THE GRUMBLER

The Official Newsletter of G.N.H.W.S – May June 2007

Vol 7 Part 3

To quote Field Marshall Blucher: **"Vorwarts".**

Welcome to the May/June Edition of the Grumbler – the official bimonthly newsletter of the Group North Historical Wargames Society.

March & April were busy months for the Society. In this edition, we have reports on the activities, and a continuing article on Naval Wargaming. Rimmer's War Diaries covers a clash from the DBABB Berserker competition. We also have our regular items.

Looking over the past editions I see I should introduce a 'spot the mistake' segment for readers to point out to me those annoying little errors that sneak through the editorial process.

Rowland
Editor

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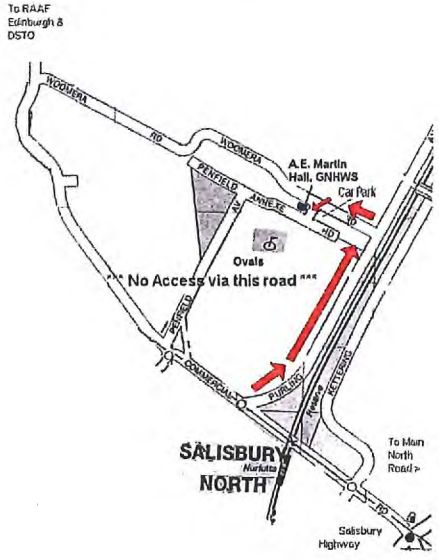
WHO ARE WE? (for visitors)

The Group North Historical Wargames Society first aim is to provide a convivial atmosphere to **play wargames** for those interested in figure, board and computer based wargaming of all periods and genre. We are also interested in research, competition, exchange of information, promulgation of rules, systems, umpiring, preservation of historical military structures and relics, and societies and individuals similarly engaged.

WHERE ARE WE? (for visitors)

The club rooms are located at the A.E. Martin Hall (Building 36), Penfield Ave Edinburgh UBD Ref: 61 E9. Access is by road and rail (Nurlutta Station - five to 10 minute walk). The nearest bus stops are over 1km away (twice as far as the station).

Access from the South along Penfield Ave is blocked. So access is from the North, off Woomera Rd. Drive down Purling Avenue and take the first left, (Woomera Road). Penfield Ave is the only access to the compound on the left (South). The Society's clubroom is right next to the entrance. (If coming from the North it is down West Ave then left on Woomera Rd)



Diary

Group North Activities

To 30 June - **Beserker 07** – Open to anyone DBABB competition. (See detail below).

19-20 May – **De Bellis Adeladium** – (DBM) Organiser Martin Foreman. See below for details.

17 June - **Napoleonic Battles** – Organiser Marcus Tregenza. Something suitable for the date – from the Ligny-Quatre Bras-Waterloo campaign. Watch this space.

June - (late) **AGM**

June – (late) **Annual Tattoo** Organiser TBA

7 July - **Northern Heresy 40K** – Organiser Owen Barstch. Details TBA

Mid August – December **Companion 07 (DBM)** – Organiser Ross Dawe. Details TBA, introductory notice see below.

28 October **Open Day** Organiser TBA

Other Organisations[1]

9-10 June	**Terracon IX – 40K** – WAU – Wodin or Straylight
9-11 June	**Victorian FoW Championships** - League of Ancients (Melbourne)
30 June	**Southern Impact Fantasy** – mike@bettanet.com.au
July	**De Bellis Melbournian** -
12 & 19 Aug	**DBM Doubles Tournament** - League of Ancients (Melbourne)
25-26 Aug	**Games Workshop** – Adrian (GW Marion)
September	**Lionheart (DBM)** – The Northern Suburbs Games Assn (Melbourne)

FOR SALE
Warhammer Army – Lizardmen 4000 pts
$350 ono
Peter McElroy @ Elizabeth [infinity2@iinet.net.au]

[1] I have included all South Australian competitions I can find and Victorian (because it is only eight hours by car). Australian Championships located further afield will also be included, if I know about them. - Ed

Grumbler – 12 Months in Review

Well, with the completion of this issue's period, it will be 12 months since my taking over the role as Editor of the Grumbler and it is time to sit back and have a look at the year in review. I would like to thank all those who have contributed articles and those competition organizers and activity attendees who have put up with my nagging to get them to write up what happened or what they did. Over the six issues we seemed to have achieved around 19 pages per issue.

