to the Spanish Civil War; I came upon a page of seven photographs, with very little text, of ships carved at Tiverton Church in Devon. The photos were attributed to Brian Clayton, a local man. All are, or were carved in 'beer stone', and were deteriorating quite rapidly then. The carvings were dated to 1517, in Henry VIII's reign, and look quite remarkable. Three of the seven vessels shown carry the 'Cross of St. George' and are described as 'English ships', and two of the carvings are galleys. All of the vessels bar the galleys are three masted, with lateens aft. One of the galleys, interestingly, has the Maltese cross on its sail, and is therefore called a 'Knight's galley' of the Order of St. John. The carvings are well done, with sails, pennons and ship's crews in most cases. One notable point is that there is a clear intention of displaying cannon on board the ships; most have three or four, though without gun ports, which are usually credited to the French c. 1500. Is anyone familiar with these carvings? Do they still survive? I'd be interested to learn of any articles about them.

Rob Morgan

Request for information. Has anyone knowledge about a set of Wargame Rules called "Banana Republic", but might be "Red Banner"? Banana Republic may date from many years ago. The idea of these Rules is that each player starts off with money and auctions are held for a collection of older ships which are being disposed of by the "big powers". Each player representing a banana republic, then bids on the ships and then battles are fought between them using their newly acquired assets. Any info please email to me at normanpivc@gmail. com

Battle Report Coastal Forces in the English Channel 1942

Introduction

October's game at the Northants regional group was something of an experimental coastal forces action. I had a new rule set to try out (Flaklighter II) and a new approach I was developing for hidden movement in WW2 night time actions. I also wanted to see how the coastal forces scenario generator mechanism I recently wrote up for the latest issue of Battlefleet played out. It had the added benefit too that it gave me the hard deadline I needed in order to buckle down and paint up the Skytrex models I bought back in April at Salute.

Attendees were Jeff and Dave, who represented the Royal Navy and Rob and Norman playing for the Kriegsmarine. Although my hidden movement mechanism is designed not to need an umpire, for this it's first outing I decided to umpire the game.

The Game(s)

We managed to get through two games on the day. In the first game the Brits chose to play an offensive scenario and the Germans opted for special operations. They blind drew their cards and picked an offensive sweep and mine laying respectively, though neither side knew what the other's objectives were.

The hidden movement mechanism was explained to both sides and they took it in turns to lay out their way points and mark off their cards. I've written up the mechanism in more detail for Battlefleet but essentially it comprises using unit cards placed face down on the playing area and noting down on the reverse of the unit cards speeds and way point references, which are marked by coloured sticky dots placed on the playing area.

The Royal Navy forces comprised a unit of 4 Vosper MTBS supported by a unit of 2 Fairmile C MGBs. The Kriegsmarine forces comprised a unit of 2 large R boats (designated as the mine layers) supported by 2 S boats.

As it turned out both sides chose the same part of the playing area to head towards, but it was the British MGBs which were spotted first by the S boats. The S boats decided to launch torpedoes immediately, but then regretted so doing as the MGBs had just reached their way point and thus turned and slowed as per their orders so unwittingly saving them from the German torpedoes which passed harmlessly ahead of them.



Germans S boats launch torpedoes at the British MGBs they have sighted

It took another move before the MGBs finally spotted the German S boats and opened fire on them, at which point the S boats also returned fire, both sides scoring damaging hits causing at different times fires, flooding, engine damage and loss of steering on S boats and MGBs alike.

In the meantime the German R boats reacted to the firing which had suddenly erupted off their starboard bow by turning to port and heading back the way that they'd come. Unknown to them though, they were being tracked by the British MTBs which had sighted them even before the firing had broken out between the MGBs and S boats. They chose their moment well and launched their torpedoes at a most propitious time. Both R boats were hit by more than one torpedo each and both sank very quickly.



R boats go up in smoke as the British torpedoes strike, meanwhile the S boats and MGBs tangle at close quarters in the background.

So game 1 ended as an emphatic victory for the Royal Navy.

Both sides had learned how the system worked now and had ideas of what they needed to do to improve their chances, so we cleared the board and set up for another game.

This time the Germans opted to field an offensive force (4 S boats) and the British a defensive force (2 MGBs, 3 MLs, 2 Trawlers and a Flower class corvette). The German scenario was a Coup de Grace scenario involving an additional S boat which was lying stopped and disabled in enemy waters, the Germans needing to close with the stranded vessel, take off its crew and sink it before retiring. The British scenario was as an escort for a coastal convoy. As the British were playing defence they also got to lay out some coastal scenery and they had some additional unit markers denoting a buoy and a minefield which they could place on the playing area wherever they wanted.

