



ALL GUNS BLAZING!

NEWSLETTER OF THE NAVAL WARGAMES SOCIETY

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EDITORIAL

Every time I read about HMS DREADNOUGHT, there is always an aside comment about how Dreadnought made every battleship obsolete overnight. To test this out I recently gamed twice, HMS DREADNOUGHT v HANNOVER, once where HANNOVER flees and once when she holds position and attempts to slug it out.

Game 1. Dreadnought sights Hannover in fair weather at medium-long range. She turns to bring a broadside to bear, which could be an error as this gives Hannover the chance to open the range to long and the exchange of fire proves ineffective. It takes 6 game turns for Dreadnought to reduce the range back to medium-long and her reward is to receive the first straddle of the Game and non-penetrating hits from her 11 inch main armament. After some atrocious shooting Dreadnought manages to finally get four consecutive straddles and Hannover suffers boiler room damage which reduces her speed. She gets a salvo away which causes some flooding amidships for Dreadnought but then Hannover suffers a direct hit to the bridge which kills most of the bridge crew including the Captain. The superstructure is damaged and she fails to hit Dreadnought as the range reduces. The range is now medium and Dreadnought scores hits on the stern of Hannover damaging a turret and Hannover floods her magazine to avoid a disastrous explosion.

Game 2. Weather is fine and the ships sight each other at long range. The gunfire of the Hannover is by far superior to that of the Dreadnought but fails to penetrate the armour of the Dreadnought. It is 5 game turns before the 12 inch guns of the Dreadnought score any hits but they are immediately effective causing damage to the boiler and engine room of the Hannover. The Dreadnought as in Game 1 has flooding amidships but an explosion in the Hannover's engine room and spreading fires bring the Game to an end.

Game 2 lasted 2/3 as long as Game 1, indicating that evasion is the wise choice of action for the Hannover. The Games also indicate that HMS DREADNOUGHT would indeed be a formidable opponent for other ships of the day; although that "lucky" bridge hit cannot be counted on to happen regularly.

Somewhere in the World the Sun is over the yardarm.

Norman Bell.

SMS HANNOVER was built in Wilhelmshaven and according to Wikipedia the Ship's Bell is in the Military History Museum of the Bundeswehr in Dresden.

Sea Quiz 47... Answers....

A fairly straightforward set of questions this month I thought. You should have got the lot, no problem. I've never seen Number 3 wargamed by the way, but it could be easily I think.

1. Cochrane, Codrington, Collingwood, Colossus, Comet, Conqueror, Conquest, Contest, Courageous, Cossack, Cordelia, Columbine, but the list's not complete there.

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2. It was Sir Edward Codrington of course, and he was in *HMS Asia*, against the Turks in 1827.
 3. *HMS Bermuda*, the others all Colony class Cruisers.
 4. Warburton-Lee (VC later) at the First Battle of Narvik.
 5. The Royal Canadian Navy.

