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Books I've Read

The Resurrected Pirate: George Lowther

All The World At War: People Places WWI

Paper Dreams: History of PBM Gaming

Persia Triumphant in Greece: Xerxes Invasion

Black Hearts and Painted Guns: Iraq 2005-7

The Crimean Offensive 1944 (Casemate Illus)

Roman Empire at War: Compendium 31BC 565AD

Night Fighter Aces Luftwaffe 1943-45 (CI)

Overland Campaign for Richmond 1864 (CI)

The Waffen-SS in Poland 1939 (Casemate III)

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Home Front: Color WWII Photography in US

US Coast Guard Cutter 37: Legends of Warfare

Nagato-Class Battleships: Legends of Warfare

Vichy's Last Castle: Petain's Puppet Regime

Black Devils' March: 1st Polish Arm Div 1939-45



Japanese storm across the river. From bottom left corner clockwise: Pat, GM Marc, Garrett, Dan, Jake, and Allen.

Guadalcanal Game Diary: Welcome to the Jungle

by Russ Lockwood

Marc set up a *Command Decision* (CD) game with a Pacific Theater flair: the Japanese offensive in late October 1942 on Guadalcanal along the Matanikau River. This was the shoreline attack on the drive for Henderson Field.

Jake-san, Garrett-san, and Dan-san played the Japanese while Allen, Pat, and I played the US Marines. Just

about the entire tabletop battlefield was jungle (visibility 2 inches!) except for small clear areas around the river and shoreline and a larger area inland. A swamp separated my inland troops from the rest of the Marines.

Japanese on right of river. Marines dug in at left. My Evans detachment at top middle of photo.



As it had been raining heavily at the time, all movement was halved due to mud.

US Marine infantry, MG, and 37mm AT gun platoons were dug in along the river's edge in the jungle except my infantry, which apparently didn't know how to dig foxholes.

As for the Japanese, it looked like two reinforced battalions near the shore plus a third weaker battalion inland prepared for the big offensive. In addition, light tanks rolled along a trail next to the beach, ready to cross the river.

Japanese Open With A Bang

On Turn 0 (zero), the Japanese got a big bombardment from a heckuva lot of artillery in a wide variety of calibers, from mortars to 150mm guns. Marc had determined the results beforehand, but it was a shock to see an entire company of Marines at the mouth of the river retreated out of their foxholes, although they soon reoccupied 'em.

Japanese recon platoons advanced to find the Marines. In *CD*, recon infantry spot up to two inches. However, as they crossed, Allen and Pat opened up on them mid-river. Of course, as soon as the Marine stands fired, the firers were spotted. Japanese artillery took its toll.



Japanese (left) move up.

The firing proved hot and heavy near the shore as Marine MMGs and HMGs targeted Japanese in the open in opportunity fire while Japanese return fire played havoc in the general fire phase.

Evans' Detachment

Meanwhile, up river, my detachment of two companies under battalion commander Evans provided protection for combat engineers who were hacking a trail through the jungle. I wasn't sure if I could call on the engineering company in a pinch. After all, every Marine is a rifleman, but keeping the Japanese from them in the first place was my mission.

Japanese on other side of river, Evans' troops at bottom. Swamp at right. Combat engineers off bottom of photo.



So, my troopers were lined up at the jungle edge...

Minor mistake. I should have asked if I could fiddle a bit with the set up. Oh, the line of riflemen and MGs was fine, but the commanders (except one) were behind the line in the jungle where they could not look out into the open area. Since I needed them to try and call in artillery, they were useless.

What's that? Move 'em up?

In *CD*, you can advance them, but all movement is auto spotted by any one enemy stand in range. And that would bring in the storm of Japanese artillery. So, my stands remained immobile. I should have remembered that from a previous game. By the way, each stand is a platoon.

In any case, Garrett-san's battalion began its crossing to advance upon me. I held my fire except to shoot at the recon stands just beyond spotting range. I only nailed one of the two, but the firers were spotted and a trio at the left end of my line was spotted by the surviving Japanese recon stand.

Fortuitously, Japanese artillery proved ineffective against me.

To my right, from the other side of the swamp, Pat's MMG opened up and eliminated the two outer Japanese platoons.

Dan-san's troops (upper middle) start to clear out Pat's Marines. Jake-san's troops exchange fire with Allen's Marines (upper right).