Set up and plotting of way points proceeded as per the first game, but this time the random events, rolled when the unit markers are first placed on the playing area, had a marked effect on the game. The British trawler *Lindisfarne* which was being used to scout ahead of the convoy rolled a random displacement that put it much closer to the disabled German S boat whilst the disabled S boat's random displacement took it closer still to the *Lindisfarne*. This meant that as the game started the *Lindisfarne* was almost immediately on top of the hapless S boat.



Lindisfarne lines up to ram the immobilised S boat.

The result was somewhat inevitable, and the disabled German S boat stayed hidden for only one turn before they were spotted, though the British players immediately leapt to the wrong conclusion thinking that the boat was simply lying stopped in an attempt to ambush the convoy. *Lindisfarne*'s captain immediately ordered the helm to be put over and the trawler squared up to ram the stationary S boat amidships. Here I need to take a moment to compliment Dave Gregory for the way he deals with ramming and collisions in *Flaklighter II*, the system worked very nicely indeed and given the good dice roll from the British player the result was exactly what you'd expect i.e. the S boat was sunk without trace and the trawler, having backed it's engines to bring it's speed down to only 9 knots before impact, received only superficial damage.

The Germans main objective now having been eliminated, the S boats on their rescue mission attempted to close on the *Lindisfarne* and exact their retribution for the loss of their compatriot. Things were not going well for the Germans this night however, and the *Lindisfarne* spotted the S boats in the dark and a bit of accurate star shell work later, had the whole force thoroughly illuminated.

Again a brief mention is due to the *Flaklighter II* rules for star shell illumination and more specifically it's rules for silhouetting which work very nicely indeed, at least for the British they did, and soon the S boats were not only under fire from the *Lindisfarne* but also the British Fairmile C MGBs.



Star shell illuminates the German S boats.

The Germans were now taking damage and inflicting very little in return, so with the element of surprise completely gone they turned tail and beat a hasty retreat.

Conclusions

All in all the hidden movement mechanism we adopted for the game worked surprisingly well, with players having to think carefully about the course and speed that they were setting for the whole game, and trying not to sail on the same heading for too long. It was also pretty much impossible to work out the enemy's intentions from the way points marked on the playing area, especially as there were many dummy markers mixed in with the real way points.

The other pleasing aspect of the game for me was the absolute importance of concealment from the enemy for the attacking forces if they were to have any chance of success. The parallels with historical accounts of coastal forces night actions in this respect were just what I was looking for.

We were pleased with the Flaklighter II rules that we used for the game. Overall they were easy to pick up, quick to play, gave a realistic result and had some very nice features. The only area where we felt the need to make some adjustments was in applying the maximum sighting distances. For an action which was supposedly set on a dark overcast night, the maximum sighting distances seemed way too long for our liking, so for the purposes of our game I set them at the point in the rules where there would be a 50% or better chance of a sighting. This compromise seemed to work pretty well and gave a workable set of sighting distances for units.

Thanks to Jeff, Norman, Rob and Dave for their helpful suggestions, and as always to Jeff for the venue and drinks.

Simon Stokes, Oct 2012

Fleet Tactics. A few words from Rob Morgan.

I've mentioned the academic journal 'War in History' previously, and the new issue, Vol. 19 (3) autumn 2012 contains, between pages 379-395 a short, valuable article by James. P. Levy of Hofstra University, New York USA.

Entitled 'Royal Navy Fleet Tactics on the eve of WWII', it's an overall impression of the 1939 Fighting Instructions, compared to US and Japanese pre-war thinking. It is full of insights. The Royal Navy's ideas of short range fighting and night fighting actions were intended to compensate for the 'relative inferiority' of their guns, and the effects of plunging fire. The writer gives some interesting comparisons, starting with the best scoring battleship at Jutland, HMS Iron Duke, the fleet flagship which fired 43 shells, and scored 7 hits. While in the action off Calabria in July 1940, which lasted only eleven minutes incidentally, The Italian Cesare fired 74 rounds, and Cavour 41, scoring absolutely no hits. HMS Warspite the best of the three British battleships present fired 17 salvos, maybe as many as 100 rounds, and scored only one hit. While HMS Eagle's air element, scored no hits at all. The Bismarck-Hood encounter, and Guadalcanal, is also considered. Also the wondrous concept of 'decisive battle', which proved, for battleship commanders as elusive and impossible to achieve in the Second as in the First World War.

'Mariner's Mirror' and the 'Early Modern Period.'