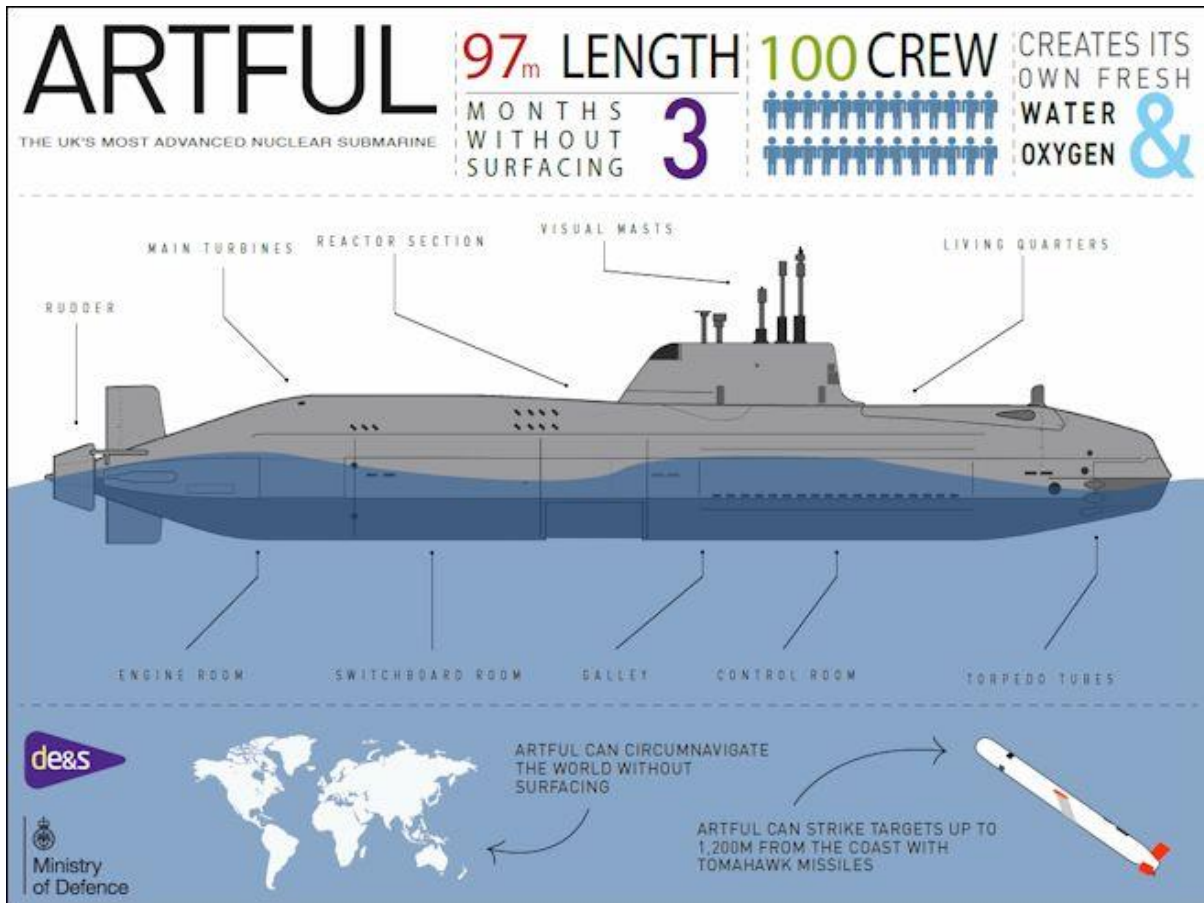
The Fleet Air Arm Quiz... Answers.

The original quiz had some 42 questions in all, and believe me these are the easier ones, in my humble opinion. In question 5, I opted for the Catalina, wrong.

1. It was a glider used for RN research onto flight.
2. RNAS Lossiemouth, Scotland.
3. *HMS Centaur*.
4. *HMS Triumph*.
5. Incredibly the Grumman Avenger.

Nick Jellicoe, NWS Member and Grandson of Admiral Sir John Jellicoe asked the following question. "Would you be OK with me extending an invitation to the group to subscribe to the Jutland blog that I've just started last week in anticipation of the site opening in November? If you want to have a look first, its www.jutland1916.com.

Of course the answer is yes.



The 7,400-tonne Artful left BAE Systems' construction yard at Barrow-in-Furness in Cumbria and sailed to her new home at Her Majesty's Naval Base (HMNB) Clyde. She will provide the Royal Navy with the most technologically advanced submarine Britain has ever sent to sea. HMNB Clyde will become a home for the Royal Navy's submarines and associated support by 2020, creating a submarine centre of specialisation.

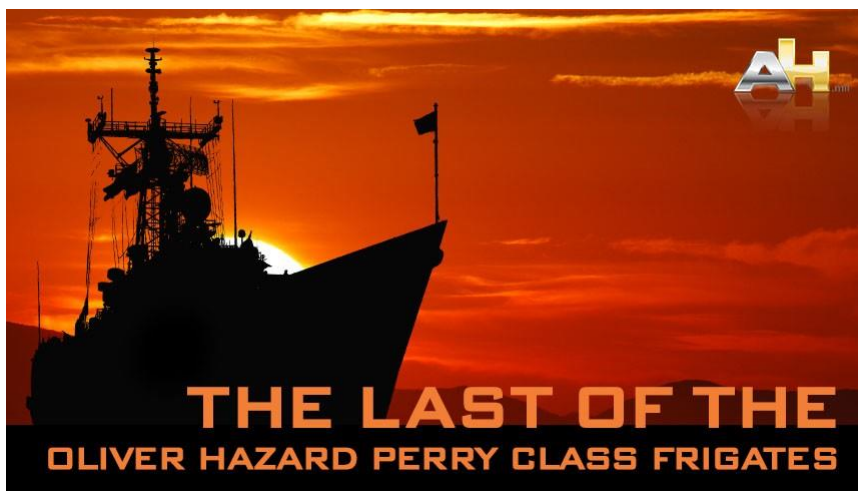
The base is among the largest single-site employers in Scotland, with 6,700 military and civilian personnel, increasing under current UK Government plans to 8,200 by 2022.

