



All Guns Blazing!

Newsletter of the Naval Wargames Society

No. 228 – OCTOBER 2013

EDITORIAL

It is 5 years since the collapse of Lehman Brothers Bank seen by many as the event that marked the start of a World recession. In the current and continuing financial climate, just what can Britain afford regarding the size and capability of the Royal Navy? Obviously the RN does not have the Empire to police and no one would suggest that Great Britain should have a "Pacific Fleet". But there are many trouble spots around the World and the Royal Navy is tasked by the Government with varied jobs with fewer and fewer Ships. Judging by the turn out for the Australian Navy's centenary and the recent International Festival of the Sea weekends in the UK, the public appear to have a lot of support for the Services. Included below in this edition of AGB are some details of what the Royal Navy does around the World. I am sure that most members of the general public are unaware of most of it. Politicians and the tax payer have to decide what role the RN and the other armed services are to perform and adequately fund the services to carry out that role. Well that's the rant over. Fortunately the cost of Ship Models is within reach of enthusiasts. Whether or not the Country can afford a Fleet, we can.

Well done to John Curry and David Manley for their efforts at "Colours" at Newbury 14th and 15th September.

Welcome to new members, David Fisher, Matthew Finch, Todd Kauderer and Mark Russell.

Somewhere in the World the Sun is over the yardarm.

Norman Bell

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The following is an abridged version of an article in the Daily Telegraph by Defence Correspondent Ben Farmer.

A Government cost-cutting proposal to mothball or sell one of two carriers being built would be a poor use of public money, Tobias Ellwood MP said in a report for a military think tank. Trying to rely on a single carrier would also undermine the UK's ability to cope with international crises. Mr Ellwood said: "The UK either needs a carrier capability or it does not. If it does, then a minimum of two are required in order to have one permanently available." Running both carriers would cement Britain's position as "a global player with a military power of the first rank," he said.

The Government has yet to decide the fate of the two 65,000 ton Queen Elizabeth class carriers currently being built, but the 2010 defence review proposed selling one or keeping it mothballed to save money. Mr Ellwood, in a report for the Royal United Services Institute, said: "A £3-billion carrier waiting in 'suspended animation' in Portsmouth to be activated has political consequences, as does the selling of a ship at a loss.

"Neither option is a sensible use of taxpayers' money. Indeed, the latter should be firmly disregarded." He said the lack of British carriers during the 2011 Libya campaign had meant that RAF Tornados and Typhoons had been forced to fly a 3,000 mile round trip from the UK to hit Col Gaddafi's forces. Even when a base became available in Italy, he said air raids were still four times more expensive than if they had been launched from a carrier in the Mediterranean. Mr Ellwood, a former Army officer, said: "The carrier's agility and independence means it is likely to be one of the first assets deployed to any hotspot around the globe." He said a single carrier would only be available around 200 days per year because of maintenance work.

Backbenchers on the Public Accounts Committee warned the aircraft carrier programme faced further spiralling costs. The project remained a “high risk” because technical problems had not been resolved and there was potential for “uncontrolled growth” in the final bill. The committee also said a decision to change the type of planes to fly from the carriers had wasted tens of millions of pounds. The Ministry of Defence had originally opted for jump jet versions of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, then switched to the carrier variant, only to return to the jump jets again last year when costs soared. Philip Hammond, Defence Secretary, said no decision would be made on what to do with the two carriers until the 2015 strategic defence and security review. But money saved by reverting to the jump jet F-35s meant there was the possibility of having two operational carriers.

He said: “Of course there are operational cost implications of holding two carriers available rather than one, but we will weigh very carefully the benefits of that and the costs of that in the review.”

Royal Navy Welcomes Sixth and Final Type 45 Destroyer into its Fleet

HMS Duncan – the sixth and last of the Royal Navy’s new-generation Type 45 destroyers – has been formally commissioned into the fleet.



HMS Duncan Commissioning Ceremony
Crown Copyright

Hundreds of guests including families of the 190 ship’s company attended a colourful ‘Christening’ ceremony at Portsmouth Naval Base to mark the ship’s transition into front-line service. The event marked a significant milestone for the fleet of Portsmouth-based Type 45s – the most powerful ships ever built for the Royal Navy. The first, HMS Daring, was commissioned in July 2009 and has been followed by sister ships Dauntless, Diamond, Dragon, Defender and now Duncan.

Principal guests at Duncan’s ceremony included Lady Marie Ibbotson - the ship’s sponsor who launched the vessel at BAE Systems’ Govan shipyard on the River Clyde in October 2010 - and First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas. Dignitaries from the ship’s affiliated cities of Belfast and Dundee and veterans from the last HMS Duncan – a Type 14 frigate in service between 1957 and 1985 – were also present.



HMS Duncan Cake Cutting
Crown Copyright

The hour-long ceremony was rounded off in traditional Royal Navy fashion with the cutting of a commissioning cake. Performing the honour were the CO's wife, Emma, along with the youngest member of the ship's company – Logistician (Steward) Clancey Welford, aged 18.

The first four Type 45s have already experienced life on operational deployments and the fifth – HMS Defender – is due to deploy for the first time next year.

HMS Duncan will continue an intense period of trials and training around the UK lasting well into next year before being ready to undertake operational tasking along with her sister ships around the globe.

SPLICE THE MAINBRACE – Wednesday 11th September 2013

Introduction

On the occasion of the birth of HRH Prince George of Cambridge, and on receiving a message from the First Sea Lord on behalf of the Royal Navy, Her Majesty the Queen has sent her best wishes to all Naval personnel. Her Majesty has directed the Naval Service to 'Splice the Mainbrace'. The order 'Splice the Mainbrace' may only be given by Her Majesty the Queen, members of the Royal Family or the Admiralty Board, therefore it is an occasion steeped in tradition.

History and tradition

Originally 'Splice the Mainbrace' was an order for one of the most difficult emergency repair jobs aboard a sailing ship which normally took place in the heat of battle. The mainbrace was the largest and heaviest of all running rigging; enemy gunners commonly aimed for the rigging during naval battles with the mainbrace being the prime target. If the mainbrace was shot away, it was usually necessary to repair it during the engagement as the ship was un-maneuvrable without it and would have to stay on the same tack. Splicing in a large run of hemp was strenuous work, generally the ship's best Able Seamen were chosen to carry out the task. On completion of the task those men alone were rewarded with an extra ration of rum or grog. Eventually the order 'Splice the Mainbrace' came to mean that the entire crew would be issued with an extra ration of rum, and was given on special occasions. An extra ration was deemed a great privilege.

Today, 'Splice the Mainbrace' allows for a tot of rum of '62.5ml' to be issued to all personnel of the Naval Service who are over the age of 18. Those who do not desire the spirit ration may receive a soft drink in lieu.

Arrangements for issue

'Up spirits' for 'Spice the Mainbrace' was conducted for all Naval personnel on Wed 11 Sep 13. The issue took place with 'Rum call' at 1500 hrs. For those unable to take their tot at this time, spirit issue continued until 1600 hrs. In accordance with tradition, the first tot is taken by the youngest person present (over the age of 18) at approximately 1510 hrs. On completion anybody who wishes to take their issue may do so.

Personnel under the age of 18 and those under punishment are forbidden to consume alcohol however they are welcome to receive their issue of soft drink.

Pen & Sword Books.

The new autumn 2013 "SALE" catalogue has arrived from Pen and Sword, and contains a host of very good value titles on naval and combined ops subjects.....

A hardback 400+ page 'Russian Warships in the Age of Sail 1696-1860', at only £25 caught my eye and among the other titles, 'Second World War Carrier Campaigns' by David Wragg, again a hardback of 256 pages for a mere £8, and 'Axis Warships' (256 pages, hardback-£8) as well as the 'Seaforth World Naval Review' at £10 have a great deal to offer the naval wargame, a few titles for the modeller too. I could list a further twenty five titles which are to say the least sumptuous.

