



# All Guns Blazing!

## Newsletter of the Naval Wargames Society

### No. 286 – AUGUST 2018

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#### EDITORIAL

A few articles have appeared recently in the UK press saying that the Royal Navy is dangerously below strength in Ships and there are reliability problems also. The UK's allies are also concerned as this article, brought to my attention by Andy Field, proves.

<https://news.usni.org/2018/06/25/failure-provide-u-k-royal-navy-escorts-new-carriers-potentially-dangerous-warn-lawmakers>

Obviously money is a contributory factor, but it is a well-known axiom that if you want peace you prepare for war.

Welcome to Nathan, Joanne, Andrew and David; just four new members this month.

Norman Bell



An F/A-18F Super Hornet assigned to the "Fighting Checkmates" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 211 launches from the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) during exercise Baltic Operations (BALTOPS) 2018. BALTOPS is the premier annual maritime-focused exercise in the Baltic Region and one of the largest exercises in Northern Europe that is designed to enhancing flexibility and interoperability among allied and partner nations. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Rebekah A. Watkins (Released) 180605-N-UJ486-0376

#### French Coastal Defence in WWI.

I often feel that we, as naval wargamers neglect the role of what's ashore in terms of ordnance and other defences; but not as much as we neglect the mass of very useful and pertinent material produced for the support of historians and ultimately wargamers in other parts of Europe. Take this example....

*'Les Canons de la Victoire 1914-1918' Edited by General Guy Francois. Published 'Histoire & Collections' - Paris 2010. Price 16€uros. Volume 5, part 3. 'L'Artillerie de Cote et l'Artillerie de Tranchee.'*

Until a query about pneumatic weapons in the Great War cropped up, I had no idea that this book existed. It's the first 33 pages of an 'Osprey' sized volume which deal

purely with coastal defence guns. Fascinating reading. The text which is accompanied by scores of photographs in black and white, and several good colour plates, deals with almost thirty weapons, some of them quite elderly, dating to 1870, which were used to defend the coasts of Metropolitan France and her colonies up to and beyond 1918.

Each gun is provided with a full table of technical information, and details of service and history. They range from the little 47mm Hotchkiss of 1885, to the heavy 32cm cannon and mortars of the 1890's. There's sufficient information to provide back up for say, a Franco-Prussian War raid, or an Anglo-French encounter. There are photos of coastal defence guns in service in colonies such as French Indo-China and North Africa, and some remarkable oddities. Such as the Hotchkiss 37mm revolvers used to defend the lighthouse at Bizerte, and the huge 240mm turrets built in 1893-1896. As well as guns removed from heavy naval units for the purpose of defending ports. The French text is straightforward, and the second part of the book, equally interesting and detailed, deals with WWI in the trenches.

Rob Morgan.

<http://www.wargamevault.com/browse/pub/6867/Long-Face-Games>

“Long Face Games” have several naval war-games at reasonable prices available on “Wargame Vault”. Games cover Ancients, medieval, ironclad ACW, Great War/Jutland and up-to current times. The website is well worth a look.



“Where There Is Discord” is an all-embracing solitaire board game of the Falklands War of 1982. The Task Force approaches and air raids, submarine and surface action become more likely with each passing day. Can the Royal Navy perform many tasks

with limited resources? Will world or UK domestic opinion or the loss of an aircraft carrier bring the conflict to a premature end? Can the limited number of Harrier aircraft interdict the supply Hercules transports from the mainland to the Islands, while providing CAP for the Fleet? Will the landings face stiff opposition and be repulsed? The game puts you in the position of the UK Government and then in turn as Task Force Commander, on the bridge of a picket and in the cockpit of a Harrier. Then just when you think that things cannot get worse, Exocet armed Super Etendard aircraft attack and the code word "Handbrake" is flashed around the Fleet followed by, "BRACE FOR IMPACT!"