Sometimes the journal of the Society for Nautical Research comes up with gems. In this case in the May 2011 issue (Vol 97 No. 2) in which Jeremy Black's text from a memorial lecture to Alan Villiers entitled '*Naval Capability in the Early Modern Period*' occupies pages 21-32. Not an article on the Dutch in the Medway and Menorca, but a very, very wide ranging piece which looks at riverine warfare with canoes, and the developments of Chinese and Indian Ocean fleets. He pays due tribute to Portugal's immense achievements in naval development and design especially in conflict with Ottoman expansion. A significant number of battles noted here, especially those in the Red Sea and along the eastern coasts of Africa could easily be wargamed using the excellent 1/2400th 'Tumbling Dice' ranges which would provide everything necessary (own penchant, a small modelling note here, is to use the 'Dice' ASN 18 Dhow pack against the 1/1200th RS10 Portuguese Caravella, and maybe an RS3 anchored Carrack-works well!). The Portuguese fought the Chinese junks as well of course and in one encounter in 1522 lost two ships out of three in a single sea-fight.

The heavily gunned Portuguese, Jeremy Black reminds us faced serious opposition in S.E. Asia largely from galley fleets such as those of Achin and Brunei, and the European reliance on sail power meant vulnerability to fast shallow-draught oared ships. Black's emphasis on the lack of influence that sea power had on many of Portugal's opponents immense land strength and his overall view that 'naval capability' existed beyond the fleets of European powers has a great deal to offer the wargamer. His references unfortunately, are scant, but his theme is valuable.

Well worth reading, and developing on the table top.

Rob Morgan.

1. Ospreys.

Not merely the name of the finest rugby team in Europe, but the coming 'season' of releases from the publishers include a small number (as always!) of naval titles. In March 2013, '*Imperial Japanese Destroyers 1919-45 (1)*' the first of three or four I suspect, deals with the Minekaze to Hatsuharu classes, some nice ships, and in May there's '*The Naval Battles for Guadalcanal 1942*' to look forward to. There's also another of those 'duel' titles, which for me don't ever really work. This is British Frigate v French Frigate 1793-1814, we'll see.

However, there is a title worth looking out for, at least I think so... Adrian Wood's '*Warships of the Ancient World 3,000-500 BC*' may well prove to be a very useful title, though it's a lot to cover, and a few ship types might be considered to be worth a title in their own right. It will at least give some insight into how to game with the attractive new 1/2400th 'Tumbling Dice' Classical range. I'll make an exception and actually go out and order this one!

2. Mariner's Mirror.

In Vol.98/4 for November 2012, there's a splendid article entitled "*Sea Travel at the end of the Middle Ages*"..pp436-448. This is an account of a voyage to Spain and Portugal from Southampton in 1489. Not actually a piece on warfare, but useful nevertheless, in detail about seafaring, problems of piracy, and the problems of wind and weather. Did you know the Bay of Biscay was called the Mer d'Espagne in medieval times? Worth ten minutes of your time, as is a second article on '*Depiction of Indo-Arabic Ships*' pp 421 -436, dealing with ship types, including warships on an 18th century sea chart of the region. Some lovely craft, a few easily convertible in smaller scales.

Rob Morgan.

The Naval Wargames Weekend, June 2/3rd 2012

June saw the second Naval Wargames weekend at the “Explosion” Museum of naval Firepower in Gosport. My plans for the event were dashed by both Liz and I suffering various debilitating injuries in the week before, meaning I couldn’t walk, Liz couldn’t drive or do anything requiring two hands, and so I had to stay home to look after the children. Thanks then to Mark Backhouse for providing some feedback on the event.

The show was, as last year, a small affair but featured some excellent games.

Simon Stokes ran his “Blackbeard’s Last Stand” game as featured at Salute. The Solent Wargames Group, ably led by Mark Backhouse presented a beautiful 28 mm Sudan skirmish game featuring the Naval Brigade and some lovely gunboat models. The Solent team also put on a lovely game set in the Falklands during 1914, played out in 1/1200 with some excellent models, and to cap it off a 1/600 ACW naval game using the popular “Hammerin’ Iron” rules from Peter Pig.

Mark Barker’s “Inshore Squadron” chose the bicentenary of the outbreak of the War of 1812 to stage a refight of the battle of Sandy Hook – War of 1812, whilst Jim Wallman brought along his ever popular WW2 Damage Control participation game set on board HMS Belfast.