At the beginning of my tenure as Editor I set my primary goal as to meet the bi-monthly publication schedule. This has been achieved but only with the support of those who have contributed articles and reports. The Section on Rimmer's War Diaries has seen a steady flow of contributions from our DBM'ers, Fantasy, Sci-Fi and LOTs players. Our more modern gamers seem rather reticent to contribute and I hope to redress this in the next twelve months. The letters to the Editor does not seem to have been successful – not one letter! Perhaps if people wanted to play spot the 'Editorial Mistake' there might be some. On the bright side we have had articles from James Dekort, Ross Dawe, and me covering technicalities of weapon aiming, the French Terror, ancient warfare and naval warfare. During the next twelve months I hope to see us go to double contributions in the War Diaries and Articles sections to cater for a growing interest. Notices of events seem to require some chasing up – whether this is because wargamers are a secretive lot or just don't like to plan things too far ahead I don't know.[1] Anyway, for anyone planning an event, it pays to advertise, and your own newsletter is a good place to start ;-).

Considering planning ahead and so on, in preparing this edition I have found that the schedule of issue for the Grumbler does not fit Group North's annual cycle. So that we can get any topics into the Grumbler relevant to our AGM each June there, really needs to be an issue of the Grumbler at the beginning of June. While it is too late for this year, I plan to do a July issue, so that subsequent bi-monthly issue will come out at the beginning of the even numbered months.

Over the last twelve months the structure of the Newsletter has evolved. Page 2 is reserved for the table of contents, a description of what we are about and a map of where we are for casual readers of the Newsletter. Page 3 is reserved for the Diary of Activities in the next two to four months. Page 4, except for the occasional Editorial such as this or letters from the President or the like, starts the announcements/notices section which is followed by activity reports, Rimmer's War Diaries and then the Articles Section. Except that I might receive any letters to the Editor, this structure seems reasonably good, so it looks like it will remain stable for a while.

So, once again my thanks to all contributors and look forward to seeing many more.

Rowland
Editor

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[1] Or is it because if I get a diary event I then ask the people involved for some sort of a brief description of what happened? - Ed

Notices/Announcements:

Gaming Nights:

A reminder to everybody gaming nights are:

- every Weds and Fri evenings and
- every 2nd, 4th and 5th Sunday afternoon.

Weds and Fri the hours are: Doors officially open at 7:00 pm and close at 11:00 pm.

- On Weds people often start arriving from 6:30 pm and a key holder might be there to open up. If you plan to be early please speak to a committee member (beforehand) to get access.
- Closing time is 11:00 pm. Please schedule your game to finish with enough packing up time to be out of the doors by 11:00 pm.

Sundays (2nd, 4th and 5th): Noon to 6pm. Attendance fluctuates at the moment so if you plan to come along it may pay to ensure someone has a key to get in. Otherwise email the Society (attention Mike Allen) on : mailto:groupnor@groupnorth.asn.au , check the Society's website at www.groupnorth.asn.au

Next Committee Meeting

A reminder to the Committee: the next committee meeting is scheduled for 7/05/07

AGM June

The AGM is coming up and the date is to be decided at the next Committee meeting (7 May). However, it is due at the end of June so be prepared for one within two Weds of that. Any items that members wish to be placed in accordance with Sub-Clause 11.13 of the Constitution, being:

11.13 Any member who has business to put before the meeting shall unless otherwise directed by this constitution or its by-laws, petition the secretary to include that business in the agenda of the meeting, and this shall be done. Otherwise, it shall stand aside until the president shall call for the presentation of 'other business', which is not on the agenda.

The Secretary plans to put out the agenda by Wednesday 6th June and so the cutoff date for agenda items is 30 May 2007. Please note that by placing an item on the agenda, everyone is able to consider that issue beforehand. Consequently the AGM is likely to provide a more informed decision on the issue raised (and not go on for as long).

Annual Tattoo

It is time to start planning for the Tattoo which is normally held on the night of the AGM. Details on the categories and prizes are will be advised.