I've just posted a cheque for a copy of 'Yanagi' (£8-again!) the Axis exchange of materials and weapons from Germany to Japan and back again. I think there's a wargame in that somewhere. Do take a look at the web site....

www.pen-and-sword.co.uk

Hurry though, the sale ends on October 30th 2013, and is a while stocks last offer.

Rob Morgan

This from Pen and Sword.

Dear Norman

My name's Heather and I am the marketing executive for magazines and specialist publications at Pen & Sword Books.

I wanted to let you know about our latest navy releases, that I believe may be of interest to readers of *All Guns Blazing* and for which I've included a brief description of below. The titles featured range from those on the U-Boat Wars and naval firepower, to the early naval campaigns of the First World War.

Grey Wolves: The U-Boat War 1939-1945 – Philip Kaplan (hardback)

In the early years of WW2, the elite force of German submariners came perilously close to successfully cutting Britain's transatlantic lifeline. The men of the U-Boats were bound together by an intense camaraderie forged in an environment of ever-present danger, and a unity of purpose more powerful than any known to other sailors. By the end of the war, of the 39,000 men who went to sea in the U-boats, 27,491 died in action and a further 5,000 were made prisoners of war. Of the 863 U-boats that sailed on operational patrols, 754 were lost.

Grey Wolves captures life on board a U-boat, in text, letters, diaries, journals, memoirs, prose and poetry, relaying tales of the mundane and the routine, dramatic and heroic along with the fear and resilience of every crew member. It is a vivid, brutally realistic portrait of the men who fought and died beneath the surface of the Atlantic, in what was perhaps, the most critical battle of the war.

Diving Stations: The Story of Captain George Hunt & the Ultor – Peter Dornan (paperback)

The inspiring story of Captain George Hunt's career; born in Uganda and then educated in Glasgow he was determined to join the Navy and at 13 years old, entered HMS Conway. His pre-war years saw him serving worldwide and in 1939, at the outbreak of war he was already serving on submarines. Over the next six years he was rammed twice, sunk once and had hundreds of depth charges dropped around him. He gave more than he got! While in command of the Unity Class Submarine Ultor, mainly in the Mediterranean, he and his crew accounted for an astonishing 20 enemy vessels sunk by torpedo and 8 by gunfire, as well as damaging another 4 ships. His fifteenth mission was described by the Admiralty as 'unsurpassed in the Annals of the Mediterranean Submarine Flotilla'.

The Kaiser's Pirates: Hunting Germany's Raiding Cruisers 1914-1915– Nick Hewitt (hardback)

A dramatic and little-known story of WW1, when the actions of a few men shaped the fate of nations. By 1914 Germany had ships and sailors scattered across the globe, protecting its overseas colonies and 'showing the flag' of its new Imperial Navy. After war broke out on 4 August there was no hope that they could reach home. Instead, they were ordered to attack Britain's vital trade routes for as long as possible. Under the leadership of a few brilliant, audacious men, they unleashed a series of raids that threatened Britain's war effort and challenged the power and prestige of the Royal Navy. Rounding up these 'Kaiser's Pirates' became the first priority for Winston Churchill, Britain's First Lord of the Admiralty. The next year saw a battle of wits which stretched across the globe, drawing in ships and men from six empires. By the end, the 'Kaiser's Pirates' were no more, and Britain once again ruled the waves.

In telling this incredible story, Nick Hewitt has drawn on the full resources of Imperial War Museums, including photographs and compelling first-hand accounts of the events from the museums' sound archive.

Naval Firepower: Battleship Guns and Gunnery in the Dreadnought Era – Norman Friedman (paperback)

This heavily illustrated book outlines for the first time in layman's terms the complex subject of fire-control, as it dominated battleship and cruiser design from before WW1 to the end of the dreadnought era. Covering the directors, range-finders, and electro-mechanical computers invented to solve the problems, America's leading naval analyst explains not only how the technology shaped (and was shaped by) the tactics involved, but analyses their

effectiveness in battle. His examination of the controversy surrounding Jutland and the relative merits of competing fire-control systems draws conclusions that will surprise many readers. Friedman also reassesses many other major gun actions, such as the battles between the Royal Navy and the Bismarck and the US Navy actions in the Solomons and at Surigao Strait. All major navies are covered, and the story concludes at the end of WWII with the impact of radar.

This is a book that everyone with more than a passing interest in twentieth-century warships will want to read, and nobody professionally involved with naval history can afford to miss.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you

Best Wishes

Heather Williams

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The following is from Mike Crane, an expert on the Arkansas who lives in Arkansas. It is a reply to Rob Morgan.

Hey, Rob!

I was intrigued by your comments on the colour of river bases. First, allow me to speculate on the reason the CSS Arkansas was painted brown. The iron that was used in the construction of the Arkansas had to be pulled up from the bottom of the Yazoo River where it had been thrown by panicky builders. It is safe to assume that the iron was already covered with rust and was naturally a rusty brown. It would be easier to paint over the rust quickly (sloppily) using brown paint. The ship was assembled in record time and I am guessing that brown was the only colour of paint available in supply large enough to paint the entire ship. Everything was in short supply in the Western theatre of the South. The unplanned effect was that the Arkansas blended into the shadow colour of the Vicksburg bluffs, which in effect gave it a certain amount of camouflage.

As for the colour of rivers, that depends upon the source of the river and the season. There are two rivers in eastern Arkansas that will illustrate what I am talking about. At a place near Oil Trough and Surrounded Hill, the Black River runs into the White River. The White River gets its whitish colour from the limestone hills of the Ozark Mountains. The Black River gets its dark green colour from the rotting vegetation of the Delta area. Where the rivers meet, the swirls look very much like a cup of black coffee when cream is poured into it.

Almost all the rivers in America are dammed now, so the colours are less muddy than they used to be. Most Southern rivers were coloured like coffee with a lot of cream--a light ochre. Many of the shorter rivers are coloured dark green--especially in the summer and fall. The Arkansas, fairly clear now, used to be a light, muddy red when I was a kid. The Red River which runs by here had--and still has--a darker red clay tint. Of course, the muddy colours are more prominent during the winter and spring rains. Although they are muddier, they also seem to be lighter in colour. Perhaps you can judge it better by the photos I am emailing from an old Bayou Wars convention at Vicksburg, Mississippi.

Your letter came today. Thank you so much for the articles. --Mike

Battle Report – The Russian War in the Baltic, 1855

Stuart Barnes Watson's campaign weekend, Lee Village Hall, October 2013

This last weekend saw the latest of Stuart Barnes-Watson's excellent naval campaign weekends at Lee village hall, near Ilfracombe. The setting this time was the Russian War (often known as the Crimean War), centring on operations in the Baltic in 1855.

The Russian War is a tricky one to wargame. Both sides had extensive fleets, but for various very good reasons they never met in battle. The Russian fleet was predominantly sail powered and hence suffered a very real mobility (and gunnery) disadvantage against the British and French. Sailing out to engage them was a very unpleasant option. And the allies were unable to go in to the Russian strongholds to winkle them out – the lack of inshore gunboats and bomb vessels in substantial quantities made assaults on fortresses such as Helsingfors and Kronstadt completely impractical; bombardments at distance (such as the assault on Sveaborg) were the limit of allied offensive activity, at least until Britain's substantial inshore fleet was built, but that only came in 1856 by which time the war was over.

Nevertheless, the fleets and the settings are attractive, so Stuart developed a starting scenario that allowed both sides to bring ships to bear whilst giving the allies an opportunity for some heavy shore bombardment.

But on to that later. Stuart has assembled substantial fleets of Russian, French and British ships from Hallmark and Tumbling Dice in 1/2400, and he put together the weekend using my "Iron and Fire" ironclad rules. I&F is written with the period 1860-1880 firmly in mind but with some tweaking it works for the earlier wooden period too (the alternative was to amend a sailing set such as Form Line of Battle; a harder job to complete). So I set to drafting some period specific additional rules and gunnery tables to reflect the situation in the mid 1850s. On the strength of this Stuart also asked me to umpire the games.