The board and game pieces are of a high quality – I am tempted to use the word, "sumptuous", if only all games were made to this standard instead of the all too frequent paper map which tears along the fold lines all too quickly. The full conflict will take several hours to replay. I have always played for a few hours in the afternoon and left the board out overnight and continued the following day. Unfortunately free weekends are few and far between. And with the above average weather in the UK it is preferable to be out and about rather than indoors.

Norman Bell

Lockheed Martin's F-35 aircraft has reached a new milestone.

The stealth fighter jet built at Lockheed Martin's Fort Worth campus has been flown for the first time in combat.

Israeli Air Force Commander Maj. Gen. Amikam Norkin said that the planes were used in two recent missions. Israel has ordered 50 F-35s. The country's version of the aircraft is known as "Adir," which is Hebrew for "mighty." It was unclear whether the F-35 actually fired on any targets, or perhaps provided more of a support role in the missions.

Both "Naval Command" by Rory Crabb and "Shipwreck" from Vandering Publications have Falkland Island Annexes. Rory has made his Falklands 1982 Campaign available free of charge whereas there is a small fee for each of the Shipwreck scenarios, peanuts if you already have the base Rules. There are at least 12 Shipwreck scenarios and there could be 13 by the time you read this. Both sets look good to me and the prices are reasonable so if you already have the Naval Command Rules or the Shipwreck Base Rules you could splash out on the other collection without breaking the bank. Naval Command and Shipwreck are available from "Wargame Vault" and being PDF downloads there isn't expensive postal charges to add. Both Sets enable actual events to be re-played, or "what ifs" and design your own situations. In my opinion, the Naval Command pages are visually more impressive but it is a question of you pay your money and you make your choice. <https://rorycrabb.files.wordpress.com/2016/07/falklands.pdf>

### SEA QUIZ No. 73.

This set of questions seems dated now, but is a typical 1954 selection!

1. Which type of vessel was ordered to be painted white from 1919 on?
2. What's 'Iolanthe' to the Fleet?
3. What remarkable event took place in Malaya earlier this year? (Its 1954 remember).
4. What ceased to exist on 7<sup>th</sup> April 1919?
5. What did HMS Jamaica take part in, in July 1950?

Good luck. See the answers below.

Rob Morgan.

ATLANTIC OCEAN (July 2018) An MH-60S Sea Hawk helicopter assigned to the "Dragon Slayers" of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 11 conducts a vertical replenishment between the fast combat support ship USNS Arctic (T-AOE-8) and the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75). Harry S. Truman is currently deployed as part of an ongoing rotation of U.S. forces supporting maritime security operations in international waters around the globe. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Gitte Schirmacher/Released)



Commented [NB1]:

[http://minden\\_games.homestead.com/PanzerDigest13.html](http://minden_games.homestead.com/PanzerDigest13.html) Check out the Minden Games website, especially their Naval Games which have easy, intermediate and more complex rule sets. Prices are I suggest reasonable and some offerings are PDF downloads.

**CALLS of 'up spirits' echoed out across the deck of an historic warship as old salts and maritime lovers united to mark a beloved Royal Navy tradition.** Dozens of people gathered on HMS Victory to slurp down a shot of rum to mark the 48<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Black Tot Day.

It was the latest toast to be staged in Portsmouth to commemorate the last official rum ration issued to sailors way back on July 31, 1970 – the poignant end of a 300-year tradition.

SEA QUIZ 73, Answers.

Pure nostalgia this one.

1. It was survey ships of course.
2. This is the music of a Flag Officers Salute.
3. The first naval helicopter airlift of troops by RN Sikorsky's!
4. It was the Grand Fleet, of which as several readers pointed out, Beatty had been Commander, but not for long!
5. HMS Jamaica took part in an encounter with 3 North Korean torpedo boats, the only surface engagement of the Korean War. Might make a decent short wargame this one.

A UK MOD statement was recently released:

“There have been no changes in our plans to procure a first batch of five new Type 31e frigates to grow our Royal Navy. We still want the first ship delivered by 2023 and are confident that industry will meet the challenge of providing them for the price tag we've set”.