Subscriptions Due 1 July

A reminder to everyone that subscriptions fall due on 1 July as required by the constitution. Unless paid up, as of then we all automatically become non-financial. Your

attention is drawn to sub-clause 4.5 with regard the grace period for payment and the effect of non-payment within the grace period.

Competitions
As Editor I try to keep up to date as to what is being planned in the Club, however unless I am told I do not know. So if your are planning a competition please let me know either by emailing me on mailto:groupnor@groupnorth.asn.au, dropping a soft copy on disc of your competition blurb into my box at the club rooms or even a note. Verbal notification is dicey as I offer no guarantee of remembering anything after I leave the club rooms.

Companion 07
This year's Companion ancients tournament will be a round robin format running from mid August to Christmas. This year's theme looks like being 'Any army that fought in the Holy Land'. Ross Dawe has a draft list of appropriate armies: these will be published with the full tournament details once they are approved. Rules will be DBM version 3.1 with 400 points and one list, using 15mm scale figures.

Adeladium 2007
Organiser Martin Foreman, for details see announcement next page

Looking for Opponents or Got Wargamers Visiting?
I know planning two or more months ahead is an anathema to most wargamers, but if you want to play someone outside your current circle then why not advertise in the Grumbler? Put a note in my (Editors) tray in the library or send an email to:
mailto:groupnor@groupnorth.asn.au

Ladders
DBA, DBABB and DBM ladders – contact Rowland Dickinson

New Members
We continue to have a small but steady flow of visitors to the Club Rooms. So keep your eyes open and if there is someone you don't recognise go up and say 'hello' to them and make them feel welcome.

Items for 'The Grumbler'
Email address for articles: mailto:groupnor@groupnorth.asn.au . Alternatively hard or soft copies can be dropped into Rowland Dickinson's tray in the Society's Library room. Please feel free to include any photo's.

'Cut off date' is two full weeks before the effective date of the next issue. Articles/Items received after this date and before the edition goes to print may get in but that cannot be guaranteed.

Next Edition is the July issue. So the 'cut of date' is 16 June.

Adelaidium 2007

Ograniser Martin Foreman

DBM 3.1 Competition South Australian State Titles: Adelaidium 2007

The South Australian DBM State Titles are on again at the GNHWS club rooms to be held on the 19th and 20th of May 2007.

Rules: DBM v3.1, including any official amendments released by authors and 2nd edition Army Lists plus current errata to the lists as issued by the authors. . Armies to be selected from any DBM Books 1 to 4, up to 1500AD and not to exceed 375 AP. . One army list only to be used. . Players are to provide terrain. . It is expected that games will achieve a minimum of 12 pairs of bounds, and that deployment (including all pre-game preparations) must not exceed 40 mins. . Dice will be provided to each table by the organisers. . All figures must be appropriately based and accurately depict the troops they represent. . Scoring will to 0 to 10 as per the DBM 3.1 rules. . Paring will be Swiss Chess after the first round.

How-To-Enter

1. Send a form to the Organiser (Address is listed in application form).
2. Send list directly to the list checker (email address is listed in the application form).
3. Payments can be by check with the application form or paid on the day.
4. Cost of entering competition is $20

Army lists need to be in to the list checker by the 12th of May 2007. Your army list must be submitted with the following:

1. Complete summary of all troop types using correct descriptions, individual points values and an overall summation of points that does not exceed 375AP. {Identify all double based elements.}
2. Breakdown by commands, the total element equivalents and demoralisation level for each command. Include the same for the whole army as well.

Trophies will be awarded to 1st, 2nd and 3rd.

Entry form can be found at the end of this issue

Tournament Results/Diary Events

Working Bee

The working bee held at the club on the weekend 28 & 29 April had a very good turn out of members. While the rain was a dampener on doing work on the outside area, it did allow the identification of the leak in the roof while we had people there (wasn't that exciting!) We had a long list of things to do from the mundane (clean kitchen areas & fridges) through general maintenance – (fix leak in roof and replace damaged ceiling) to the more relevant to most gamers of repairing terrain. The sausage sizzle and availability of refreshments through out the day ensured that all those who attended were able to maintain their strength. Unfortunately there are several key tasks still not complete. Members will need to be prepared to spend a little more time on the club as we approach the open day. However, well done to all those who made the effort to attend and thank you for your efforts. If we are to keep the Clubrooms we all need to be prepared to spend a little more time on the maintenance and less on playing the games. This, sadly, is the price of "owning" our own hall.