Stuart checks the range from his batteries around Bomarsund as the British fleet approaches

Game 1 – Second attack on Bomarsund

Scenario. Bomarsund, May 1855.

The Allies are reconnoitring the Aaland Islands with a possible view to locating a supply base in the area. The Russians have spent the winter attempting to reinstate the defences that were destroyed in the assault of 1854. None of the masonry forts have been rebuilt – repairs will take years to complete – but there are a number of earthwork forts on the main islands and smaller batteries on the outlying islands, and some mobile batteries of the Russian army dotted around the coast. There are also a substantial number of troops on the islands as well. The Allies make their approach from the West; the wind is from the North.

The allies began with a deliberate approach to Bomarsund, deploying landing parties to the outlying islands to ensure that they were unoccupied. I was surprised at this point that they did not attempt to bring on ships on the opposite side of Bomarsund (it's an island fortress after all), but no matter.

HMS Lightning was the first steamer to be engaged by shore batteries at Fort Andropov. She returned fire, but this was ineffective. Shortly afterwards the battery was silenced by heavy and accurate fire from *Penelope* and *Dragon*. *Lightning* then went on to be engaged by the guns of Fort Breshnev – in this case *Lightning* was acting as something of a lightning rod! *Penelope* followed close behind; the guns of the earth fort engaged the heavy British ship, causing some minor hull damage. But after a brief gunnery exchange the guns of the fort were silenced. *Lightning's* fun and games were not over though, as she set off a mine. A large plume of water drenched the ship, but no damage was caused.

Meanwhile, landing parties investigated some of the smaller the outlying islands. No Russian troops or batteries were located, but instead a few locals were encountered who offered to sell the navy some herring. The naval parties politely declined, but the locals took offence - a pity, since they were likely to spill the beans about the Russian troops dug in on the beaches on the South island. A nearby lighthouse was also recce'd (by what seemed like the biggest landing force ever created – boats from 6 ships trying to land simultaneously. The lighthouse keeper was paid handsomely for information, mentioning a number of Russian warships in harbour (whose presence could be seen anyway). But again, herring sales to the jolly Jacks were refused and so the information regarding troops on the beaches remained covert. Oh well....



British steam warships recce the outlying islands

Lightning and the other ships of the Inshore Squadron reconnoitred the coastline near Bomarsund, spotted several possible landing points and then withdrew, their initial orders completed.

With the opening phase complete the British brought their bomb vessels up to form a firing line. A major earthwork battery on the island of Presto (designated "Presto Alpha" by the allies) was engaged, initially no hits were scored, but after a while the mortars got the range and the battery was silenced.

The Russians has decided to defend the approaches to Bomarsund not only with batteries, but with a line of blockships and sailing warships chained across the sound. A good idea in theory, but one the allies saw through quickly. A second detachment of bomb vessels was detailed off to engage the line. The first blockship was quickly hit and destroyed. The crews of the warships interspersed with the blockships realised that the same fate would quickly befall them; they dropped the chains, upped anchor and with drew, sailing away to the east. Mortar rounds continued to be fired at the remaining blockships, which one by one were set on fire or sunk.

At this point the gunboats of the British inshore squadron became minesweepers. *Leopard* set off a mine; a critical hit was scored, her boilers damaged and a flood starting. Second later *Dragon* set off another mine; this time shock damage dismounted a gun. Despite this the British gunboats forced their way into the sound between the islands. But this took them towards the line of Russian steam frigates. *Rossiia* engaged *Odin*, the lead British gunboats, in the first significant engagement of a British warship by a Russian warship of the war! *Odin* took heavy damage, losing two guns and damage to her hull. Faced with heavies to their front the gunboats retired, but as they did *Penelope* sets off yet another mine, suffering minor engine damage.

Deciding that tear-ar**ing about the seas at 10+ knots was not conducive to spotting underwater threats the gunboats slowed and begin to scout for mines. One line to the North was observed by a middie on *Penelope*, another to the South by *HMS Driver*. But as she did so, *Driver* was heavily hit by *Rossiia* and the other Russian frigates. Suffering

critical damage, she sought to escape. The main British Battlefleet closed in line abreast. *Dragon* set off another mine, but no damage was caused. Still fleeing the Russian frigates, *Driver* was hit again but escaped serious extra damage.

The British battle line engaged the Russian frigates, scoring some telling hits on *Christina*, *Viborg* and *Olaf*. This encouraged the Russians to withdraw. As the Russian frigates pulled away they launched a final series of broadsides into the hapless *Driver*, finally sinking her. Russian fleet retiring through the channel. Meanwhile, the *Veliki Kniaz Mikhail* (a sailingwarship anchored and grounded near Bomarsund as a static battery) succumbed to the rain of mortar shells and was left a shattered, burning wreck.

The mortars then turned their attention to the main Bomarsund fort. A shot hit the central magazine which exploded, silencing the central battery. The west and east batteries continued to fire at the advancing British Battlefleet, but caused no hits and were soon silenced by the fire of the mortars and the battlefleet's bow chasers. The battlefleet cleared the southern minefield without incident. A field battery, previously hidden in woodland on the shoreline, opened fire on *HMS Arrogant* – which returned fire with a number of well laid and very heavy broadsides, evaporating the battery! But in so doing one of her guns exploded, starting a fire. *Nile* engages the beached *Rossiia* at close range, her battery of 8" guns shattering the old Russian ship. To the East the sailing warships *Azova* and *Borodino* were engaged; *Azova* was damaged, *Borodino* heavily hit. Her steering was jammed and she failed to avoid the rocky shore ahead, grounding heavily and becoming stuck fast. She was abandoned and burnt.

At this point the game was most definitely up for the Russians. The remaining steam warships escaped to the east, the sailing ships seeking shelter amongst the many islands of the archipelago; they would have a tense time escaping back to Kronstadt. As they departed the Russian steamers engaged and sunk the gunboat *Euraylus*. The second RN ship lost that day. Perhaps worried by this loss the allies did not immediately pursue (it was decided that they would consolidate their hold around the islands and support troop landings against Bomarsund; landings that were ultimately successful, but with heavier losses than necessary since the presence of Russian ground troops in strength was not discovered – if only they'd bought some herring!

Interlude

And so the first battle was over. Those stalwart players who were staying on at the hall retired to the Grampus for supper and beers (and an embarrassing incident for one member concerning red cabbage and the lamb shank that wasn't, but I digress.....)

Suitably refreshed, the umpire set about preparing for day 2's game. This was originally intended to be the bombardment of Sveaborg, but this would essentially be a rerun of the first day's battle, just in a different location. To make things more fun a new scenario was devised.....

Day 2

Bomarsund has fallen. The defence of fixed ports and positions with ships has proven to be a failure, so the Russian fleet has been withdrawn to Kronstadt. The allies have refitted and struck Sveaborg, bombarding the fortress but (as historically) not attempting landings. Now the allies are moving on Kronstadt, their aim being to bombard the fortress and, if possible, to sneak past in the confusion and to raid St. Petersburg and to embarrass the Tsar. But, as the fleet heads down the Gulf of Finland a storm hits, damaging several ships and scattering others. The fleet takes refuge in the sound between the mainland at Primorsk and Severny Berezovy Island and conducts repairs. News of the allied fleet's position has been reported to navy command at Kronstadt. The Tsar concerned that the allies will force their way through and attack St Petersburg, orders the fleet to sea to actively defend the city. The Russian admirals decide to engage the allies in the confined waters of the sound, the aim being to destroy the allies' bomb vessels, the ships that have caused so much damage to the Russian shore defences and which are the real threat to Kronstadt and St Petersburg.

Victory conditions.

Allied: lose no more than 6 ships of the line. Lose no more than 3 bomb vessels
Russian – destroy at least 6 bomb vessels.

In the pre-game phase the Russians decided to deploy troops in various commandeered civilian ships (the aim being to try to board the bomb vessels and burn them), lay dummy mines and also deploy some real mines in mid-channel. But the allied players were suspicious (some might say paranoid) and deployed large numbers of light forces to comb the sides of the channel. They also (rightly) spotted that the bomb vessels were the key to the action and protected them with the bulk of the battle line.