Meanwhile, the Bognor Regis Wargames club brought a 28 mm “Very British Civil War” game (which they also ran at Salute), proving that this genre has a maritime as well as a land based component – and that NWS members have a pretty good representation at the UK’s premier wargames event ☺

Mark’s game featured the intrepid Lt. Nelson and the Red Sea Rifles on a daring mission out of Suakin in 1884 to recapture some lost Egyptian rifles being used to arm the local Fuzzy Wuzzys tribes. Mark played it three times with the Naval Brigade coming out on top twice and losing once. The second pic shows the sad demise of the third game when Lt. Nelson and his men met a rather sorry end!

Mark Backhouse and Jim Wallman took a load of photos which they have made available to me to put on the blog, and a selection of them can be seen below.

The show, whilst small, was deemed a success by those attending and there is a definite will to run it again next year (as long as we can maintain the links with the museum). There were some thoughts to increasing the scope of the event to include traders, but I don’t think the size of the event justifies this at all – although there have been some thoughts as to a “bring and buy” which we can explore for next year. Whilst the event doesn’t have a formal “mission statement” the aim is, I feel, to provide an annual forum in which naval gamers can get together for a few games and a chat to swap “fish stories”, thoughts, tips and ideas and perhaps the odd model or two.

Timing was, to be honest, “not optimal” since the event clashed with the Jubilee weekend (I knew there was something significant about that date when we agreed it with the museum!) which kept many people away, so an event in 2013 will be better timed! The location, in the museum’s conference area, was much better than last year’s event in the grand magazine which, whilst very atmospheric, was very dark.

So watch out for the next event in 2013 – dates posted as soon as they are decided.



The Naval Brigade faces off against the Fuzzy Wuzzys near Suakin



HMS Aeolus plies the sea off Sandy Hook



A broad view of Mark's Sudan game



Jane and Ranger close on Blackbeard for his final battle



Blackbeard's Adventure awaits the government onslaught



Simon's "Blackbeard" game



Jim's Damage Control game – calm before the storm!



Jim Wallman explains the intricacies of WW2 damage control



Bob Kirk and compatriots contemplate the Sudan heat!



A Very British Civil War and some Very Lovely Models



British steamer and barge from Bognor's VBCW game



Let's hope that Nordefelt doesn't jam (again!)



They may not like it up 'em, but these chaps are made of stern stuff!

KAISER'S KORSAIRS

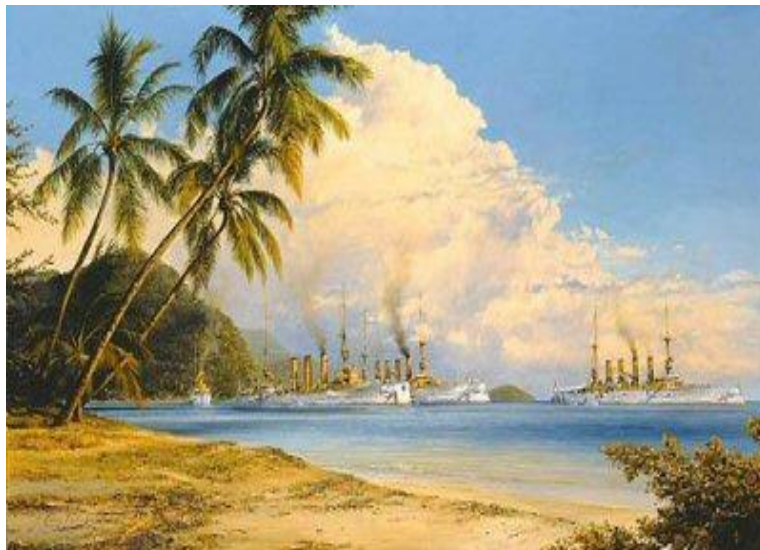
By Stuart Barnes Watson

This is a campaign report of the 1914 Cruiser War. The participants each got randomly selected German/Austrian raiders, ship stats, order sheet, map (as per Avalanche Games Cruiser War). They simply pass on orders once a week, naval actions are fought in 1/1200 by local gamers, results written up returned and so on. A league table records the victories and tonnage. The Allied and Neutral forces are umpire controlled (me!) except for Adm Craddock and Admiral Sturdee's squadrons, which were participant controlled. The reasoning behind this is that both British and French cruiser squadrons had clearly defined tasks within given trade routes, allowing little flexibility of command decision. It also gives me something to do!

This campaign has been fought out 5 times over the past 6 years, over a weekend, and also over several months via email (or locally, in the bus to work as hardly any had email!). Coal is king, and initially reasonably easy to source for the Axis in their colonies and neutral ports plus supply ships from the respective Ettappen. But as colonies fall, supply ships captured, the need for coal increases substantially. Risk taking increases dramatically. Participants are encouraged to research both the region of combat and actual naval campaign. The most successful participant to date was a local female non wargamer in command of Konigsberg. Her key to success was an old Lonely Planet guide to East Africa bought at a local charity shop. She sank 28 merchants, 2 cruisers, and trashed Karachi and Mombasa, creating havoc from Simonstown to Chittagong! Eventually she laid up in the Rufiji, without coal, waiting for a supply ship that would never come.