Key facts

- Artful's 97m length is greater than the length of 10 London buses.
- When fully stored she will displace 7,400 tonnes of sea water, equivalent to 65 blue whales.
- She will be able to circumnavigate the world without surfacing and her dived endurance is limited only by the amount of food that can be stored and the endurance of the crew.
- Artful is able to manufacture its own oxygen and fresh water from the ocean.
- The Astute class is the first class of Royal Navy submarine not to be fitted with optical periscopes – instead they employ high specification video technology. The images are delivered into the submarine control room via fibre-optic cables.
- Armed with Tomahawk cruise missiles, Artful will be able to strike at targets up to 1,200 miles from the coast with pinpoint accuracy
- Around 110 km of cabling and pipe work is installed on board Artful – enough to stretch from Bristol to Oxford.

- The Sonar 2076 sonar suite fitted on board Artful has the processing power of 2,000 laptop computers. It has the world's largest number of hydrophones, providing the Royal Navy with the "biggest ears" of any sonar system in service today.
- On a 10-week patrol the 100-strong crew of Artful will get through, on average, 18,000 sausages and 4,200 Weetabix for breakfast.

For the first time in almost 38 years, there will be no Oliver Hazard Perry (OHP) Frigate on the fleet rolls of the United States Navy. The USS Simpson (FFG 56) was decommissioned in her homeport of Mayport, Florida, Sept. 29, and represented the last frigate in the Navy's inventory.



Sailors have traditionally been a superstitious lot, and the lead ship in the class, the USS Oliver Hazard Perry (FFG 7), provided literally an auspicious launch. At her launch ceremony on 25 September 1976, the crowd watched anxiously as the ship failed to roll down the slip-way when the ceremony called for it. As if scripted, movie star actor John Wayne (the "Duke") jogged up to the ceremonial platform from his seat in the gallery and gave the bow of the frigate a shove with one hand, and famously appeared to have 'pushed' the 445-foot, 4,100-ton warship down the ramp.

A Raider in the Franco-Prussian War.

This short account appeared in 'The Foreign Correspondent' newsletter of the Continental Wars Society (My thanks to the Editor for permission to use it), a publication more frequently reporting wars ashore. The Franco-Prussian War in 1870 saw little action at sea, the French fleet was vastly superior in every respect to the German's handful of smallish ironclads, gunboats and foreign purchases. The 'breakout' of *SMS Augusta* described here, could make for a decent short wargame campaign of course. She was after all one of the Confederate builds intended to get through the blockade of the Southern ports, sold originally to Japan and then along with her sister, which became *SMS Victoria* to the Germans.

Not a particularly successful cruise even for a German-raider, but one with some potential. The plight of France after Sedan was desperate, and the 'break-out' could, arguably, have been more substantial; the two former Confederate warships and the *SMS Prinz Adalbert* could have achieved something more significant in European waters. The sailing of *Augusta* alone has the feel almost of a one-way mission, a statement of naval potential rather than of capability. A far better 'raid' or cruise might have been achieved by ships of the *Arcona* class, which if accompanied by the larger *SMS Kronprinz* would have created a squadron of effectiveness, to counter a larger force the French would have to put to sea at strength. Caught up with by the French, in their home waters, the result would be inevitable for the Germans. Or would it?