The RN light forces, lacking charts of the region, were prone to grounding. Several ships touched bottom and after awhile the gunboat *Valorous*, on the southern side of the channel, grounded and became stuck fast. Meanwhile the Russian small craft began to drop mines and dummies, but did so close to the oncoming British battle line; they were heavily engaged and quickly sunk.

The Russian light squadron, in advance of the rest of the fleet, engaged the leading British squadron, but was hit hard in reply. *Christina* lost a paddle wheel and her helmsman was killed, Ilya Muromets was hit in the rudder and careered away to starboard (lucky as there was an island to port). The light squadron veered away from the British heavies and instead closed to point blank range with the British and French squadrons to the South of the Sound, the plan being to use the cover of the islands there to try to get around behind the British line and on to the bomb vessels. But this plan was dashed on the anvil of the French squadron. *Olaf* was quickly destroyed and her sisters followed soon after. Meanwhile, on the British side, attempts to refloat *Valorous* were unsuccessful; she was stuck fast and could only be recovered after the battle, another paddle steamer hauling her off.



The Russian steam squadron – shortly before they were shot to pieces.

To the north side the threat of mines initially threw British line into disarray, but they quickly recovered and then moved to engage the oncoming battle line. The Russian *Gangut* was engaged by the leading British ships. Unable to reply effectively, she succumbed in short order, left a sinking wreck. And this began the rapid destruction of the Russian fleet, with heavy and accurate British gunfire scoring telling hits. But it was not all one sided, *HMS Exmouth* was singled out and heavily battered.

Despite this the Russian fleet was hit hard. The weight of British fire was telling, and it was obvious that there was no way through to engage the bomb vessels. At this point the game was called, the Royal Navy and her French allies winning the most significant action at sea since Navarino.

Aftermath

And so the weekend drew to a close. Despite being hammered in both games the Russians enjoyed themselves, the allies obviously did too. And from my perspective it was a great opportunity to see the rules used outside their “comfort zone” and working well with the period amendments applied. So all in all an excellent weekend played out with some good friends. And plenty of money made for the RNLI through the book sale – thanks to everyone who contributed.

SEA QUIZ 24...Answers.

A mixed bag this time, but one or two were easy enough. The quiz writer in 'The Navy' sometimes slipped in merchant ship questions, but I'll avoid those I think! I've also avoided the more obscure questions such as...."What type of rope is made from the fibres of the wild banana tree?". Hm??

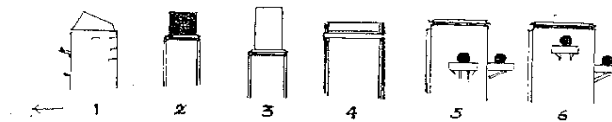
1. HMS Campania was lost in collision with HMS Glorious in a gale in 1918.
2. The signal to HMS Condor was at the Bombardment of Alexandria.
3. It was HMS Calliope which survived the Samoa hurricane.
4. This 1953 question all revolves around the 'Squid' a/s launcher. In 'Battleaxe' it was in 'B' turret position, in 'Crossbow, it was in 'X'. Simple, eh? I wondered why the positional change, anyone know?
5. Turrets in echelon....
Well, HMS's Inflexible, Ajax, Agamemnon, Colossus, and Edinburgh.

By the way if you are interested the rope's manila!

SEA QUIZ 25.

Sometimes the original compiler of the Sea Quiz thought he was running an Admiralty Board, and here's a good question in that mode to open....

1. What exactly is a Commodore?
2. When and how was HMS Wakeful lost?
3. Name 12 British warships beginning RE.
4. At which action were the carriers HMS's' Eagle, Albion, Bulwark, Ocean and Theseus present?
5. Name the RN Warships which carried the funnels in the drawing.





This is the best idea yet of how the Royal Navy's frigates of tomorrow will look.

Computer artists have unveiled the latest impressive images of the Type 26 Global Combat Ship which show the design of the new vessel dramatically taking shape after three and half years' work. From 2020, these ships will take the place of the trusty Type 23s which have been the nation's safeguard and protector against submarine attack – and much more – since the early 1990s. The images were unveiled at the Defence Security and Equipment International exhibition in London's Docklands by BAE Systems, as it announced the first contracts had been placed for some of the key equipment aboard. Work will begin on the first – as yet unnamed – ship in the class in just three years' time, with that same vessel due to be in service as soon as possible after 2020. As things stand at present there will be 13 of these warships (AGB Editor's note: like they said there would be 12 Type 45 Destroyers and we ended up with 6) for anti-submarine warfare, air defence and general purpose duties such as hunting down pirates, pummelling enemy positions with its main gun, or providing humanitarian aid in the wake of disaster – replacing the 13 Type 23s currently in the service around the world with the RN.



The Royal Naval frigate HMS ARGYLL returned to HM Naval Base DEVONPORT after a successful maritime policing patrol. HMS ARGYLL's deployment has seen the ship conduct a range of operations in the seas around Africa, the Falklands, the Eastern Pacific and the Caribbean. This scope of operations, from disrupting the illegal supply of \$116m of narcotics, to saving a life, working with partner nations in Africa, to reassurance in the Falkland Islands has displayed the huge variety of tasks a Royal Navy warship can undertake.

HMS ARGYLL's Commanding Officer, Commander Tim Neild, said:

"ARGYLL's deployment stands as an exemplar in the defence community as to the flexibility and agility represented by a UK frigate on operations. We have conducted a vast range of tasking across half the globe. The capacity we built in Africa, the re-assurance and training in the South Atlantic and the 116 million US Dollars worth of drugs we helped stop in Central America all show the value for money that a most capable warship, such as HMS ARGYLL, provides. I am immensely proud of my 'Band of Brothers' for their commitment and professionalism throughout."

The Type 23 frigate has travelled 35,000 nautical miles during her deployment visiting 16 countries across eight time zones. She has spent 206 days away in weather ranging from equatorial Africa and the Caribbean to the iceberg-filled South Atlantic.

Following departure in February the ship's initial programme took in a successful period of regional engagement from Lisbon to Cape Verde, throughout West Africa, culminating in Simon's Town, South Africa, in May. This period included counter narcotics operations with Cape Verde Coast Guard and civil police embarked. Throughout West Africa, the ship delivered a comprehensive maritime security training programme to 300 personnel in Atlantic nations. The ship was also the centrepiece to two maritime security conferences hosted to raise awareness and dialogue for key players in the region. The ship also saved the life of a Japanese fisherman who had been gravely injured in an accident at sea.

Following adventurous training in Simon's Town, South Africa, HMS ARGYLL crossed the South Atlantic to South Georgia and the Falklands where leadership training was undertaken with lectures, briefings and challenges including the planning and execution of a trek across South Georgia following in the footsteps of explorer Sir Earnest Shackleton. HMS ARGYLL delivered an impressive capability across the region earning the praise of the Commander of British Forces, Air Commodore La Forte. Highlights included; supporting the Liberation Day Commemorations in Port Stanley, visiting remote settlements across the Falkland Islands and offering assistance to islanders. The ship conducted amphibious operations as part of a land exercise, providing support to a company from 3 Parachute Regiment on board.

Following a stormy passage around Cape Horn, HMS ARGYLL shifted focus in the Pacific back to counter narcotics operations with a United States Coast Guard detachment embarked. The ship's notable success was the disruption of six tonnes of cocaine and conducted a search and rescue using the ship's helicopter for a lost sailing yacht. The period concluded with the ship successfully interdicting and detaining a drug smuggling fast boat and its crew as the ship left the Panama Canal for the Caribbean.

The United States Director of the Joint Inter Agency Task Force Admiral Mehling, was effusive in his praise for ARGYLL during her secondment, heralding her participation as a resounding success and presenting the ship with a 'Snowflake Burgee' to mark their achievements.