Note battle reports are from Axis and Allied perspectives. Readers can select a favoured ship and follow its progress. If they think they can do better then I'll run it for the NWS, thus connecting members worldwide. If they want the ships then contact me and I'll do my best to help.

DEUTSCHES KRUISERFLOTTEN ABWEHR



Von Spee's Squadron in the Solomons 1914

ALLIED DISPOSITIONS

FORCES:

Admiral Jerram South China Station

Arabian Sea AS: Battleships Swiftsure, Goliath & Ocean, light cruiser Dartmouth and gunboat Cadmus.

Bay of Bengal BB: Gunboat Clio.

Gulf of California GC: gunboat Shearwater.

South China Sea SCS: Battleship Triumph, armoured cruisers Minotaur and Hampshire, light cruisers Newcastle & Yarmouth, destroyers Kennet & Itchen.

Admiral Patey, Royal Australian Navy

Chatham Islands CHI: Light cruisers Pyramus, Psyche & Philomel.

Coral Sea CS: Gunboat Algerine.

Tasman Sea TS: Battle cruiser Australia, light cruisers Sydney, Melbourne, Pioneer, gunboats Fantome & Amokura, destroyers Yarra, Warrego & Parramatta, monitor Cerberus, submarines AE1 & AE2.

Admiral Craddock, RN W Atlantic 4th Cruiser Squadron

Caribbean C: Pre dreadnought Glory, armoured cruisers Suffolk, Berwick, Lancaster, Essex, light cruiser Bristol.

Rear Admiral Stoddart RN, Cape & West Africa 5th cruiser squadron

Armoured cruiser Carnarvon, Cornwall, Cumberland, Monmouth, Light cruiser Pegasus, AMC Otranto

Royal Canadian Navy

Armoured cruiser Niobe on East Coast, light cruiser Rainbow currently off West Coast with gunboats Shearwater and Algerine.

New Zealand Division

Light cruiser Philomel based on Auckland, NZ.

Russian

Light cruisers Askold and Zhemchug in Western Pacific

French

Armoured cruisers Dupleix and Montcalm operating off Tahiti, French Polynesia.

Armoured cruiser Friant cruising in Gulf of Gabon.

THE NEUTRALS

Netherlands: Dutch East Indies, Dutch New Guinea, Dutch West Indies, Curacao

Likely to be strict with neutrality. Maximum stay in Dutch ports just 24 hours. The Dutch East Indies Fleet consists of 3 coastal defence battleships plus light cruisers, British Embassy strong.

Portugal: Macao, Timor, Goa, Portuguese West Africa and East Africa, Madeira Islands and the Azores.

Also likely to be strict but only possess small fleet based at Lisbon.

USA: Philippines, Hawaiian Islands, Cuba, Puerto Rico

Again, likely to strictly enforce replenishment and British Embassy very strong. Very strong navy.

Japan: Korea

Very pro British and likely to join war on Allied side. Big, professional fleet. To be avoided. British Embassy very strong.

Mexico

In middle of a civil war. Etttapan have secured coal stocks in both Pacific and Gulf of Mexico. No navy of significance.

Panama

The canal is open but to transit will take 4 days (1 move). Under US supervision, British Embassy very strong.

Ecuador, Peru and Chile

Friendly neutral, ettrapen have secured coal stocks and merchantmen. Both fleets are significant but ageing.

Argentina and Uruguay

Friendly neutrals, ettrapen have secured coal stocks and merchantmen. Argentina possesses a significant well trained navy.

Brazil

Likely to be strict with neutrality and possess a modern fleet.

Colombia and Venezuela

Friendly neutrals, Ettrapen have coal stocks available.

Cuba and Haiti

Both likely to be pro Allies, but totally corrupt and coal secured by Ettrapen in both. French embassy strong in Haiti. No navy of note.

Spain

Friendly neutral. Ettrappen have coal stocks available. A significant but ageing fleet based off the Bay of Biscay.

Denmark: Greenland, Iceland, Faroe Islands and Danish West Indies

May be strict on neutrality. Small fleet designed for defence of homeland.

Italy: Somaliland

Friendly neutral. Large fleet based in Med.

German Overseas Empire

Tsingtao, German New Guinea, Caroline, Marshals and Samoan Islands, German South West Africa, Kamerun, Togo, German East Africa and Zanzibar.