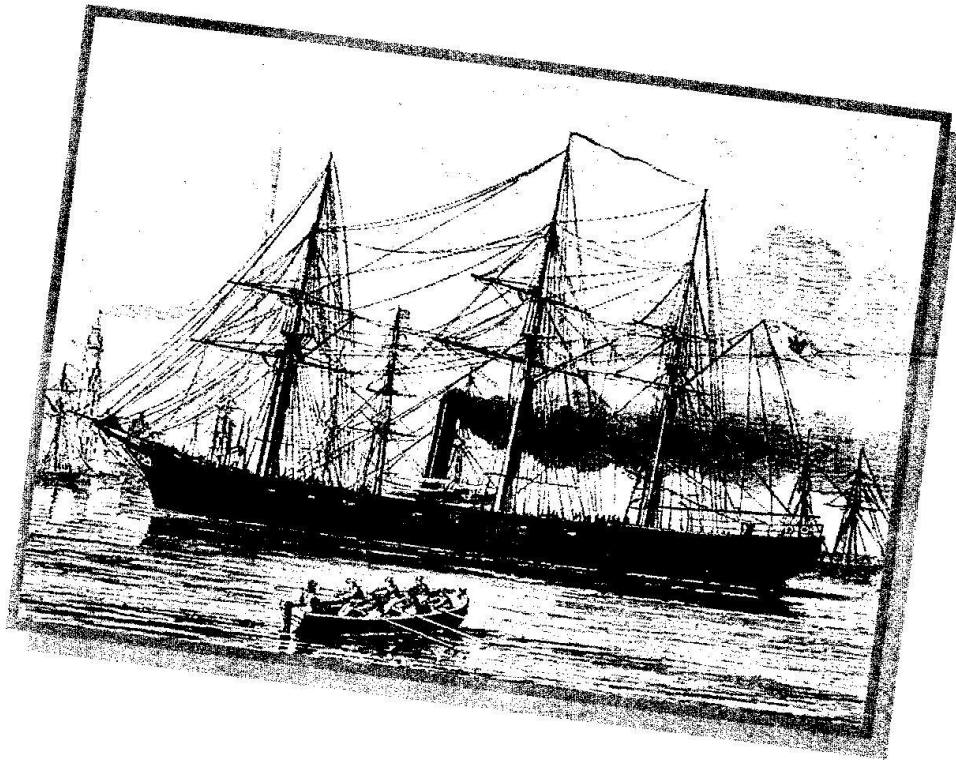
I've never encountered a war game based on the Franco-Prussian War at sea, but has something to offer using 'Tumbling Dice' models in 1/2400th. Coal must for the German ship have been a problem from the outset. British sources would probably have been denied, so Spain almost the only source of supply. Worth a little more thought possibly?

Rob Morgan.

THE VOYAGE OF THE SMS AUGUSTA, 1870

During the American Civil War the Confederate government tried several methods of breaking the blockade of its lengthy coastline. Ships were ordered from European yards, one of which, the corvette CSS Mississippi was constructed in the French shipyard of Arman Frères at Bordeaux. The government of Napoleon III seized the vessel and sold it on to Prussia. It was renamed the SMS Augusta, equipped with a two cylinder steam engine of 1300 horse power and with three masts for auxiliary sails. It was capable of 12 knots and was armed with eight 24 pounder and six 12 pounder guns in batteries.

Augusta, under its commander Johannes Weickmann, slipped out of port into the North Sea, sailed round the northern tip of Scotland and down to the Atlantic coast of France. By the end of the year Weickmann was off the mouth of the river Gironde, not far from the temporary French capital of Bordeaux. He came across two French merchant ships which he took as prizes. Not unnaturally this threw the French government into a panic and they ordered frigates of the still powerful French Navy to hunt the raider down. Weickmann steamed north towards the large harbour of Rochfort and captured a small French communications ship and even took temporary



In 1870 the French navy, much superior in number to the (North German) Prussian navy, blockaded the German ports and captured over 200 German commercial ships on the high seas, effectively closing down maritime trade. After Sedan, many French ships returned to Cherbourg and had their guns and crews removed to bolster the defenses of Paris.

The German naval base at Wilhelmshaven, was no longer closely watched and the Prussian government gave the go-ahead to take offensive action. In November the

occupation of the coastal defense work Fort Boyard in the bay (the garrison had already been withdrawn before the Prussian ship arrived).

The Augusta was running low on coal so Weickmann steamed across the Bay of Biscay to the Spanish port of Vigo. The French frigates came across the Augusta and Weickmann prudently stayed in the port with the French keeping a close blockade until the end of the war.

A German Sea-plane Carrier.

It would be a rare event to find a WWII war game involving a German convoy, and there are rather few German merchantmen or auxiliaries around, excluding commerce raiders and *Altmark* of course. Mick Yarrow's 1/3000th range has released a model of *Schwabenland* (No.3160) priced at 80p currently; the Kriegsmarine Sea Plane Carrier, built in the 1920's and used as a mail vessel before the war. She was armed with 6 or 7-20mm a/a guns and carried a Dornier sea plane, with a catapult and retrieving crane aft. The auxiliary was torpedoed by a Royal Navy submarine off Norway in 1944, and took no further part in the war.