Back To The Middle

In the middle river section, Pat withstood fire and counter-fire, but a Japanese banzai charge by Dan-san managed to push back the Marines, eliminating some in the process. There began a scrum with Japanese

artillery pounding what it could see, and Marine MG fire tearing into the remaining Japanese platoons.

Meanwhile, the dimness of dusk turned to the darkness of night. Spotting distance in the jungle remained at 2 inches, but other spotting distances dropped from 30 inches to 12 inches to 5 inches. Artillery observers could not register the fire of their guns.

By The Sea

Jake-san rumbled his light tanks as far forward as he could without running over the mines and anti-tank ditch. His infantry swept forward and swarmed Allen's Marines, who devastated an entire Japanese company with heavy fire. Jake-san's plan to clear the Marines, and especially the 37mm AT gun platoon, was delayed.

The exchange of fire continued as a new Japanese attack formed up on the river bank.

Japanese advance against Evans. Clear template indicates 150mm artillery dropping on Marines. Green cubes note suppression. German flags really should be Japanese, but Axis needs must.

Versus Evans

Garrett-san called in for smoke shells to mask his last move



towards my detachment.

"What smoke shells?" came the Japanese commander's reply.

Artillery. The plan called for a barrage of smoke shells.

True, but not inland, came the reply. Only along the lower river.

Garrett-san had that sinking feeling, and it wasn't just the mud. Remember, mud halved his movement, so what would have been a two-turn advance and charge became a three-turn move.

Japanese banzai platoons run into a Marine buzzsaw. Eliminated Japanese stands are on their side.



He called on what artillery he could, but only a single 150mm battery responded. It was enough to suppress the fire of a few Marine platoons (green cubes).

Garrett-san did the only thing a Japanese commander could do: Banzai!

Two companies of Japanese infantry screamed and charged. The officers waved samurai swords. The mass of infantry drew together, concentrating on a couple points in the Marine line. Morale soared among the attacking troops. Most of them charged into contact.

The remains of the Japanese charge: two infantry platoons, a MG platoon, and the battalion commander.



The Marines waited until the last possible moment and opened fire. The entire line slaughtered every platoon in contact except one. One entire Japanese company disintegrated with no survivors. The other had two platoons left plus a lagging attached MG company. Battalion commander Garrett-san could only watch in horror.

Amazingly, despite all the carnage, his remaining troops passed their morale.

I didn't lose a platoon.

End Game

We played four turns in about three hours -- a bit slower than usual, but the questions revolving around sighting took up a fair bit of examination and explanation. The two-inch range in the jungle and the sheer number of troops made movement and firing a longer process than usual.

In the end, because of Marine losses and a sagging line, Marc called it a marginal Japanese victory. The Japanese took losses too, but he noted in a few more turns, the Japanese advantage would likely punch a real hole in the Marine line.

Thanks for hosting and GMing Marc and to the rest of my fellow tabletop commanders for a hard-fought game.

7th Sea: Pirate Card Game

by Russ Lockwood

Dan and I played this out of print deck-building card game some 20 or more years ago, but he had a hankering to try it again. Avast, me hardies, I'm game.

By random pick, I was the Captain of Castille.

That's Castille, not Captain and Tennille. Hey! I refuse to answer any e-mail from the Muskrat Anti-Defamation (MAD) Society.

Anyway, I had a Captain card, a ship card with room for 11 crew cards, and a customized deck of about 60 cards. Each card has a number of key attributes: Cannons, Sailing, Adventuring, Influence, and Swashbuckling. I should also mention cost to deploy your crew card on your ship and a variety of text cards with benefits once deployed. For example, I eventually had two rams on my ship, my captain had influence at court, and other crew cards sported a variety of benefits -- generally involving adding points to one of the five key attributes.

A sample Captain card.

Who'll Make His Mark?

Generally, to recruit a crew member, you need to spend a certain number of influence (crown icon) points. Any existing crew member can apply such points, although in the early going, the captain card will supply most of the points.

To actually use a crew member and his or her benefits, you need to "tack" the card sideways to generate the necessary and specific points. Once tacked, the card may not be used for the rest of the turn except to satisfy damage from enemy attacks. Cards untack at the end of the turn.

The swashbuckling attribute is used to offset damage. If a cannon shot does three damage, then the targeted player must either tack enough cards with enough swashbuckling points to meet the damage, "sink" (remove from the ship and out of the game) enough tacked cards with enough swashbuckling value to meet the damage, or some combo of the two. Note that some non-crew cards mitigate damage.