French possessions

Marquesa & Tahitian Islands, Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Madagascar.

Belgian Possessions

Belgian Congo, Upper Volta

British possessions

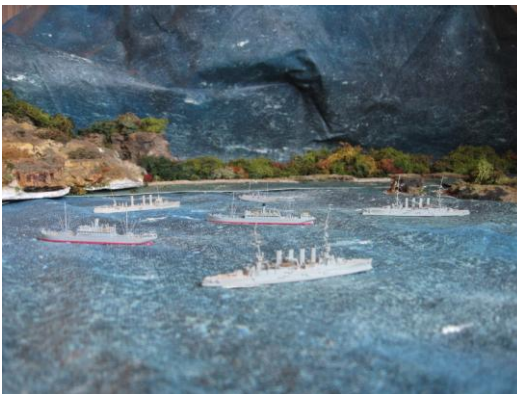
Bermuda, British West Indies, British Guiana, Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya, British Somaliland, British Indian Ocean Islands, Ceylon, India, Burma, Malaya, Brunei, British Pacific Islands, Falkland Islands.

Commonwealth

Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

General orders, Admiralstab, Von Tirpitz

- 1. To commence war on commerce, avoiding engagement unless odds in favour.**
- 2. To raid allied ports and installations if practicable.**
- 3. To return to German ports.**



Von Spee's kruiser squadron at Rabaul in the Caroline Islands. Left to Right: Schwarzenwald, Nurnberg, Scharnhorst, Sao Paulo, Komet, Gneisenau



TSINGTAO

Left to Right: Geier, Luchs, Iltis, Jaguar, Tiger, Emden, S90, Taku, river gunboats, Prinz Eitel Friedrich, Titania, Kaiserin Elisabeth

Armed Merchant Cruisers

To arm the Kronprinz Wilhelm (Gulf of Mexico), Prinz Eitel Friedrich (Tsingtao) and Cap Trafalgar (Brazil), guns and ammunition must first be obtained from German warships.

Supply Ships

Rio Negro, Sydlitz, Crefeld, Patagonia, Eleonore Woermann (Caribbean), Titania, Sao Paulo, Schwarzwald, Mark, Prinz Waldemar, Longmoon (Solmons), Markomannia (Tsingtao), Marie (Tehuantepec).

STRATEGIC CAMPAIGN RULES

1. THE MAP

The map is divided into sea zones. There is no maximum as to how many ships can operate in these zones.

A ship may elect to stay in a sea zone or move 1 zone per move (approx 4 days). In each case a coal box is marked off. A forced move may be performed in which case 4 coal boxes are expended in return for 2 sea zones.

Two major navigable rivers exist to the Central Powers: the Rufiji (off the Mozambique Channel), German East Africa and the Sepik in German New Guinea (Samoan Sea). See Searches.

Tsingtao

Any allied ships blockading Tsingtao will be observed by the German Taube. This may be shot down on a throw of 0 on a D10. Upon Japans entry into the war, all Central Powers ships will be observed in Tsingtao by the Japanese air-force. With numerous aircraft and balloons available, these cannot be shot down. Tsingtao cannot be taken by sea power alone due to high number of gun batteries and minefields.

2. COALING

A collier may refuel 2 vessels in a strategic turn. All coal boxes are restored irrespective of capacity. This applies to prizes as well as fleet supply ships. Refuelling ships may perform no other duties unless surprised by enemy. If the ship is refuelling empty, then combat must be resolved without chance to evade. Colliers will attempt to escape. Any number of ships may re-supply in one move.

3. AMMUNITION

An ammunition box is expended following each major surface action. This includes bombardments of shore installations. Central Powers may only replenish ammunition from naval supply ships and Tsingtao, Rabaul, Dar es Salaam, and Yaounde. Tsingtao has unlimited re-supply, the others may only re-supply once. Up to 6 ammunition boxes may be stocked, on whichever ships in the sea zone.

4. SEARCHES

Ships allocated to sea zones may do either of the following in each strategic move:

Patrol shipping lane
Port (either re-supply or attack)
Coastal cruise
Dead zone to evade detection.

Contact is subject to appropriate D10 roll by umpire and opposing vessels being nominated for same purpose.

Note: Sailing ships may be attacked by the Central Powers in the Dead zones if sighted. Such sightings are rare in these zones.

5. REPAIR

Engine Damage

On a D6 throw of 6, a ship may regain one knot in speed. On a throw of 1 or 2, speed cannot be increased. No further attempts can be made.