Thanks again for those who made the effort - your time will keep us going for the next six months!

"The Committee."

Increasing the Society's Profile in the Community – Power of the Past, Salisbury Fringe& Barrossa Airshow

By Marcus Tregenza

Over the past few months the Club has been quite busy with displays and domonstrations. The Salisbury Fringe (held in March) advertised Group North as an event in the **Salisbury Arts and Cultural Festival** ... unfortunately although the Club prepared displays there were no visitors for the event.

We also attended the Mt Barker "Fair" titled **Power of the Past which** was held on the Mount Barker oval on the weekend of 3/4 March. The fair covered a whole range of exhibits (to do with the past ... !) including craft, antiques, old cars, steam engines etc. This year Group North provided a small display of Ancients and Napoleonics games and a small display of Warhammer painted figures. There was a small but steady flow of interested observers and the event was useful to expose the Club and the hobby to the broader community. Thanks to Dave Waldegrave and Owen and Chester Bartsch for helping out on the displays.

On 15 April Group North put on a display at the **Barossa Airshow** at Rowland Flat. The display was Ancients (DBA) and Naploeonics (The Battle of Maida - 1806) and a table of

painted figures. The display was manned by Owen, Chester and Marcus and there was a constant and "high demand" stream of interested visitors (mostly aged 13!!). While we didn't keep a record I think there were at least 12 games of DBA played and two of Napoleon's Battles. There were also many Club leaflets handed out and there are several possible activities for Club members to demonstrate wargames at schools in the northern suburbs. Many thanks to Owen and Chester for standing in on the display when I'd talked myself hoarse!

While we have no set date for the **Group North Open Day** it will be close to the end of October - so note that time in your diaries.

Napoleonic Battles – Part 1
Re-fight of the Battle of Talavera. Spain 1809

By June 1807 Napoleon was at his peak. He had defeated three major continental powers in three brilliant campaigns and only Britain, Sweden and Portugal still resisted his power. In 1808, following internal upheaval in Spain, Napoleon established (with a heavy hand) a puppet government under his brother Joseph in June of that year. The British, who had strong alliances with Portugal, dispatched Arthur Wellesly with instructions to support the Portuguese and Spanish by "securing the final and absolute evacuation of the Peninsula by the troops of France". A series of battles and major engagements followed and while the Allied armies were not always successful the harshness of the Peninsular, British discipline and the Spanish guerrillas ground the French forces down. On 28 July 1809 the British won a significant (though costly) battle at Talavera.

Talavera Township

On 21 April Club members "re-fought" the battle of Talavera using the "Napoleon's Battles" rule-set. There will be a complete report in the next issue of the Grumbler … but here are the highlights.

The battle was fought with three players on each side and was a close victory for the French. The use of a purpose built table (thanks Matt) and the significant prior

preparation clearly made the game easy to play and spectacular to watch. The following photos are from the battle. The town of Talavera and the French assault on the Medellin Hill

French assault on Medellin Hill

Many thanks to Marcus, and we look forward to the next report. Ed

"Berserker 2007 Big Battle DBA Tournament"
A Progress Report"

By Ross Dawe

Nine players have entered this year's 'Berserker' round robin ancients tournament. So far Ross Dawe has jumped to a big lead with Chris Young in pursuit. The final placings are based on the best six game scores and not the overall total, so the competition for places is still wide open.

Player	Army	Score
Ross Dawe	Silla Korean	114 (7 games)
Rowland Dickinson	Minoan & Early Mycenaean	53 (7 games)
Harry Dunn	Feudal Spanish	50 (4 games)
Martin Foreman	Seleucid	37 (4 games)
Michael Grant	Mongol Conquest	51 (6 games)
Andrew Jacobi	New Kingdom Egyptian	18 (1 game)
Richard Moriarty	Pre-Feudal Scots	21 (4 games)
Marcus Tregenza	Later Swiss	43 (3 games)
Chris Young	Pyrrhic	86 (6 games)

We also have a prize for unluckiest player, based on having generals killed, camps sacked and generally having awful movement and combat die rolls. This prize currently has several contenders and, based on how some player's armies have disintegrated with alarming frequency, is expected to be very closely contested.