Along the way across the five, not seven, seas in play there are adventure cards to play and grab. You need to tack a certain number of specific icons and the card provides some benefit to a member of the crew (including the captain, who is considered a crew member).

Last ship standing wins.

As I noted, my ship could carry 11 crew cards while Dan's ship could carry nine crew.

A sample adventure card. Note the letters on the bottom left used for boarding actions.

Closer to the Wind My Boys

Dan won initiative (most sail icons) and immediately unloaded a six-damage cannon broadside on me.

What's this? What about the pirate code of not attacking other pirates? No honor among thieves, apparently. My response would be key.

I shouted across the water as I turned the ship's wheel. "I'll see you dancing on airrrr!"

What I really did? I tacked a couple crew to satisfy the six damage, then tacked the ship, applied full sail, and headed for the next sea over.

Note that this quick damage made these tacked crew unavailable for the rest of the turn. I only had four crew (captain and three others) and six damage was a pretty steep penalty so early on. I had to sink one of my crew and then I ran away. I mean, I headed for a safer sea.



As I sailed a few seas to recruit crew and complete adventures, I came to a realization: Due to alternating card play, the ship that sails into another ship's sea will suffer the first attack.

Four of the five seas, my ship, and my captain and two crew. Dan's ship is peeking from the top middle of the photo.

Firing is not simultaneous. Sure, this is mitigated by only allowing one crew to activate at a time except for tacking or sinking crew to satisfy damage. However, there are no dice to roll. It is all deterministic: tack a six-cannon crew member and six damage occurs -- unless the target plays a mitigating card.

I already faced his cannon once. Like me, he had added to his crew. So, I delayed and delayed and delayed, one eye on preserving enough crew to fight if he sailed into my sea and one eye on recruiting and completing adventures. It's a good thing I didn't need an eyepatch.

Come Aboard, My Pretty Boys

Eventually, my Captain of Castille went recruiting.

That's Castille. Not a fine time to leave me Lucille. Hey! I'm not answering any e-mail from the Kenny Rogers Anti-Mockery (KRAM) Society.

I filled all 11 crew slots. That gave me two crew over his crew slots. I even made "Billy Bones" -- a crew card dropped on me by Dan that takes up a crew slot without adding any beneficial icons -- walk the plank so I could get a real crew member.

Then I sailed one sea over and hoped his cannons were not too bad.

Oh, they were: Nine of 'em, although I had a card that gave one of my crew an eyepatch in exchange for reducing damage by one.

Russ' reaction to taking nine damage from a cannon shot. Photo by Dan.

"Shiverrr me timberrrs! 'Tis worrrse than I feared." I tacked crew and cards to satisfy the damage and then unleashed a broadside of my own.

I inflicted seven damage and he had a card that gave one of his crew a pegleg in exchange for reducing damage by one. He tacked a crew member for two more, and then he tacked another crew member to satisfy the last four damage.

"Arrrrrgh! Not so fast, ye son of a sea serrrrpent!" I roared. I tacked my padre -- who negated the swashbuckling icons of a card used to satisfy damage. That forced him to tack additional crew worth four damage.

Captain Dan yelled back, "You briny devil! I'll send you to Davy Jones' Lockerrrr for that!"

Then he played a card to begin a boarding action.

I would have none of that. I had been saving an anti-boarding card for just such an occasion. It cancelled his boarding action and inflicted three damage. I taunted, "Arrrrrgh! Getting' that sinkin' feeling, barrnnacle breath?"



More of his crew tacked.

Now it was my turn. I started a boarding action by tacking one of my crew with four sail icons. Dan didn't have an anti-boarding card, so it came to melee.

To The Devil Drink a Toast

Most of the game is fairly standard card game fare. But boarding actions -- now that's a cool mechanic.

Each card has a three letter icon: C for Club, P for Punch, T for Thrust and so on. The top letter icon is larger than the lower two and represents an attack.

The boarder plays an attack card. The other player picks a card with that same icon in one of the two smaller letters to block the attack. Now comes the counter-attack. The boarder plays a card with a large letter icon. The boarder then picks a card matching that new counter-attack icon to block the counter-attack. If successful, the boarder picks a new card for a counter-counter-attack. So it goes until boarder or boarder runs out of cards or runs out of blocking small letter icons.