Following engagement activity in Key West and Bermuda, HMS ARGYLL invited families on board to enjoy a day at sea to experience life at sea and a chance for the ship to thank families for their support while deployed. Families joined the crew in belatedly toasting the birth of Prince George.

ARGYLL will commence a period of leave, maintenance and training prior to deploying again next year.



A team of classes and staff from the Royal Navy Air Engineering & Survival School (RNAESS), HMS SULTAN visited the USA in order to equip the future Fleet Air Arm (FAA) engineers with experience of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter and fixed-wing carrier based aviation. With a sense of great anticipation the group made their way down the east coast to Naval Air Station Patuxent (Pax) River, home to the US Navy's Test and Evaluation Squadrons. It was here that they were given their first look at the F-35 with tours given by the team of embedded FAA maintainers. All were struck by the change in characteristics from traditional aircraft; however this was a vital part of the visit made all the more worthwhile by the facilitators' willingness to talk the junior Air Engineer Officers (AEOs) through the engineering design process.



The visit to Pax also included a trip to see the X-47B, the Unmanned Combat Air Vehicle Demonstrator which has recently completed the first ever entirely automated take-off and landing on the USS GEORGE H W BUSH. Whilst F-35 is a 5th Generation stealth fighter, the X-47B is an example of what the future of military aviation may hold.

On completion of exploring the test and evaluation centres associated with both fixed wing and rotary wing aviation, the group moved on to the carrier strike aspect of the trip with a liaison visit to the USS DWIGHT D EISENHOWER which was alongside in Norfolk Naval Base. One of 10 nuclear carriers, the sheer scale of the ship was one of its most impressive features, with the vessels are so large that they have to go around South America to get to the Pacific rather than use the Panama Canal. A well organised tour was followed by a brief from their Commander Air equivalent (one of 10 Captains on-board) who explained the way in which the busy flight deck operates in order to achieve simultaneous landings and take-offs at 45 second intervals.

RFA Wave Knight in multi-million pound drug haul

Royal Fleet Auxiliary support ship Wave Knight has helped seize an estimated £6.5 million worth of drugs from traffickers in the Caribbean.



Suspect vessel Miss Tiffany is circled by Wave Knight's seaboot with the Royal Fleet Auxiliary supply ship seen in the background
[Picture: Crown copyright]

In a multi-agency operation involving UK and US assets, the fishing vessel Miss Tiffany was detected and one of Wave Knight's boats was launched to investigate. Soon after the Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) ship's arrival, and upon hailing the vessel, the Miss Tiffany's crew members were seen jettisoning a number of suspect packages overboard. With multiple bales now being jettisoned by the crew and an urgent need to stop the fishing vessel, the decision was taken to immediately launch a second boat from Wave Knight to help recover the weighted bales before they sank. A total of 55 bales were eventually recovered from the sea.

Defence Secretary Philip Hammond said: "The work of the Royal Navy across the globe, and in particular in the Caribbean, on counter-narcotics operations is vital to protecting us here at home. This drugs bust follows recent successful interdiction and deterrence operations by HMS Lancaster and HMS Argyll in the Caribbean which all contribute to ensuring illegal drugs do not reach our streets. "I congratulate the ship's company for their actions in this operation."



The suspect vessel Miss Tiffany
[Picture: Crown copyright]

Subsequent onboard analysis strongly suggested these bales contained marijuana – a haul of some 1,300 kilograms with an estimated street value of around £6.4 million. The boarding operations, preservation of evidence and detention of seven crew members will hopefully lead to a successful prosecution in court. Captain Chris Clarke, Commanding Officer of RFA Wave Knight, said: "The entire ship's company – RFA civilians, US Law Enforcement Team and Royal Navy personnel alike – as well as HQ and prosecuting staff ashore - are delighted with the result. Once again the joint multi-agency approach to counter-narcotic operations has resulted in another successful take-down."

Although the crew of Wave Knight was unable to recover all the jettisoned bales before they sank, the total disruption was estimated as being in the region of 1,800 kilograms, and an estimated street value of some £9 million. A custody crew was subsequently embarked on the Miss Tiffany which enabled the fishing vessel to be delivered to Jamaican authorities.

The Royal Navy's Response Force Task Group (RFTG) has sailed through the Suez Canal on its way to operate in a number of countries as part of the long planned Cougar 13 deployment.



RN task group sails Suez Canal for Cougar 13 deployment

Image Crown copyright

The RFTG left UK waters in August briefly visiting Gibraltar, Rota, Lisbon and Palermo before arriving in Albania to conduct a final test of operational readiness for the Royal Marines of the Lead Commando Group, formed from 42 Commando Group Royal Marines.

HMS BULWARK, HMS ILLUSTRIOUS, HMS WESTMINSTER, Royal Fleet Auxiliary LYME BAY, RFA FORT AUSTIN and the Ministry of Defence strategic RO-RO ferry Hurst Point, carrying amphibious vehicles, join HMS MONTROSE, already in the Arabian Gulf, having sailed ahead of the Task Group to meet commitments to counter-piracy and counter-narcotics operations, in tandem with regional security partners.

Over the next three months elements of the RFTG will exercise with military and security forces in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Oman to strengthen British ties with historic and valued counter-terrorist, security and economic partners in the Middle East region. It will also carry out counter-piracy operations in support of the European Union and conduct engagement with strategic partners in support of wider Government objectives. The Cougar 13 deployment will operate in the Mediterranean, Red Sea, Arabian Gulf, and Horn of Africa. It involves exercising with partner nations, and will show the UK Armed Forces' capacity to project an effective maritime component anywhere in the world.

"Sails of Glory" - The NWS at Colours 2013 by David Manley.

So today the Naval Wargames Society ran "Sails of Glory" at Colours (one of the main wargaming events in the UK). The small but intrepid team of four stalwart naval types (myself, Simon Stokes, Rob Hutton and pressed man Paul Ewins from my local wargaming club) assembled at the show at 0800 Sunday morning, set up and in very short order got straight into action. We played an initial game amongst ourselves to give the newbies a chance to get up to speed. Even this game, kicking off before the show started, attracted considerable attention from the gamers and traders present. The show opened officially at 1000 and the public appeared. We were kept busy right through the day, playing through six games, all of which were hard fought and very enjoyable actions, and in fact we were just about the last game still playing on the day.

The reaction to the game was amazing. Everyone who played it loved it. And it worked just fine for all ages. I think our youngest player was 10, but we had a visit from a 6 year old who was very well acquainted not only with pirates, but with Admiral Nelson and Trafalgar, and who grasped the style of play very easily - no prizes for guessing what is on his Christmas list this year! The table was often surrounded by observers. If we'd had copies on sale on the day we could have cleared dozens based on the numbers of players and observers who were stuck by the quality of the models and the speed and ease of play. We had a few "old salt" naval gamers playing as well who thought the system was ideal for those quick "club night" games, and for small ship actions (we are already kicking off thoughts for period and other variants using the basic system).

So, all in all a very successful day. And with luck more demos and parti games upcoming at events in the next couple of months (I'm planning to bring it down to Stuart's Crimean campaign weekend). The game was a big hit, highly popular and, if today's reaction was anything to go by, assured of great success in the near future! I posted a similar summary to the Sails of Glory forum and was asked by a member there for any advice in running games of this type. I posted ten "hot tips" and thought, as a bonus, some readers here might like to see them too.

1) Have a good team of players with you. It can get rather wearing running game after game after game so you need to be able to swap between umpires. It also allows those not directly running the game to hover around the players to help them out if they get stuck remembering the rules or wanting advice. It also lets the "spare bodies" dash off for a short while to see the rest of the show.

2) " Battlespace management" is more important with a sailing game than most others I think, due to the effects of the wind. The action will naturally flow downwind, so be aware of that and have your scenario starting points clustered towards the upwind part of the table. And think about how the terrain (if any) is going to help and hinder the game. We had an island that, if at the downwind end of the table, was a real pig to sail around due to its proximity to the corner. So

we swapped ends and it was now at the upwind end and much easier to negotiate.