Hull Damage

On a D6 throw of 6, 1000 points of hull damage may be repaired so long as ship does not perform any other duties. +1 may be added for elite crew, +1 Tsingtao (Central Powers), +1 Allied port. If a 1 or 2 is thrown, then the damage cannot be emergency repaired. No further attempts may be made.

Armament Damage

Only Japanese ships may attempt to repair armament damage. 4, 5 or 6 repaired. 1, damage will take longer than a year to repair.

6. IMPERIAL CONVOYS

The umpire has an Imperial convoy Table. Each even strategic move, the umpire will throw a D6 to determine which convoy requires immediate Allied escort. A minimum of 2 Allied vessels must be assigned accordingly.

7. JAPAN

The umpire will throw a D10 each odd strategic move to determine Japan's entry into the war on the Allied side.

8. COMMUNICATION

Wireless communication was still in its infancy in 1914. Ship borne wireless is restricted to same or adjacent sea zones. However, to improve range, messages may be passed to high frequency shore wireless stations. The range is then increased to 3 sea zones. As such, these shore stations are a strategic target for both sides, and may be destroyed by bombardment. Neutral countries can pass on messages via respective Embassies.

The Central Powers are known to have high frequency transmitters at Tsingtao, Dar es Salaam in Zanzibar, Windhoek in South West Africa, Lome in Togo and Yaounde in Kameroun.

The Allies have high frequency transmitters in all mainland colonies plus Cocos Island and Tahiti.

Messages have a high chance of interception. Umpire will advise.

9. WEATHER

The sea zones have blue numbers for weather. The umpire will throw 2 D6 each strategic move; the number scored indicating sea zones with stormy conditions. Detection is harder and hull mounted barbette batteries may not fire, nor may torpedoes be launched. Sighting visibility is halved to 36 cm.

Kaisers Korsairs

Allied Report

Each move represents approx 4 days.

THE GEN

The War starts with the allies having very little information on German strength or disposition. Even less is known about the defences of the various German colonies in Tsingtao, the German Pacific Islands in the Carolines and Solomons, New Guinea, the Samoan Islands, German South West Africa, Kameroun, Togo and Tanganyika.

Von Spee's squadron based on Tsingtao is known to consist of the armoured cruisers Scharnhorst & Gneisenau, the light cruisers Emden & Nurnberg plus gunboats. The port itself is believed to be heavily defended, as is Rabaul in the Solomons. Both are established bases and have large radio transmitters. Herbertshohe in German New Guinea is also suspected as being a supply and radio station.

The Leipzig has been sighted off Tehuantepec Mexico, assisting the evacuation of German citizens from the Mexican Civil war.

In the Caribbean, the light cruiser Strassburg is believed to be on station off the Danish Virgin Islands.

Numerous large German liners dotted around the globe are suspected of being converted to AMC status.

FORCES:

Admiral Jerram South China Station

Arabian Sea AS: Battleships Swiftsure, Goliath & Ocean, light cruiser Dartmouth and gunboat Cadmus.

Bay of Bengal BB: Gunboat Clio.

Gulf of California GC: gunboat Shearwater.

South China Sea SCS: Battleship Triumph, armoured cruisers Minotaur and Hampshire, light cruisers Newcastle & Yarmouth, destroyers Kennet & Itchen.

Admiral Patey, Royal Australian Navy

Chatham Islands CHI: Light cruisers Pyramus, Psyche & Philomel.

Coral Sea CS: Gunboat Algerine.

Tasman Sea TS: Battle cruiser Australia, light cruisers Sydney, Melbourne, Pioneer, gunboats Fantome & Amokura, destroyers Yarra, Warrego & Parramatta, monitor Cerberus, submarines AE1 & AE2.

Admiral Craddock, RN W Atlantic 4th Cruiser Squadron

Pre dreadnought Glory, Armoured cruisers Suffolk, Berwick, Lancaster, Essex, light cruiser Bristol.

Rear Admiral Stoddart RN, Cape & West Africa 5th cruiser squadron

Armoured cruiser Carnarvon, Cornwall, Cumberland, Monmouth, Light cruiser Pegasus, AMC Otranto

Move 1. HMS Vindictive intercepts the raider Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse at night off Madeira. An early 6" hit reduced KWdG speed to 13 knots...just as well as Vindictive could only stoke up 14 knots! Missing with both starboard and fore torpedoes, Vindictive finally got a result with her port torpedo. Only damage was a 4.1" hit to the radio shack.

Move 1: Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse caught at night off Madeira by the protected cruiser HMS Vindictive. Ordered to stop, KWG put on steam and turned away to port. A fortunate hit in her boiler room, slowed her to just 13 knots, 1 knot slower than her opponent. Vindictive's first 2 torpedo attacks missed, but at short range the third torpedo launched from her unused port side tube struck home. KWG slowly heeled over to starboard and sank.