The Cutlass Harvested

I sent my Captain of Castille to board.

That's Castille. Not Remington Steele. Hey! I'm not answering any e-mail from the Steele Anti-Sedition Society (SASS).

I picked a card. It was Club. Dan blocked it and selected Thrust.

"Think again, ye scurrrrvy rat!" I yelled above the din of fighting. I swayed away from his point and selected Punch. He slipped my hilt-knuckled effort and so the deadly dance continued, card upon card as our hands slowly diminished. It was like a game of *Crazy Eights*, only with a slew of rolled Rrrrs.

Eventually, one of my Slashes sliced open his gullet 'twixt wind and water.

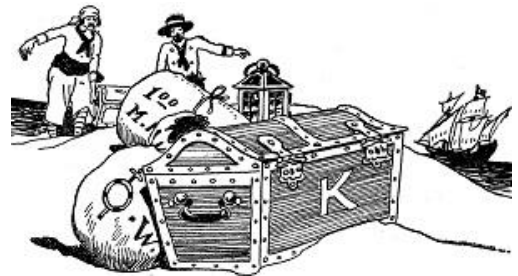
She's Ours My Boys and No One Left to Tell

The successful boarding action resulted in a most surprising sweeping of his deck. Remember that my repel boarders card did three damage. My cannon shot did seven more, plus four thanks to the Padre. Now this and other actions inflicted a further nine for a grand total of 23 damage, minus one for a pegleg. All his crew, including those that had previously tacked, now became sunk (removed from play).

Only Captain Dan remained and tacked. My other crew finished him off.

Such was an exciting and surprising finish to the card game. To me, the preliminaries of recruitment seem like typical card-game mechanics. However, the back and forth boarding action card play is by far the most interesting part of the game.

Thanks, Dan, for pulling out this oldie for a spin 'round the tabletop.



AEG's 7th Sea: Collectable Card Game

by Daniel

I invited Russ over for a game of *7th Sea*, a Pirate-themed game which we haven't played in probably close to 25 years. I used to have a sizeable amount of these cards, but I traded off most of them while retaining eight different starter decks for casual play.

I had run across a rule set formatted for 10 full pages in a larger font than in the small rule booklet contained in the Starter deck box. The rule set was not as well organized as I might expect from a 2nd printing, but we eventually found all the information we needed to go through the starting set-up and Sequence of Play.

- I. Determining Turn Order (Highest total of Sails goes first)
- II. Actions
- III. Draw 3 Cards (Discard down to 7 if over 7)
- IV. Untack (straighten any cards that are turned sideways)

Contrary to the name, the game only contains five seas to roam about. Each player starts with a Ship (which indicates how many crew it can carry) and Captain (which has an amount of gold to spend to purchase your starting crew and which sea your ship is in at the start).

Russ randomly chose the Castille Faction for himself and the Brotherhood Faction for me. We both started in the same sea (La Boca) in the center. With a full hand of seven cards, we started our adventure.

Both of us started with the same amount of Sails. To break a tie, players cut their deck and expose a random card. The card with the “lower” letter (closest to “A”) goes first.

End of Turn 1. My ship had two rams. I had the same Captain and crew, but my captain was pumped up with a successful adventure and a special captain attachment.

Sequence of Play

Each crew can perform one of the following

actions: 1. Hire Crew, 2. Experience a Crew, 3. Play or Perform an Action, 4. Put an Adventure card into play, 5. Put a Chantey card into play, 6. Complete an Adventure, 7. Play an Attachment, 8. Move your Ship, 9. Perform a Cannon Attack, 10. Perform a Boarding Attack, 11. Discard a Crew, 12. Discard an Adventure, or 13. Pass.

I started with a Cannon Attack, which is allowed if both ships are in the same sea. I used the “Gunner” crewman to generate 3 hits and also played a “Reaction” card that added 3 more hits.

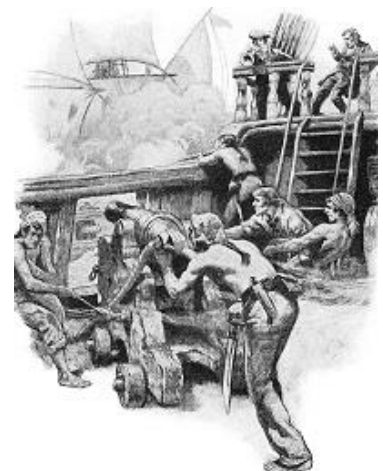
To absorb hits, you “tack” Crew with Swashbuckling skills until you generate enough Swashbuckling points to equal or exceed the Cannon hits. You may “sink” a tacked crew for the same effect (removing it from play). You can also play Reaction cards that reduce the number of hits. Russ satisfied the hits by tacking crew. He decided to move his ship to an adjacent sea. This can be done either by spending crew Sail points or tacking the ship.