Many thanks to Ross for his efforts and this update. Ed

Rimmer's War Diaries

Rimmer's War diaries are composed so that, for future generations of tabletop commanders, the experiences and insights of successful (and not so successful) commanders can be made available to them. Through such magnanimous generosity of their predecessors, the future commanders can be suitably informed and over-awed by the brilliance of those who have gone before.

This issue's battle is drawn from the current DBABB Berserker 07 competition. It is a demonstration of what not to do when the dice gods are against you. The game was between Rowland Dickinson's Minoans and Harry Dunn's feudal Spanish. Rowland was the aggressor so Harry set up the terrain as in the picture.

Harry on the left, Rowland on the right.

We had a waterway at the bottom, a road across the centre with two bare steep hills in the middle and two forests at the top. Harry lined out with light horse, knights and bow covering the steep hill and waterway on his right, spears and knights plus light horse astride the road and auxiliaries, psiloi and knights covering the topmost steep hill and forest.

View from Rowland's C-in-C

Rowland responded with a his heavy chariots plus some psiloi on his left, covering the waterway to the road, his pikes in the middle with his auxiliaries and psiloi heavy army lined up in the woods on his right.

Harry's View of the Pikes

Rowland allocated his dice high to his right, medium to his left and low to the pikes. The battle began with Rowland's psiloi racing forward to seize the high ground and the forest on Harry's left.

Rowland seized the high ground and the forest top right

Harry allocated his dice high to his right, medium to his left and low to his centre. He responded to Rowland's aggressive assault with a general advance by his two right hand commands and sending his auxiliaries and psiloi from his left hand command to clear out the woods. In the ensuing struggle on his left, Harry pinned Rowland's psiloi on the hill He also pushed that command's knights through the gap between the forest and the woods to prevent Rowland bringing up his auxiliaries and heavy chariots to support the psiloi in the woods – a high risk move as it placed them in a position where Rowland could descend on them from all sides.

The Fight for the Forest

At the other flank, after some desultory bow fire, the two armies crashed into each other – knight on heavy chariots, bow on psiloi (uphill). Harry's bow began to take a hammering forcing Harry to commit his light horse to attacking foot in difficult going, but his knights were pushing the chariots back. In the middle the pike slowly moved forward. On the left Harry's blue knight (see lone figure at the top of picture in the open ground between the forests and the hill facing the wrong way) single handedly destroyed half of Rowland's right flank command. Back to the other flank Rowland's psiloi took apart the light horse but the bow were saved.

Rowland's right has collapsed, Harry's right under Threat

With his right flank gone Rowland hooked in with his pike and the Chariots, gates were closed, odds were in his favour with quick kills available to both sides. Harry was worried as he was close to breaking on his right and his spear wouldn't stand up to the pike.

But the dice gods turned their back on Rowland, suddenly his right flank was no more.

Where did the all Minoans go?

The result, after only 90 minutes, 18 to 5 for Harry. Rowland's comment – "maybe I shouldn't race my psiloi forward or maybe I should put more troops into the command that was going to do all the fighting". Harry's comment – "I'm going to paint five figures on that blue knight's shield – he was magnificent". Overall, an enjoyable game. Well done Harry! Bad luck Rowland.

Articles

Among the Society's aims are:
"To advance the avocation of Historical Wargaming in the State of South Australia by means of research, … exchange of information, promulgation of rules, systems …"
and
"To widen public awareness of historical military heritage by … publishing reports and manuscripts of military history…"

This section provides the forum for the publication of articles and thoughts of our members to share with each other and the wider public. This issue we have the second in the series of articles by Ross Dawe on Naval Wagaming in the Sail period.

Naval Wargaming Using the "Pirates Ships by WIZKIDS
Part II: Rules for Sailing Ships

By Ross Dawe © 2007

The Wizkids Inc. "Pirates of the Spanish Main" (PotSM) ships inspired me to play Age of Sail naval battles. There are plenty of excellent and detailed sets of naval rules on the market, plus the website http://www.freewargamesrules.co.uk/ has a wide variety of rule sets to try out. The Wizkids PotSM game itself is designed to be played on a coffee table in half an hour and is too simplistic for my tastes.