3) If you are playing with the four starter set ships, impress upon whoever gets the frigates that they ARE highly vulnerable to incoming fire from the SOLs. We had two games where frigate players (despite this advice) went SOL hunting in frigates. Their games were short. But tell them anyway, some of them might listen.

4) Practice. Set the game up some time before the event and play it through with friends to make sure your scenario works. I didn't get a chance to do this on this occasion as the kit arrived just the day before, if I'd had the chance the issue with the island would have been spotted before game #1 rather than during it :)

5) Have an on duty "caller" - a floating person who spots interested people (or even vaguely disinterested ones) in the crowd and passers by and hooks them in for a chat and to inveigle them into the game. You need to have a separate person doing this, not the umpire (they are busy keeping the game going)

6) Remember, keep clutter to a minimum. Nothing looks worse than a table strewn with drinks, lunch, random stuff that someone has bought and dumped on the table edge, odd papers etc. A tidy game is an efficient game :)

7) Bring glue - although not required on this occasion I always have some superglue and/or plastic cement (as demanded by the models) on hand to conduct running repairs during a game. Especially relevant in this as you only have four ships to work with and, had one been damaged and out of action, that would have seriously compromised the game.

8) Prepare yourself as well as the game. I take a sports water bottle to shows so can have a crafty drink to keep me going through games - all that talking through rules and the game with players causes havoc with your throat.

9) Practice your rules summary - you need to get the key concepts of play explained to and understood by your players in 5 minutes or less. So work out in advance what you want to say and demonstrate.

10) Above all, have fun! Although you are Ares unofficial PR department on the day remember it's a hobby, not a job. And if you aren't having fun, chances are your team and your players aren't either.

This article from the Daily Express gives food for thought.

Proof that our Navy is on the scrapheap?

LINED up along the quays the glory days of this formidable fighting force are over as they await the end in the Royal Navy's graveyard.

By: **John Ingham**



Many Royal Navy ships are in danger of being scrapped. The four Type 42 destroyers and a minehunter, their names already removed, are destined to be turned into razor blades. But critics claim that instead of being scrapped they could plug gaps in the smallest Royal Navy in centuries. The ships are languishing in Portsmouth Naval Base from where the aircraft carrier Ark Royal was towed to a Turkish scrapyard in May. And yesterday a former First Sea Lord and

Security and Counter-Terrorism minister, Admiral The Lord West of Spithead, warned that Britain is "standing into danger" - a naval term for going on the rocks. He said that in any fleet three ships are needed for a commitment - one on station, one coming back and one working up to replace it. He said: "I know we are in a period of austerity but we have cut the military to too great a degree. We are standing into danger. "We have 19 frigates and destroyers and that is simply too few for the UK." In contrast, we had over 60 destroyers and frigates at the time of the Falklands War. The Royal Navy is now at its smallest for hundreds of years. "You only have to look at Egypt and Syria to realise we are in a very dangerous and uncertain world." We run global shipping from London. How capable are we of protecting it?" The Navy argues that the Type 42s are about 30 years old and the new Type 45s are far more capable. But Lord West said: "A ship can only be in one place at one time.

"You need three ships for every one permanently deployed which means with our current fleet we can permanently deploy just six ships which for a great maritime nation is not good enough. "If something crops up we will be in a bit of a pickle." He was backed by Steve Bush, Editor of Warship World and formerly in the Royal Navy. He said: "The Navy's ships are more capable but we don't have enough of them." He said that the 1998 Strategic Defence Review said the Royal Navy needed 32 frigates and destroyers compared to today's 19. Commander John Muxworthy of the UK National Defence Association said: "The Royal Navy is being emasculated. It is being forced against its will to discard ships which have some life left in them.

"Common sense says we have insufficient ships. Why are we throwing away these valuable Type 42s?"

The ships in the Navy's graveyard are HMS Manchester, which served in the 1991 Gulf War but is already boarded up after being cannibalised to supply other ships. Just along the same quay is newly decommissioned HMS Edinburgh, "The Fortress of the Sea", which saw active service in the 2003 Iraq War. It is being axed despite a £17.5million refit as recently as 2010.

Across the water is HMS York, another Iraq veteran which evacuated British nationals from Beirut in 2006 and Libya in 2011. On its port side is HMS Gloucester, which served in the Gulf War where it made history by becoming the first warship to shoot down an enemy missile with a missile. It saved the American battleship USS Missouri by using its Sea Dart missiles to shoot down an Iraqi Silkworm missile in 1991. It also joined HMS York in 2006 in the Beirut evacuation. Joining the warships awaiting the end in the scrapyards is an unnamed Sandown Class minehunter, thought to be 21-year-old HMS Walney.

But the Royal Navy insists that the capability of the modern fleet is such that it can cope. The Type 45's, for instance, are billed as the world's most advanced destroyers, capable of eliminating a cricket-ball sized target travelling at three times the speed of sound 30 miles away. The ship's radar system can build a three-dimensional picture of up to 1,000 different ships and aircraft simultaneously up to 220 miles away. And its missile system can engage and attack 48 incoming aircraft and missiles in two seconds. A MoD spokesman said: "The Royal Navy has sufficient ships to meet its current commitments. The Type 45s which replaced the Type 42s are the largest and most powerful destroyers ever built for the Royal Navy."

SINK THE BISMARCK, THIRD AND FINAL PART

See May and July's AGB for Parts one and two.
Naval Thunder, Battleship Row, Bitter Rivals Rule Set.

The Royal Navy Ships, ordered to sink the Bismarck must attack without delay as a fuel shortage and the fear of U Boats means that the Bismarck may escape and be a threat to Atlantic convoys. The Bismarck struggling with the jammed rudder can only sail away from the safety of France and the 2 U Boats that are trying to reach the scene.

1. BISMARCK can only steer a course which takes her towards the enemy on the horizon. She opens fire with the forward turrets at what is assumed to be the biggest threat - HMS RODNEY. KGV turns to starboard to open up the arcs. HMS RODNEY opens fire and waits to observe the splashes and fall of shot reports from the "spotting" Walrus aircraft. All opening shots fall short of their targets.

2. Long range shots from HMS RODNEY are spot on, straddling the BISMARCK and making one non penetrating hit midships. HMS KING GEORGE V is out of range but manoeuvres to split the enemy's fire. The repair efforts to the BISMARCK's rudder are abandoned and the forward turrets fire at RODNEY – short. The BISMARCK has formidable anti-aircraft guns but no hits on the Walrus spotters are made. The RODNEY, with all turrets forward of the superstructure continues towards the BISMARCK. KGV attempts to cross the BISMARCK's T.

3. KGV is still out of range; RODNEY scores a hit on Turret "Anton" putting one gun out of action. BISMARCK straddles RODNEY and also hits the RODNEY's Walrus, which is seen to land on the sea, smoking. HMS NORFOLK is directed to pick up survivors if situation allows. First priority is a torpedo attack on the BISMARCK. RODNEY turns to Port, while still keeping firing arcs open. KGV is desperate to join in the action. BISMARCK has no choice but to continue in a North Westerly direction.