Adventure Calls

Both of us played Adventure cards. Each indicates how many linear seas away from the current sea containing your ship. The card is played on that sea and can only be resolved by the owning player. The player’s ship needs to sail to the sea with the Adventure card. On a subsequent Action, crew need to generate Adventure skill points to meet the number required by the Adventure card and complete the Adventure. The completed Adventure card is then attached to a card -- usually one of a player's crew cards, but also perhaps to a ship card or the sea itself.

I managed to complete an Adventure that added more Cannon skill to my crew. I then intercepted Russ' ship as he was trying to complete his own Adventures, fired on him, and forced him to sink a crew. I then wandered off to complete more of my own Adventures, while Russ added more crew to his ship and also completed Adventures.

While my ship was easier to move, it could not hold as many crew as the Russ' ship. We both maxed out our crew and eventually had it out. Russ had the crew to absorb my initial Cannon attacks and he hit me back, using a “Reaction”



card that canceled my initial effort to absorb hits and instead forced me to tack other crew to satisfy the hits. I attempted a Boarding Action that Russ canceled (by spending Sails for a card). Russ then started his own Boarding Action, sending his Captain over.

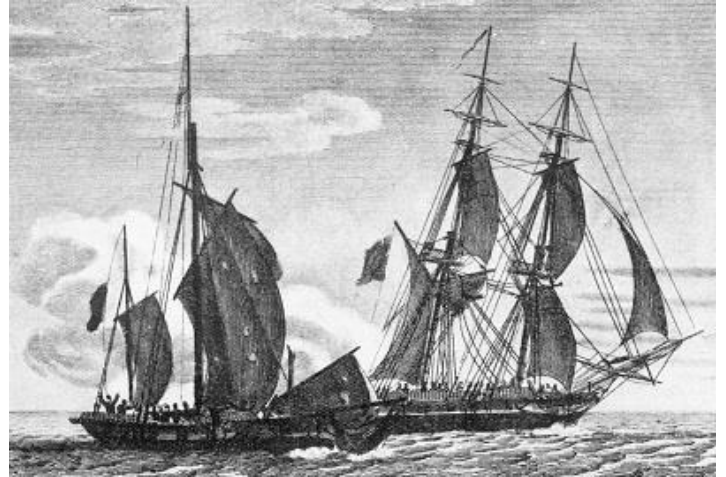
Boarding Action

Boarding Actions are resolved playing cards from your hand, consulting the three letter boxes near the bottom of the card. The larger top letter is the type of Attack: C=Club, D=Dagger, P=Punch, S=Slash, and T=Thrust.

The opposing player must play a card from his hand that has the appropriate counter to the type of Attack (a matching letter among the lower two smaller boxes) or suffer hits from the crew that did the Boarding Action.

If the correct counter card is played, the larger top letter is the type of Attack delivered back. Now the first player has to play a card from his hand that has the appropriate counter to the type of Attack or suffer hits from the crew that defended against the Boarding Action.

This is where the greater number of crew Russ had available became an advantage. While I fended off the initial attack, my crew were all tacked and Russ was able to play more Boarding Actions and Cannon attacks to force me to sink my crew and eventually my Captain, winning the game.



Pirates Turned CEOs: *Space Base*

by Daniel

After losing my Captain and ship to Russ in *7th Sea*, we returned to a favorite: *Space Base*.

Having played through all the expansions, I kept the ship pool relatively simple by not including any Alien Technology cards or ships that generated Patrol counters — but we did use the Patrol Die and Plutonium dice from *Shy Pluto*. We used the Light Speed starting variant that allows each of us to spend 15 gold to purchase new ships from a random set of four Level 1 ships and two Level 2 ships.

Dan considers his resources and what card to purchase.

I was not particularly impressed with the initial selection as it had either ships with low Bay numbers (1-3) or high Bay numbers (9-12). You never know how the dice will roll regardless of probability, so you make do with what's available. Russ had more diverse options to select from. Russ spent less on his starting ships so he went first.