What I wanted was a relatively simple naval game that used the red and white die statistics on the plastic ships and any useful comments such as speed and special abilities on the ship deck plate cards, without the need for any other bookkeeping. My aim was to be able to play squadron battles in an evening and major fleet battles in a day, so in the time-honoured tradition of wargamers, I designed my own set of rules for fighting naval battles between sailing ships in the period 1500s to 1800s. A variety of scenarios and campaign guidelines will be posted on the Group North Historical Wargames Society website at http://www.groupnorth.asn.au/index.htm every month or so. Readers are welcome to modify the following rules for their own use as they see fit.

With sailing ships the overall doctrine is massed cannonades, with some boarding actions that see a few crew killed and the rest surrender. With galleys, the doctrine is to use high speed and manoeuvrability to get close, fire a few cannon shots and fight a boarding action as soon as possible. To simulate these doctrinal differences, I have separated out the galley fighting rules and these will appear in the next issue of *The Grumbler*.

Rossco's Generic Naval Battle Rules: Sailing Ships vs. Sailing Ships

I suggest using the basic movement rules as per the Wizkids Pirates of the Spanish Main (or any later booster) rules. You get a set of rules in every pack along with the ships. Note that the PotSM character and crew counters are not used with the generic rules.

I recommend using rectangular bases underneath the ships, with each **S** or **L** move giving a maximum 90° turn. See the accompanying photos for examples of ship basing.

Changes from the Wizkids PotSM rules for fighting with sailing ships are as follows.

1. At the start of each turn, both sides roll 1d6: the higher roll chooses whether to move and shoot first or move and shoot second. Reroll any ties.
   - Notable naval commanders can modify this roll as described in the scenarios. For example, Francis Drake (English), Horatio Nelson (British), Michiel de Ruyter (Dutch) and Yi Sun-sin (Korean) give +1 to the die roll.

2. All ships can move and shoot in the same turn. All moving is completed before shooting. Movement for sailing ships is measured from the bow of the ship, which should be at the front edge of the ship base. When turning, measure from the outside corner of the base.
   - Ships can move up to their maximum allowed distance.
   - Ships must move a minimum of **S** each turn.
   - Ships involved in a boarding action cannot move, unless they successfully break off the combat.

3. Shooting follows the Wizkids PotSM rules, with the following changes.
   - When shooting directly at the stern and along the central axis of the target ship, add an extra point of damage if the shooting inflicts any damage. (This is additional damage from stern raking.)
   - Ships currently fighting a boarding action cannot shoot or be shot at.

4. Wind effects: if a sailing ship turns directly into the wind or turns through the wind, it cannot shoot and cannot initiate or join in a boarding action that turn. For simplicity, this applies to moving within 45° either side of the wind direction.

5. All ships have 4 times their number of masts as their 'damage rating' unless otherwise specified. Each time a ship is hit by a cannon shot, it suffers one point of damage. For every four points of damage the ship suffers, the ship loses the use of one cannon: this is indicated on the ship model by placing a rubber ring (or some other marker) over that mast. The player controlling the ship chooses which mast is lost, but normally this should be the closest mast to the enemy ship.

Rubber rings can be bought cheaply from the plumbing section of any good hardware store. Damage of 1, 2 or 3 points can be easily indicated using an appropriate coin token from the PotSM game placed on the ship base. See the accompanying photos for examples.

6. When the ship suffers damage equal to its damage rating, it sinks.
   - A sinking ship is an obstacle hazard for 1 to 3 turns (determine randomly) and is indicated by a 'sinking ship' marker.
   - If a ship sails into another ship that is sinking, the moving ship suffers 1d3 points of damage.

7. When a ship has just one damage point remaining, it is considered to be derelict. It can move at speed **S** and can defend itself as normal. However, it cannot shoot and cannot initiate or join in a boarding action.

8. If a ship sails into another ship without intending to board, the moving ship takes 1d3 damage and the ship that is rammed takes 1d3 damage.

- Note that an enemy ship can avoid being rammed. In this case each side rolls 1d6 and if the defender's roll is equal or higher than the moving ship's roll, it avoids the collision. The faster ship has +1 to the die roll.