Australia [will acquire](#) nine high-end anti-submarine warfare frigates from the end of the next decade under a deal with BAE Systems worth AU\$35 billion (U.S. \$26 billion). The announcement was made at the ASC shipyard in Osborne, South Australia, by Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, Minister for Defence Marise Payne and Minister for Defence Industry Christopher Pyne. A version of BAE Systems' City-class Type 26 ASW frigate, now under construction for the British Royal Navy, will be acquired under Australia's SEA 5000 Phase 1 project, also known as the Future Frigate Project. Referred to as the Global Combat Ship–Australia, or GCS-A, during the competition, the design will be known as the Hunter-class in Royal Australian Navy service and will replace the Navy's existing Anzac-class frigates. Will New Zealand go down the same procurement route?

14<sup>th</sup> August 1941 saw the first formal meeting of Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt on board USS AUGUSTA, Placentia Bay, Newfoundland.



1/1250 IJN Yamato  
(Neptun) by Kostas  
Katseas; a more skilled  
model maker than me,  
(which isn't hard).



Grandpa's Cabinets  
<http://www.grandpascabinets.com/custom-display-kits/georgedunn320x238/>  
They look great but presumably they are not cheap. If you have a high-class model to show and protect, then this may be the answer.

'The Normans and War at Sea'..... David Nicolle's Osprey 'Elite 9' A thought.

David Nicolle's *'The Normans'* was published over thirty years ago ( 1987, my copy cost £5.50 then) and with the splendid plates of the late Angus McBride has stood the test of time as a decent introduction to a powerful military structure, rather than a warrior nation or martial race. The Norman 'empire' after all overpowered much of Northern France, England chunks of Scotland, of Ireland and Wales, as well as Sicily, a hefty chunk of Southern Italy, Parts of Greece and the County of Antioch. A fair sized group of linked states.

Nicolle considers the origins of the Normans, their arms and martial equipment, their tactics in warfare, and their military efforts and encounters in their world. This is a broad sweep of a book, it really is, and the plates of the late Angus McBride are magnificent ( when ever otherwise?) and bring the book to life for the wargamer. Mention of Angus' art work brings me to the reason for this short note. It's several years since I wrote a note in these pages on William the Bastard's fleet *en route* for England in 1066, and the Normans were like their distant Norse forbears, seafaring people, the composition of the Norman lands required it. So, I am taken by Plate L of Angus McBride's in the book. It deals with Norman ships.

Central to this fine plate is a C13th Mediterranean transport vessel, used as auxiliaries and troopships everywhere, two-masted, lateen rigged, big and looming. The plate 'profiles' four other ships of the type, in 2,3, and 4 deck versions, as well as the ubiquitous *Salandrium* horse transport. Along with these appears an illustration of William's flagship for the England voyage, and two others, a C13th castled ship, almost a *Nef*, and a slim lateen rigged galley which the text describes as a development of the Byzantine *Dromon*.

The plate and the exquisite art work took me back to the same thoughts I had when I bought the volume. In the world of medieval wargaming, warriors, knights and soldiery generally are all well provided and in a decent number of scales. Not so warships! Of the eight vessels in Angus' drawings, only one can be found, requiring minimal conversion, that's in 1/600<sup>th</sup> scale in 'Peter Pig's' Viking range, his superb sailing Viking Longship.

Yes, Cogs can be found in several scales, little difficulty there, galleys too, or ones which can be converted to the period with some effort. Ral Partha, Navwar, Triton too. In the smaller scales, 1/2400<sup>th</sup> and 1/3000<sup>th</sup> conversions are easier, but small is the right word. 'Tumbling Dice' for me in this scale!

In 1/1200<sup>th</sup> you've got more choice, for the Early Medieval period, the Navwar Viking longships, the attractive *Dromons*, a decent Saxon ship too. One or two of the Arab ships in Rod Langton's range will slip back a century or two to join them with effort! It's 1/600<sup>th</sup> scale that could do with the boost of a handful of 'mid-medieval' period ships to my mind. There's little available....yes, Triton make a Norse Longboat, and a Dhow. A castled warship or *Nef*, a decent galley too, a horse transport, and a big round-ship transport and auxiliary would fill that gap of around two-hundred and fifty years of medieval war at sea.