As the game started, my income was meagre, but at my first opportunity to purchase a Level 2 ship I picked up the one that could give you a double reward (*U.E.S.*

AKSYONOV 7525-G) although I had nothing great to double. I could always purchase a ship each turn and I soon populated Bays 8-12 with relatively inexpensive ships, such that I could get a decent amount of gold if Russ rolled an '8' or '9.'

I also picked up a ship-swapping card that starts at Bay 9. That proved useful to swap to Bay 6 and then once charged again to swap a high reward ship from Bay 11 to Bay 6.

By this time Russ had elevated his Production from 1 to about 9, while I was at 5. His Bay 10 would yield quite a bounty, but my Bay 10 was about as impressive, so if I rolled a '10' at least I made out as well. He was routinely purchasing ships at Level 2 and sometimes Level 3. My response was to start buying ships that generated VPs and I



acquired some high VP ships at Bays 10-12 and when I finally rolled a number to collect on an 8-VP ship, I used my double reward to make it 16 VP and suddenly I was halfway to winning while Russ was at 3 VP.

That caught his attention. His combos continued to elevate his Production to as high as 15, but the VP ships were now getting scarce. He purchased what he could. I started buying Colonies with whatever I could afford, inching closer to the 40 VP finish line. Although catching up, Russ quickly realized he was not going to generate VPs fast enough to beat me to 40 and I actually reached 40 VPs during what turned out to be his last turn.

The doubling card. Once you roll it (in the 8 slot, as per upper right corner number) and put a marker in the blue box, you can use the marker to double any card benefit in any other card slot that you just rolled.

Space Base: An Hour and a Half

by Russ Lockwood

After *7th Sea*, we had some time on this weekday night, so Dan pulled out *Space Base*, a favorite card and dice game. As I've explained this over the years, I'll skip the mechanics portion.

We included the *Shy Pluto* expansion. This extension provides interesting new cards and mechanics. I'm less enthusiastic about the next expansion, *Terra Proxima*, which seems to be pushing the system a little too much, although we enjoyed the adventure aspect. The third expansion we both think stretched the system past its breaking point -- way too many overwhelming items and considerations to be fun.

Per usual, we rolled dice, bought cards, and tried to layer up the regular cards with the special cards. I had the money machine cranking, but Dan had the VP machine on standby.

His key move, or perhaps I should say the move that doubled my admiration for his card selections, was loading up the "2x" card and then unleashing its icon-doubling special ability when he rolled his slot with 8 VPs. Instantly, what had been a relatively slow and steady increase in his VP total was increased by 16 VPs. Buying a couple of VP specific cards sealed his win at 40 VPs.

Ordinarily, resource-management games are not on my favored games list, but in the case of *Space Base*, the addition of dice, the sheer number of card options, and interacting on all players' die rolls allow for multiple strategies to win and multiple ways to maximize your card benefits. No two games are the same and it's anyone's game.

Although we played in two-player mode, the interactive aspect of the game works well with three, four, five, or seven players. I've never played in a six-player game, but I'm pretty sure that works well, too.

This remains an easy-to-understand and entertaining game with myriad ways of winning. Great game, Dan.

Field of Glory: Ancients Card Game

by Russ Lockwood

Last month, I played a card game called *Milito* (see the 5/23/2025 AAR). This month, Dan pulled out *Field of Glory* card game that is quite similar. In fact, it's almost identical.

My Carthaginian Elephant card attacks with a face down supporting card. Dan is considering his options whether or not to defend and risk losing the battle and the card, or, fleeing (discarding the card) and giving me control of the terrain.



The command points paid to deploy a card in one of five terrain spots is slightly different, but paying extra for deploying to flanks is the same. Attacks are a case of adding combat factors of the deployed cards and a hidden played card is the same. This hidden card can be from your hand or a blind draw from your deck -- the same -- although the type of card used is slightly different. Flanking works slightly different as well. Still, high total wins and kills off the enemy cards, some of which are worth Victory Points that are used as a tie breaker in case neither player captures three of the five terrains.

In this game, I was the Carthaginians and Dan the Romans. We battled card for card until I ran out of cards and my three-card draw was hopeless. I had to attack at such unfavorable odds, it was almost a foregone conclusion. Dan took the first game.