9. To board a sailing ship not already in a boarding action, the ship bases must be touching. If the defending player wants to avoid a boarding action, both sides roll 1d6. The side with the faster ship adds +1 to their roll. If the attacker (the moving player) rolls higher, a boarding combat starts. If the defender rolls equal to or higher than the attacker, there is no boarding action.
   - The defender may opt to forego the die rolls and automatically fight a boarding action.

10. If the target ship is already in a boarding action, the moving player may add extra ships to the action without needing to roll the die.

11. Each ship has a number of 'decks' equal to the number of masts.
    - If the ship has lost cannons due to damage, the number of decks is reduced by the number of cannons lost.

    #Example: a 3-mast ship would normally have 3 decks for fighting the boarding action. If it has lost a cannon due to having four points of damage, it has only 2 decks remaining for fighting the boarding action.

12. Boarding actions between sailing ships are resolved after all moving and shooting. For each boarding action the players roll 1d6.
    - Ships with the special ability "+1 to boarding rolls" add +1 to their score.
    - The side that has more decks from their own ships in the boarding action adds +1 to their score. Multiple ships combine their number of decks for this total. Subtract any decks lost from the total number of decks.

    # Example: two undamaged 3- mast ships have a total of six decks. If one of the ships has lost a cannon due to damage their combined total is five decks.
    #Example: if a 4-mast ship has lost a deck from a previous round of this boarding action, it counts as having 3 decks left.

13. The side with the higher score captures one deck of the other ship or recaptures one of their own ship decks (recapturing takes priority). If a ship has lost all its decks, it is captured by the opponent. If neither side has lost all its decks, the boarding action continues into the next player's turn.

14. If a ship is boarded by multiple enemy ships, it fights each opponent in the same turn. Results of boarding actions against multiple opponents are cumulative.

    # Example: two undamaged 3-mast ships, 'A' and 'B' (total of six decks) board a 5-mast ship 'C'. In the first combat A has +1 for more decks than C. If C wins the combat, it captures a deck off A, so that when B and C fight their combat in the same turn, each side has five decks remaining and there is no die roll modifier.

15. For a ship to break off from a boarding action that is still in progress, each side rolls 1d6 and modifies the score as follows:
    - +1 for whichever side's ship is fastest,

- -1 per deck lost by the ship that is trying to break off.

If the ship trying to break off rolls higher, the boarding action ceases and the ship can move away. If the roll is equal or the side trying to maintain the boarding action rolls higher, the boarding combat continues.

16. If a ship leaves a boarding action, it returns to its normal number of decks and has normal movement.

17. Captured vessels.
    - When a vessel has been captured and is under tow, use a dismasted hull as a marker. It takes one turn to prepare a vessel for towing, during which the towing ship can shoot but cannot initiate or join in a boarding action.
    - The towing vessel has its speed reduced to **S**. The towed vessel follows behind with its bow in contact with the rear edge of the tow vessel's base.
    - A captured vessel can be scuttled. This takes one full turn, during which the capturing ship cannot initiate or join in a boarding action.

18. Recapturing vessels.
    - A captured sailing ship can be recaptured by fighting a successful boarding action against its prize crew. The prize crew count as having only one deck, regardless of the size of the ship.
    - A recaptured sailing ship counts as having a full crew.

19. If a ship surrenders but no opposing ship moves to take it under tow during the next turn, the surrendering ship instead sails away. It will defend itself from boarding actions as normal, but will not shoot.

20. Ending the game. Each fleet will continue fighting until its losses reach a level at which the fleet either surrenders or tries to escape. Fleet morale is part of the scenario, as some fleets such as the British and French generally have a high morale, while other fleets at times turned and fled at relatively low casualties.
    - Fleet morale is the sum of the number of ships of the line (3, 4 or 5 masts) plus half of the number of frigates (1 and 2 masts).
    - Unless stated otherwise in the scenario, a fleet stops fighting when it has lost half or more of its fleet morale.
    - Ships of the line (3, 4 or 5 masts) count as one against fleet morale loss.
    - A flagship counts as two against fleet morale loss.
    - Frigates (1 or 2 masts) only count as half a point against fleet morale loss.
    - Fire ships and bomb ships are ignored for the fleet morale total and are ignored towards fleet morale loss.

The English used fire ships at Gravelines in 1588 to break up the Spanish Armada's defensive formation. The ploy was so successful that fleets kept trying to copy it, with varying degrees of success. If playing a game with fire ships included, use the following rules.