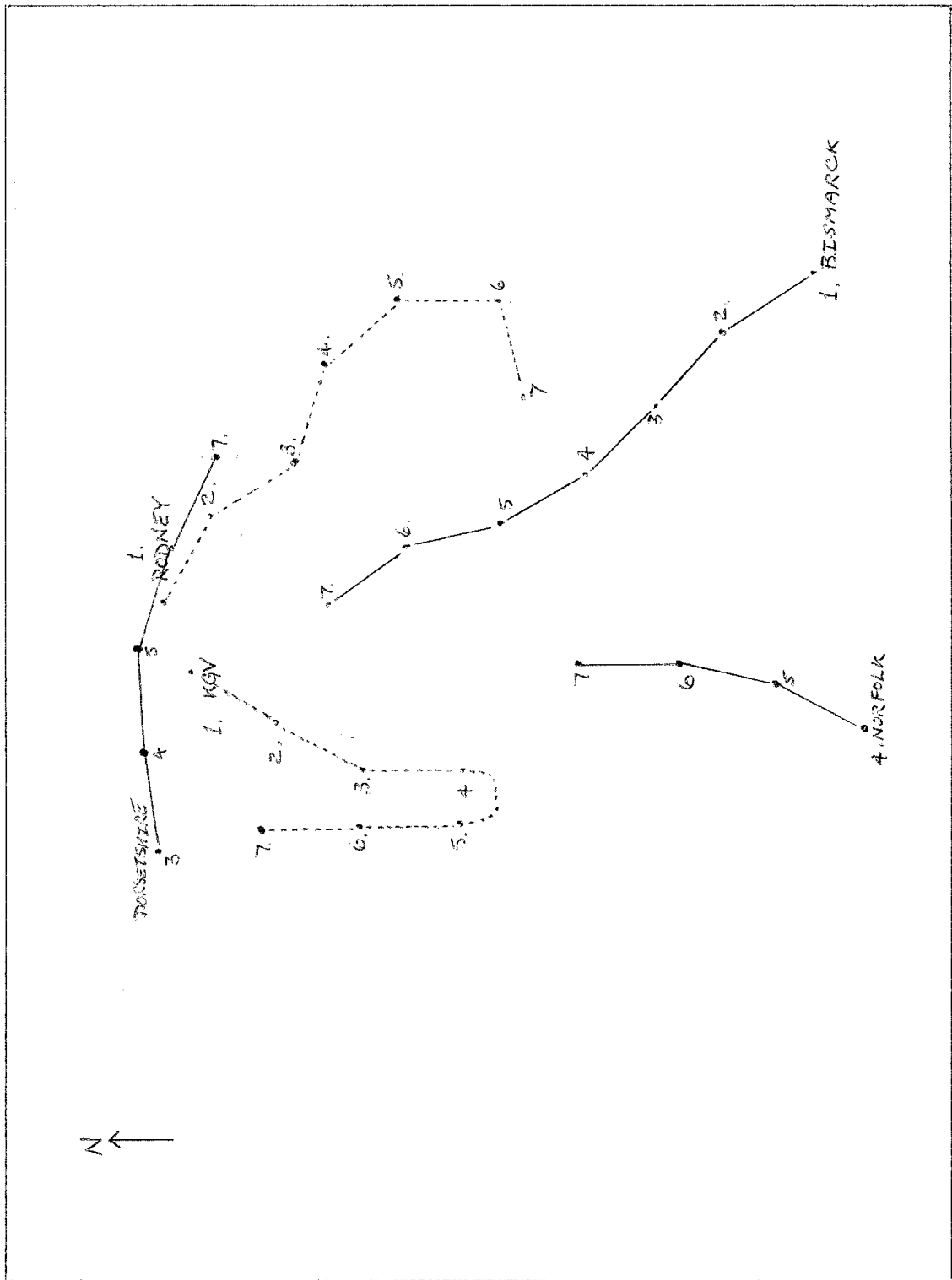
4. RODNEY hits Turret "Caesar" but shudders from two non penetrating hits on the stern from BISMARCK and a non penetrating hit on "C" Turret, BISMARCK has brought all guns to bear. KGV manoeuvres to make the BISMARCK the meat in a RN sandwich and opens fire. Two midship hits on BISMARCK, one of which starts a small fire near the floatplane hanger. The Walrus strays too near the BISMARCK, receives a hail of fire and explodes in mid-air. No survivors. A waste of good men and machine as the range of the combatants meant that fall of shot reports were not required.

5. KGV reverses course which plays havoc with their shooting, the stern guns miss BISMARCK by a wide margin. BISMARCK and RODNEY are toe to toe. RODNEY scores another hit on Turret "Caesar" which disables one gun. RODNEY receives a non penetrating hit on "C" Turret and a more serious hit on "B" Turret. KGV fires again and scores another midship hit which starts more fires that begin to become threatening.

6. Two hits on "Bruno" Turret from RODNEY and another from KGV reduce BISMARCK's forward firepower to 25%. Another hit from KGV inflicts minor damage to Turret "Dora". BISMARCK fires at RODNEY but misses badly. Perhaps the RN is gaining a winning advantage. RODNEY turns to starboard crosses the enemy's stern. HMS NORFOLK and HMS DORSETSHIRE close for a torpedo attack. NORFOLK is at risk of being rammed by RODNEY or running into DORSETSHIRE's torpedoes.

7. As the BISMARCK opens the range to RODNEY, she closes on the, so far, undamaged KING GEORGE V. Only 1 gun of Turret "Anton" can fire at KGV. A hit on the stern of KGV is achieved causing flooding. KGV fires a broadside and scores a direct hit on the Bridge of the Bismarck. RODNEY fires 6 16 inch guns and causes more damage to the bow and superstructure. Bismarck fires at RODNEY and again is widely inaccurate.

Epilogue. Time constraints draw the events to a finish. RODNEY has one turret out action, serious damage to the stern. KGV is flooding at the stern. The BISMARCK has suffered major damage to the main armament, the Bridge and superstructure. There is no hope of U-Boat or Luftwaffe assistance. The RN can fight for a while yet (three more game turns) before fuel concerns would cause a break off of the action, NORFOLK and DORSETSHIRE are closing for a torpedo attack, so we'll call this a victory for the RN as the BISMARCK will surely strike her colours and order the seacocks to be opened. NORFOLK and DORSETSHIRE to pick up survivors.



The following is from Jeff Crane and is funny because there is a grain of truth behind it.

If the Politically Correct brigade had been with Nelson at Trafalgar.

Nelson: "Order the signal, Hardy."

Hardy: "Aye, aye sir."

Nelson: "Hold on, that's not what I dictated to Flags. What's the meaning of this?"

Hardy: "Sorry sir?"

Nelson (reading aloud): "' England expects every person to do his or her duty, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religious persuasion or disability.' - What gobbledegook is this?"

Hardy: "Admiralty policy, I'm afraid, sir. We're an equal opportunities employer now. We had the devil's own job getting ' England ' past the censors, lest it be considered racist."

Nelson: "Gadzooks, Hardy. Hand me my pipe and tobacco."

Hardy: "Sorry sir. All naval vessels have now been designated smoke-free working environments."

Nelson: "In that case, break open the rum ration. Let us splice the mainbrace to steel the men before battle."

Hardy: "The rum ration has been abolished, Admiral. Its part of the Government's policy on binge drinking."

Nelson: "Good heavens, Hardy. I suppose we'd better get on with it..... full speed ahead."

Hardy: "I think you'll find that there's a 4 knot speed limit in this stretch of water."

Nelson: "Damn it man! We are on the eve of the greatest sea battle in history. We must advance with all dispatch. Report from the crow's nest please."

Hardy: "That won't be possible, sir."

Nelson: "What?"

Hardy: "Health and Safety have closed the crow's nest, sir. No harness; and they said that rope ladders don't meet regulations. They won't let anyone up there until proper scaffolding can be erected."

Nelson: "Then get me the ship's carpenter without delay, Hardy."

Hardy: "He's busy knocking up a wheelchair access to the foredeck Admiral."

Nelson: "Wheelchair access? I've never heard anything so absurd."

Hardy: "Health and safety again, sir. We have to provide a barrier-free environment for the differently abled."

Nelson: "Differently abled? I've only one arm and one eye and I refuse even to hear mention of the word. I didn't rise to the rank of admiral by playing the disability card."

Hardy: "Actually, sir, you did. The Royal Navy is under represented in the areas of visual impairment and limb deficiency."

Nelson: "Whatever next? Give me full sail. The salt spray beckons."

Hardy: "A couple of problems there too, sir. Health and safety won't let the crew up the rigging without hard hats. And they don't want anyone breathing in too much salt - haven't you seen the adverts?"

Nelson: "I've never heard such infamy. Break out the cannon and tell the men to stand by to engage the enemy."