The model's useful of course, it gives an add-on to several game scenarios, but it needs a little work. The crane aft should be filed flat and replaced with a small torpedo derrick or boat crane from either a 1/700th or 1/1200th kit, and the raised small boat aft on the port side filed flat too. On this position a 1mm wide, 12mm long strip of very thin plasticard should be cemented as the catapult for the Dornier. The only other work required is to file flat the forward hatch which has a boat on it, and add a 12mm high mast aft of the bridge structure. It makes an attractive model, a real one-off.

Rob Morgan.



Terrain Map Can anyone recommend a reasonably priced, sea-blue terrain map, overprinted with a 1" or 2" hex overlay please? Reply to Andy Field, andy1805@echointernet.net

JUTLAND 100

The Naval Wargames Society is hoping to be involved with a wargame re-creation of the Battle of Jutland on the 100th anniversary of the battle on 31st May 2016. It will be taking place at the National Royal Navy Museum in Portsmouth.

Whilst details will need to be determined, we need the following:

1. **Players.** At least 10 players (one each for Jellicoe, Evan-Thomas, Beatty, Scheer and Hipper etc) and at least 3 referees.
2. **Other Volunteers.** We will need to engage the public and tell them what is going on, what we are doing and how it relates to the actual battle. As above, more hands the better.
3. **Ships.** The museum has indicated a preference to make the game as public as possible and, weather permitting, hold the battle outside on the parade area in front of HMS VICTORY.
4. **Rules.** General Quarters 2 proposed with some limited modifications to try and capture the command and control issues that the admirals had to contend with.
5. **Timescale.** Before finally committing to our involvement the Museum will need a definite plan from us before Christmas. If you are interested in helping in some way, please contact Stuart Machin at stuart.machin@hotmail.co.uk ideally as soon as possible but no later than 7 December.

"Fighting on the High Seas"....

I'm an ardent Medievalist at heart, and so the appearance of a naval themed issue of *'Medieval Warfare', Volume V, issue 5*, in early October, persuaded me to part with £5.99 for this full colour sixty page magazine. I wasn't disappointed, though of course this is far from being a chronological series of articles, and could best be regarded as a 'taster' suitable for those who don't know a lot about war at sea in the Middle Ages, and for some who know more about the world of cogs and galleys, there are a couple of very decent suggestions which might lead to a wargame. There are eight naval articles in all, with a couple of regular non-themed features, one of which is on early handguns, along with the usual reviews and opinion pages. The brief historical introduction, rightly tying in naval war and piracy, is followed

by an article on the Vikings, nothing new there, but the second article on the 'Victual Brothers' wars at sea in the Baltic against the Hanse in the late 1300's is almost certainly one of the most complex, interesting and wargamable periods in the past millennium. I hadn't expected to find a sound and readable account of Irish sea power in the 11th and 12th centuries, but it's there, and Paul Walsh's contribution provides a superb opportunity for war at sea between the Scots Isles and Cornwall, with oared warships.

The next article by William Welsh is on Roger of Lauria, probably the best Captain at sea of the medieval period, and this is a core article indeed! The references provide a splendid opportunity for the wargamer to get to grips with a very different form of warfare, I'm sure I've heard Roger described as the Nelson of his time. I'm not sure that the next piece on the Viking siege of Paris in the ninth century, is entirely a naval article, well written, but was it truly war at sea? No. The next set of notes on the castles of medieval ships is short, but of value if you're a newcomer to this period, and the last article is on the conflicts between Byzantium and the Muslims a thousand years ago, the naval wars around Crete are new to me, but Dromons are such superb naval vessels! I thoroughly enjoyed Lucas McMahon's lengthy piece. One or two criticisms are possible of the magazine's text, but it's unusual for any historical journal to get its feet wet in this kind of issue, and that has to be welcomed.

This issue of *'Medieval Warfare'* is on the shelves at W. H. Smith's now.

Rob Morgan.

SIGNAL PAD!

Two new Members this month. Welcome to Angus Konstam and George Lockhart.

"Salute 2016" is already being organised. The NWS would like to run a participation game if we can get in.

Will you be buying any Naval Wargame item for Christmas? Or hanging on for the January sales? Either way if you find any bargains use AGB to let others know.

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.

Membership secretary: simonjohnstokes@aol.com

NWS Events and Regional Contacts, 2014

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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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