In the second, I repaid the favor. One tactical change I made was to draw a blind card for combat instead of play one. This allowed me to hold onto more cards in my hand, and thus, populate the battlefield with more units. In this game, Dan was forced to attack at unfavorable odds. I took this game.

Both games were quick, even with our questions and subsequent rules look up. Entertaining.

Dredged from my memory is another ancient card game, *Pocket Battles: Rome vs Celts*, that we played way back in 2022 (see the 9/22/2022 AAR). *PB* had more of a miniatures feel to it and used d6 rolls to inflict hits on the enemy -- the number needed on the dice depending on the card. Turn 1 initiative proved deadly in our two *PB* games, as the side that won the initiative won the game.

Splendor: A Eurogame Gem

by Russ Lockwood

This resource-management (i.e. "spreadsheet" game) involves gem chits and Victory Point cards. It's quite simple: Each card (some VP ones, some not, but all are gem cards, takes a number of gem chits (red ruby, blue sapphire, green emerald, white diamond, and brown something. Each gem has four chits in the bank -- you get to pick three chits of different colors or two chits of the same color (up to 10 chits maximum per player). Collect and pay the type and number of chits listed on the card and buy the card -- which also serves as one gem. You turn in the chits but the card gems may be used each turn and are never discarded. First one to 15 VPs wins.

One wrinkle: you can select a card on credit. You take one of the cards and place it face down. You also gain one gold chit, which serves as any color gem.

Another wrinkle: The high VP cards cost lots of gems, so you often need gem cards to get them.

We played twice and I got taken to the jeweler's schoolyard and my lunch gems taken from me twice. I lost 15-6 and 15-7.

Like any spreadsheet game, you need to plan what you want. Many times I needed gems of a color but either Dan had 'em all, or -- more than I want to admit -- I was at the 10-chit maximum. In spreadsheet games, mistakes like that leave you at a disadvantage.

It's a splendid little eurogame for a spreadsheet game. I think it needs dice, but it was an entertaining hour.



Kingsburg: Resource Dice

by Russ Lockwood

It's been a while since Dan and I played this resource-management that gets elevated above the usual eurogame spreadsheet game because it adds dice. The core function is roll 3d6 and place dice on a board filled with 18 royal influencers -- from lowly merchants all the way up to the queen and king. The dice can be used to ask an influencer for resources used to buy buildings that provide benefits and often Victory Points. Of course, the more potent the building, the more resources (wood, stone, and gold) needed to build it.

Variant Development Board.

We used a variant Development Board than the original, but it still uses the same 20-building grid: five rows by four columns. You build from left to right in any row.

Dan clued into the bottom row that included an Architect's Guild. Once completed, every new building built gains one extra VP. Dan got an extra 10 VPs over the course of the game, plus 3 VPs for having the most buildings. I wish I had made the connection earlier.

A number of pre-turn benefits can go to either, and sometimes both, players. At the end of a turn, the bad guys attack. The fifth-year attack (last of the game) is the worst of all, combat factor wise, but players can buy mercenary soldiers to supplement garrisons generated by buildings.

Kingsburg, after the Demons of Turn 3.

The Game

As noted, Dan raced to build the bottom row while I scattered buildings across all five rows.

At the end of Turn 2, the goblins attacked. While I survived and picked up a resource or two, Dan lost the combat. His Currency Office was destroyed and so had to be rebuilt if he was going to get to the Architect's Guild.

That is also the last time I was ahead in the game.

Dan was fortunate to roll a 17 and use the Queen as influencer: Gain 3 VP, two resources of any type, and look at the enemy invasion card for the combat factors of the ugly-fuglies. He also rolled an 18 for the king, who gives you one of every resource plus one soldier.

Early in the game, I could not seem to roll above an 11 on 3d6. Even when granted a special fourth die, my total was only 12. Obviously, my 3d6 advisors were wholesale incompetents. I banished them to the dungeon and recruited three new d6 advisors. That move generated larger numbers, so I was able to keep relatively close VP-wise to Dan.

Then came the Demons at the end of the third turn. I had enough combat points, except, my Armory's 2 Combat Points drop to zero when fighting demons, so I lost. I lost resources and a VP and that set me back almost a full turn. I also lost personal morale because I could see that gathering resources means not building buildings. Dan pulled comfortably ahead and stayed there.