An immensely colourful era, with scores of battles and encounters, the four vast wars between Genoa and Venice, the brilliant campaigns and victories of Roger of Lauria in the War of the Sicilian Vespers, the naval adventures (that seems the best term to use) of the Crusades. Certainly the Genoese wars and the skilful actions, he won six vast battles and lost none, of Roger of Lauria, deserve to be gamed, and to be created in model form.

Just a thought about the Norman period at sea.

Rob Morgan.

### **Paper Napoleonic Fleets**

'When I were nowt but a nipper....'

Well, ok, I was between 15 and 18 at the time, and just starting to take wargaming seriously.

Anyway, several of my school friends were really keen on Napoleonic wargaming. (everyone seemed to be at that time) and spent their time buying and painting metal, 25mm figures, refighting Waterloo and hanging around the local wargaming shop.

Me, I wasn't much good at the required, fiddly painting. (Still aren't). Plus, I was more interested in warships generally and my reading was predominantly naval history (It still is) plus, Hornblower, Bolitho, Ramage and Fox. (I've since added Drinkwater, Jack Aubrey, Matthew Quinton and others to the list).

So, instead, armed with felt pens and card, I set too and drew out, and coloured, my own fleets of Napoleonic ships. It was great. Black and white chequer-board hulls, and appropriate ensigns I could have any ship I wanted, they were cheap, colourful and easy to make. Within a short time my fleets of Spanish, Dutch, French, and British ships were doing battle, using an amalgam of rules from Donald



Featherstone, Phil Dunn and Arthur Taylor<sup>1</sup>. I refought all of the major battles that I could read up about, and devised several scenarios of my own. Soon Portuguese, Danish, Russian, Swedish and American ships joined my fleets and, if memory serves me correctly, even a few, lateen rigged, Barbary pirates.

I had a great time. Then I went to college. (I had a great time there, too, but that's another story). Fleets were packed away and eventually I think they were thrown out, as I had a long lay-off from wargaming.

Anyway, I've now made a discovery that has made me realise that I should have stuck at it, marketed these ships, and, of course, made millions! Just recently, whilst on holiday, I came across two, separate sources of very similar, but, of course, much nicer looking, ways of acquiring paper, 'flat' model ships, printed on paper or card.

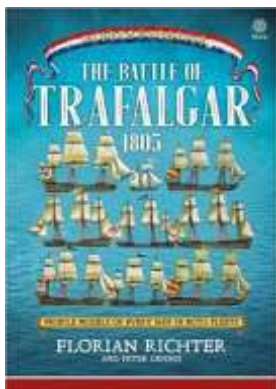
One, 'Your Fleet' is obtainable from The Wargame Vault ([wargamevault.com](http://wargamevault.com)) for about £10 [\$15] this gets you a download that allows you to print off Napoleonic ships, in different scales, onto card or paper. You can print your fleets with either black and buff hulls, or black and white. Or both, of course. You decide with a simple click of a button, print, mount up and you're away.

Further options allow you to print RN ships flying the Red, White and Blue ensigns, Royalist, Republican and Imperial French, Spanish before and after 1785, Portuguese and Dutch, both before 1795 and Batavian Republic. You also have the option of printing off ships with no ensigns, so you can add your own and expand into the Baltic, Ottoman Turk and US navies if you wish. I don't think that's bad value at all.



<sup>1</sup> (All available from John Curry's 'History of Wargaming' Project. Arthur Taylor's rules were in the Shire book 'Rules for Wargaming' and you could also get hold of a Signal Log and Scoring Pad. I found these recently on EBay and with the wonders of scanning; I'll never be short of them again.)