Hardy: "The men are a bit worried about shooting at anyone, Admiral."

Nelson: "What? This is mutiny!"

Hardy: "It's not that, sir. It's just that they're afraid of being charged with murder if they actually kill anyone. There are a couple of legal-aid lawyers on board, watching everyone like hawks."

Nelson: "Then how are we to sink the Frenchies and the Spanish?"

Hardy: "Actually, sir, we're not."

Nelson: "We're not?"

Hardy: "No, sir. The French and the Spanish are our European partners now. According to the Common Fisheries Policy, we shouldn't even be in this stretch of water. We could get hit with a claim for compensation."

Nelson: "But you must hate a Frenchman as you hate the devil."

Hardy: "I wouldn't let the ship's diversity co-ordinator hear you saying that sir. You'll be up on disciplinary report."

Nelson: "You must consider every man an enemy, who speaks ill of your King."

Hardy: "Not any more, sir. We must be inclusive in this multicultural age. Now put on your Kevlar vest; it's the rules. It could save your life"

Nelson: "Don't tell me - health and safety. Whatever happened to rum, sodomy and the lash?"

Hardy: "As I explained, sir, rum is off the menu! And there's a ban on corporal punishment."

Nelson: "What about sodomy?" Hardy: "I believe that is now legal, sir."

Nelson: "In that case..... kiss me, Hardy."

And now back to reality.

Naval Antics???

I've just been given a copy of John Drogo Montagu's "*Greek & Roman Warfare: Battles, Tactics and Trickery*" published as recently as 2006 by Greenhill Books. Obviously I anticipated, in a 250 page volume a little more than three pages of text on naval warfare over three or four centuries, but that's all there was, under the heading above!

There's not a lot more to say other than that the book makes this mention of a tactic used by the Illyrians used in battle with the Achaeans off the Paxoi Islands in 229BC. It's very suggestive of later Viking tactics of course, though I've never encountered a wargame in which ancient warships were grouped like this. Apparently, before battle the Illyrians lashed their galleys together in groups of four, inviting the enemy to ram them, they then boarded the attackers in overwhelming numbers and in this battle captured four and sank a fifth of the Achaean warships before the enemy abandoned the fight and turned for home. Presumably a chase was out of the question with the Illyrians lashed together?

Montagu attributes this account to the Greek historian Polybius.

Rob Morgan.

I have a new copy of the following book for sale.

Agents of Innovation: The General Board and the Design of the Fleet That Defeated the Japanese Navy

It traces the development of the US Fleet in the inter-war, post Washington Treaty period. It's listed on Amazon at £16. I'm selling for £10 + p&p

Andy Field
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Norse Longboat 1/600th Scale.

The availability of what I suppose I might call 'early medieval warships' in any scale is limited, which is a great pity. Among the few regulars which have managed to crop up over the years is not surprisingly, the Viking Longship. The 1/1200th Navwar version's well known, and there was a long period back in the 80's when my Viking and Saxon ships from that range regularly fought it out in a sort of 'Alfred goes to sea' scenario. More recently, the Irregular 1/300th version, and Russ Jackson's comprehensive and excellent 'Kremlin' 1/300th range of four vessels held centre stage, and remain delightful models, if oriented a little towards inter-Norse warfare round the fjords!

As far as 1/600th scale goes, well, I do have a couple of the relatively expensive AG14 models from the now troubled Triton, but.... The 'sail lowered' longship with the equivalent of a tree trunk along its deck, has never really appealed to me. Now, however, 'Peter Pig' has issued Range 9, 'VIKINGS' in 15mm scale, with a couple of very good naval add-ons. There's Pack 33 and Pack 34, two six inch long vessels with oars in one case and sail in the other, nice looking, but BIG and though ideal for the 15mm enthusiast not for serious naval wargamers intent on a decent scrap afloat. We are superbly catered for by Pack 31 in the range, three- 1/600th Norse Longboats 'for campaigns'. Standard pack price £2.80.

Lovely models and frankly at that price a give away.

The all-metal two part 'kit', is about an inch (roughly 30mm) long overall, with a set sail and mast separate. The ship's sea-based and pretty well 'super-detailed', the photo in on the web-site....www.peterpig.co.uk doesn't do it justice. With mast fitted the model stands just under an inch (around 24mm) high on the table. Plenty of crew fill the decks and round shields line the sides, there's a nice high prow too. The only thing a purist will miss is that this Viking Ship does

not have banks of oars. In this scale it doesn't cause a huge problem, in fact it's possible to add them with a little effort, but I didn't bother- after wargaming with the sails down, rather flat AG 14's for a while, this sturdy, and rugged looking Norse warship fills a crucial gap in my early medieval fleet lists. You can add more fighting men of course, from the Xyston 1/600th pack of warriors. This marvellous addition to a thin offering from manufacturers can be beefed up by using one or two of the AG14's with an awning or a mast and sail added- it will take the 'Pig' mast by the way, and the same just about goes for the small 1/1200th Navwar job, but only *if* you do some serious work on it, and use the Xyston figures. Use this for a small *Snekke* and the others as big longships.

There is of course, some potential for conversion; one is the well known and frequently overlooked West Highland Galley or 'Birlinn' which saw action throughout the medieval era almost up to the time of the last Jacobite rebellion, from Ireland to the Shetlands, down the Irish Sea to the coasts of Wales and Cornwall against all sorts of warships. Not much effort, only trim the figurehead, and for later craft remove the side steering oar- they had rudders. Take a look at Andrew McDonald's 'The Kingdom of the Isles' (Scots Historical Monograph 1997) for some splendid ideas, including the great Epiphany night battle off the coast of Man (More of that later perhaps) The 'Tumbling Dice' 1/600th manned rowing boat model will incidentally, provide a very useful small follower' for the 'Pig' model if used as a 'Birlinn'.

I can see more potential from this hull, maybe with the shields trimmed and basic 'castles' added, a Nef of the 1200's, or with less effort here's the basis of William of Normandy's fleet. Not impossible to find a use against a late Roman fleet of course, or indeed as Carolingians or Franks. One thought I had, was that the deck area would take one of the smaller Xyston 1/600th bolt throwers. It would of course be wonderful if 'Peter Pig' complemented this single 1/600th medieval vessel with an oared companion, or developed the basic hull into another medieval ship, little effort involved there I think.

This is a very useful and remarkably well priced warship for the naval wargamer, and with so many opportunities for table top gaming from the single hull. I thoroughly recommend it.

Rob Morgan.
October 2013.

SIGNAL PAD!

12th 13th October. Military History Weekend, Williamsburg, VA, USA. www.mhwshow.com
13th October. South East London Wargames Show. Crystal Palace National Sports Centre. www.selwg.org
18th 20th October. CHARCON, Charleston, WV, USA. www.charcon.org
26th 27th October. CONQUEST, Christchurch, New Zealand.
27th October. Fiasco, Leeds.
2nd November. Crisis. Antwerp
16th/17th November. Warfare at Reading, Berkshire.

The Shows above are only some of the total out there. If you know of a wargames event let me know and I'll gladly include the details in AGB. If you go to one of these or any other show, how about sending in a few words of a review for All Guns Blazing? We have members in many countries, so you may have information of a show that is not readily available to me.

A date for you to pencil in your diaries - the provisional date for the 2014 Naval Wargames Show at the Explosion museum in Gosport is June 21st and 22nd. Hope to see you there :)

Regards,

Dave Manley

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.navalwargamesociety.org.

Membership secretary: simonjohnstokes@aol.com

NWS Events and Regional Contacts, 2013

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)
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NWS North Hants [Every 3rd Sunday]

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

e-mail: gf.crane@ntlworld.com

Devon and the West Country

Naval Wargames afternoon/evening/all day on a regular basis.

Contact Stuart Barnes Watson to arrange the details.

stuart_barnes_watson@hotmail.com

3 Clovelly Apartments, Oxford Park, Ilfracombe, DEVON, EX34 9JS

Tel: 01271 866637