Karlsruhe sighted the fighting tops of the armoured cruiser HMS Lancaster in time to hastily out distance her pursuer without damage.

Scharnhorst and Nurnberg found good hunting in the Coral Sea, despatching the tramps Carrigan (1000 tons) and Waterfield (1700 tons) respectively.

Dresden despatched the tramp Indigo off the Chilean coast at Coronel.

Move 2. No sign or news of Germans.

Move 2: Konigsberg sinks the Sailing ship Swallow (500 tons) & Steamer SS Harmonic (11700 tons) off Kenyan Coast.

Leipzig sinks the SS Jeremy Henderson (3000 tons) and SS Celtic Hope (2600 tons), and captures the collier SS Chevington (2700 tons) off Tehuantepec.

Cap Trafalgar sinks the steamers SS Kelshall (1800 tons), SS Princess (1000 tons) & SS Jervis (2000 tons) off the Columbian Coast.

The Tsingtao flotilla, bravely negotiate the South China Sea. Information from a junk suggests the presence of a British Battleship and 4 cruisers patrolling off Hong Kong.

Von Spee has burst into the Timor Sea, but at extra cost to fuel reserves. The Northern Shore of Australia is surprisingly dearth of ships.

Move 3. Cocos Island urgently transmits warning of German Squadron attacking before silencing. Enemy strength reported as 2 armoured cruisers and 2 light cruisers

HMS Lancaster reports having chased the light cruiser Strassburg in the Caribbean.

Survivors from the SS Carrigan land at Port Douglas in the Coral Sea. Report being sunk by Scharnhorst 2 moves ago.

Move 3: Scharnhorst, Gneisenau & Nurnberg silence the Allied high powered transmitter on Cocos Island.

Nurnberg sinks the supply ship SS Kilronan Castle 2700 tons.

The Tsingtao flotilla has a field day in the Gulf of Thailand. **Emden** sinks the SS Horsfield 900tons, **Kaiserin Elisabeth** sinks the sailing ship Irish Lady 500tons, **Prinz Eitel Friedrich** captures the collier SS Fair Isle 4400tons and **Geier** sinks the sailing ship Penang 500 tons.

Dresden sinks the sailing ships Southern Lady 500tons and Palmyra 1000tons off the Galapagos Islands.

Tsingtao reports naval bombardment from 1 battleship (Triumph), 2 armoured cruisers (Minotaur & Hampshire) and 2 light cruisers (Dartmouth and Yarmouth).

Rabaul reports heavy bombardment and blockade from 4 British light cruisers of Pyramus class.

Dar es Salaam in the Mozambique Channel reports heavy bombardment from 3 British Battleships of Swiftsure and Glory Class.

The Kaiser's Korsairs continue to prowl the sea lanes. Read all about them in the next AGB.

SIGNAL PAD!

WARFARE 2012 will be held on 17th and 18th November 2012.

The annual show is again held at the Rivermead Sports Complex, Richfield Avenue, Reading.RG1 8EQ
Parking (pay and display) and catering are available on site and doors to the show are open to the public from 10:00am onwards. According to the programme details available a month in advance, naval warfare is massively under represented. Only one participation naval wargame on Saturday and none repeat none on Sunday. Perhaps someone could supply a few lines review for a future AGB?

JOINING THE NAVAL WARGAMES SOCIETY

If you have been lent this newsletter and would like to join the Naval Wargames Society, please follow this link to join our Society:

www.navalwargamessociety.org.

NWS Events and Regional Contacts, 2009

NWS Northern Fleet – Falkirk East Central Scotland

Kenny Thomson, 12 Craigs Way, Rumford Grange, Rumford, Stirlingshire, FK2 0EU,

Tel: 01324 714248

e-mail: kenny.thomson@hotmail.com - Website: <http://falkirkwargamesclub.org.uk/>

Falkirk Wargames Club meets each Monday night at 7pm with a variety of games running each evening. Naval games are popular with 2 or 3 run each month. Campaign games sometimes feature in our monthly weekend sessions. Games tend to be organised week to week making a 3-month forecast here a waste of time. Please get in touch if you'd like to come along.

- Popular periods – Modern (Shipwreck), WW1 and 2 (GQ), WW2 Coastal (Action Stations), and Pre-dreadnought (P Dunn's rules)

NWS North Hants [Every 3rd Sunday]

Jeff Crane 31 Park Gardens, Black Dam, Basingstoke, Hants, 01256 427906

e-mail: gf.crane@ntlworld.com