The other offering is very similar, but very focused. The publishers Helion have branched out from just military history books to producing paper flat soldiers for various campaigns and one naval battle, Trafalgar. £11.66 will get you a copy of 'The Battle of Trafalgar 1805: Every ship in both fleets in profile' by Florian Richter and Peter Dennis (That's the price on the Helion website. Amazon is only 30p cheaper. ) Peter Dennis is the man behind a lot of the other Helion products.) You also get a few East Indiamen, chase mares, dismasted ships and different flags for each ship. There's also a free to download set of rules by Andy Callan, if you want them and if you contact Andy, he'll email you some more complex rules. But there are loads of rules for Age of Sail around; it's just a matter of choosing your favourite.



To get these ships you just cut them out from the book (or scan them, if you prefer.) and mount them, following the instructions. I've noticed on the Helion web site that some people buy two copies of the books, one to keep and one to dismember. This could be an option as well.

Richter and Dennis encourage you to demonstrate your skills with a sharp craft knife and trim around the models. Of course, you don't need to do this if you don't want to.

I've bought both. Out of pure nostalgia, I suppose, but also as an alternative to playing 'Wooden Ships and Iron Men', 'Frigate' or 'Flying Colours'. As soon as I'm back from travelling abroad I'm going to print off both sets and mount them up, Within a short time I'm hoping to recreate the fleets I had some 46 years ago (so long?) and refight some Napoleonic sea battles.

Andy Field

### Creatures of War.

An article with this title appeared in 'New Scientist' at the end of June. Worth reading by any modern naval wargamer. It deals with the US Navy's use of bottlenose dolphins in warfare, and cites the role that these mammals played in protecting US warships from Vietcong sappers and limpet mine attacks during the latter stages of the Vietnam War. The author Arran Froom provides a number of instances in which dolphins achieved success. He also gives some brilliant 'high performance data' if that's the right word, for these remarkable creatures. Two quotes are interesting..... '*the US Navy's marine mammal programme continues to this day...*', and '*In 2012, it was announced that the mine-hunting arm of the programme would be wound down in favour of a drone system.*'

This provides an unusual opportunity for wargaming with US Navy units between 1968 and 2012, or now! There may well be other navies across the world who also use Dolphins or porpoises in a military role, but who, unlike the USN aren't subject to the opposition of environmental and other NGO's.

In 15mm 'Peter Pig' make a series of swimming 'shark fins' in their 'Pirate' range, only needing a slight trim to the curved rear edge to make a dolphin. In 1/1200<sup>th</sup> you wouldn't even need a fin!

Rob Morgan.

### **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](http://www.navalwargamessociety.org).

Membership secretary: [simonjohnstokes@aol.com](mailto:simonjohnstokes@aol.com)

### **NWS Events and Regional Contacts, 2018**

#### **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](mailto: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)

### **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](mailto:stuart_barnes_watson@hotmail.com)

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

Tel: 01271 866637

### **Uruguay, SCOW: Southern Cone Orientales Wargamers** • Games erupt,

inquire to set one off: Bill Owen US telephone is [217-619-0202](tel:217-619-0202),

Uruguay 099 834 544 [WmOwen@aol.com](mailto:WmOwen@aol.com) • If Spanish speaking, email & I will get

someone who speaks it better. • Soca, Canelones or in Montevideo we can arrange a "Graf Spee 3 Gun Salvo": see her 5.9" gun, anchor & rangefinder salvaged from the ship resting in the harbor, a Real English Tour conducted by British expat staff who were associated with the British Ambassador who won the post-battle diplomacy and subterfuge plus, of course, a GQ3 refight of the battle (fees for features like museum & tour). • Most of the Salvo can even be done during a cruise ship stop in MVD from a Round Cape Horn itinerary between Santiago<->Buenos Aires.

• [wargamecampaign.wordpress.com](http://wargamecampaign.wordpress.com)

THE NAVAL WARGAMES SOCIETY <http://www.navalwargamessociety.org>

(Victorian Division "Cerberus") Email: [nws.victoria.au@gmail.com](mailto:nws.victoria.au@gmail.com) Membership by \$7/year e-Subscription to NWS BATTLEFLEET magazine.