21. Before a fire ship is set alight, it still has a crew and moves normally. It cannot shoot but may fight boarding actions as normal.

22. Once the fire ship has been set alight the crew abandons it. The fire ship then moves at speed **S** each turn in the direction the current and wind pushes it.

23. The fire ship itself continues to burn for as long as the scenario indicates. (These ships were packed with flammable material to make sure they burned for a long time.)

24. Any ship touched by a burning fire ship immediately suffers 1d3 points of fire damage. Use a 'burning mast' PotSM game piece or some other marker to indicate the ship is burning.

25. Any ship within 45° either side of downwind and within range **S** of the burning fire ship catches alight and suffers 1d3 damage if it rolls a 1 on 1d6. Any other roll is no effect.

26. Each turn a ship other than a fire ship is alight, roll 1d6. On a roll of 6 the fire is put out and the ship suffers no further damage. On a roll of 4 or 5 there is no effect. On a roll of 1, 2 or 3 the fire is worse and the ship takes that number of damage points.

27. Fire ships have damage points equal to three (not the usual four) times the number of starting masts. A fire ship can be sunk by shooting like any normal ship.

Designer's Notes

Using a damage rating of four times the number of masts gives a satisfactory amount of gunnery hits required to sink the ship, plus it also means the larger ships can take a pounding before becoming ineffective. The boarding action rules encourage a softening up phase with gunnery to make the target ship easier to beat, plus piling on with multiple ships to quickly capture the target ship before help can arrive. Overall the rules give a game in an evening for squadron battles, while large fleet battles can be played in a day. However, these rules are too simplistic for single ship versus single ship actions.

Scenarios and campaign guidelines will be posted on the Group North Historical Wargames Society website at http://www.groupnorth.asn.au/index.htm every month or so. These will include:

- A Spanish Armada campaign which includes the effects of limited English ammunition and Spanish gunnery problems.
- Anglo-Dutch wars of the 1600s.
- British versus French.
- Japanese versus Koreans in the 1590s.
- Renaissance galley battles of the 1500s.

An Example Game

The following photos are from a playtest game between Harry Dunn (French) and Ross Dawe (British). Here we see a British squadron in the foreground moving in to pick a fight with their traditional foe, the French Navy. The ships used here are the front half of the fleets to be used in an upcoming game of the Battle of Virginia Capes (1781): here Harry has set up the French in a far neater line than they managed in the real battle.

The game board is a set of interlocking carpet squares purchased from a hardware store. As the fleets moved forwards during the game, the carpet squares at the back were removed and reassembled ahead of the fleets

.

The next photo shows the ship bases with their names on them, plus the ship deck cards that have been altered to show names of the ships at the battle. In the background a classic anachronism can be seen: the French ships all have the tricolour flag, even though this scenario is dated before the French Revolution.

At the head of the fleets, the French ships *Pluton* and *Bourgogne* have hammered the British *Shrewsbury*. Note the rubber ring on the British ship indicates four points of damage and it is unable to fire that cannon. The chit indicates the ship has taken a further two points of damage.

The next photo shows the leading ships in each fleet breaking into a scrum as ships manoeuvre to either escape or stern rake their opponents. To the left the British *Shrewsbury* is making a doomed attempt to escape, while the French *Pluton* in the centre is being hounded and stern raked. Further down the line the French had a good chance to inflict some serious damage on the

British, but an unlucky round of French shooting gave the British ships the edge in the gunnery duels.

A couple of turns later the battle attrition is taking its toll, with several ships sinking. In the background some of the British ships are threading their way between a pair of wrecks. In the foreground *Pluton* is still trying to escape from the British pursuit led by the *Intrepid*.

There was also plenty of carnage further along the battlelines. The French used good manoeuvring to cut away the rear British ships and overwhelm them, including eventually trapping and destroying the British flagship *London* seen at the far right. In the centre of the photo the French flagship *Ville de Paris* has started chasing the British *Royal Oak*.

The mayhem in the centre after a lengthy gunnery duel has seen the British slowly grind down the French. The game ended with the French failing their fleet morale at 50% ship losses on the same turn they destroyed the British flagship, resulting in a pyrrhic British win.

Many thanks to Ross and particularly for indicating there will be further articles – Ed

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