Thoughts

Kingsburg is one of the more entertaining euro games. I guess adding dice to spreadsheet games is like adding more cowbells. You always need more cowbells. Thanks Dan for the hosting and the gaming.



Terraforming Mars: Resource Management

by Daniel

For months, Steve has been lobbying me to play *Terraforming Mars* -- one of his “Top Ten” games. I’ve seen this game since Stronghold Games displayed this as a demo game in 2015, but never played it. It is a *very* popular game that has gone through several printings and many players have customized their own pieces and play-aids to enhance their gaming experience.

Steve had the “Big Box” version that included the “Prelude” and “Colonies” expansions, plus a lot of upgraded playing pieces. Note: I suggest having a prerequisite in “3D Puzzle 101” to put everything back in the box, because if it’s not placed back the same way it came out, you get to enjoy doing it over again... and probably again.

The upgrades *are* visually and/or functionally better than the original pieces and play-aids.

Cool mini tiles in the big box version.

The biggest complaint I have against the game are the cards. The card itself is large enough in size, but the printing on a number of cards (and especially the colonies) is difficult to read clearly for several reasons: The print and background have poor contrast (black printing on gray or dark colored background – why can’t they use white printing or lighten up the background colors?); the space on the card is not utilized to maximize the functional text to be as readable as possible (and remove that “flavor text”, which has no game function); the functional text is often printed with too small a font. This was true as far back as the demo game I watched in 2015, so I am surprised later printings of the game have not addressed this. More than one type of font is used among the cards, some to greater visible effect.

I had told Steve I had never played the game before, which he confirmed with me again before set up. Contrary to what I expected for a beginner game, Steve would use the expansions. He was confident that the Prelude expansion would actually speed up the game. After the game was over and I had a chance to read the rules, I found very specific Beginner rules that I believe would have rendered a faster and more satisfactory gaming experience than the six- to seven-hour marathon this turned into.

The game might be best characterized as an “Engine-building” game with a lot of resource management and manipulation to eventually accomplish the victory point goals and game-ending conditions. I believe the game can be played with a relatively simple to medium complexity, especially with some editing of the Project card deck and not using Awards and Milestones. If you add in everything, such as the expansions, this will definitely add more complexity and game-time especially for novice players – too many aspects to track.

Set-Up

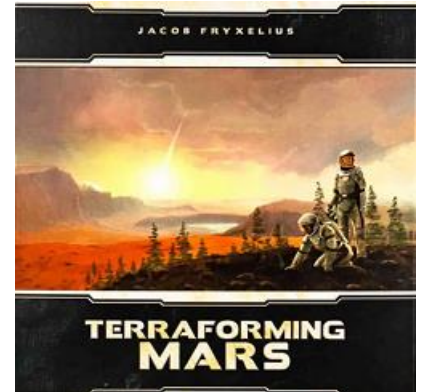
The board and play-aids were set-up. Once the Corporation cards and Project cards were distributed, I encountered my aforementioned issues about the cards being difficult to read. In the photo, you can see my magnifying glass, which I was compelled to use often.

Terraforming Mars set up. Photo by Dan.

For this game, Steve dealt two Corporation cards to each of us and then we picked one. Each Corporation card shows the starting amount of credits, one or more “Tags” that may affect game play or satisfy a requirement, and an “Effect” that can be activated during the game.

For my Corporation card, I selected “SPICE.” This has the Microbe Tag in the upper right corner and its effect impacts play of Project cards that have the Microbe Tag.

Steve then dealt four “Prelude” cards to each of us and we picked two. I did not understand this initially, but the Prelude cards actually replace the normal first turn of a standard game -- the



time-saving element to the Prelude expansion. The card text specifically stated “First turn” functions, which Steve wanted to resolve before the Set-Up was completed, which seemed counter-intuitive to me – so I started asking for the Set-Up instructions and Sequence of Play to make sure things were done properly.

Splice card.

I ended up asking Steve how many times he had played the game before and it was eight games over the last three years. That’s certainly more than me, but I could now understand why Steve might not recall everything about the set-up and game play as it’s not often enough or frequently enough to firmly learn and remember everything.

The play-aids organized the game’s primary resources cleanly: Credits, Steel, Titanium, Plants, Energy, and Heat. I soon discovered a number of other elements to keep track of with cubes: Animals, Asteroids, Floaters, and Microbes. The play and use of Corporation and Project cards often required arranging them to keep track of the different Tags (Animal, Building, City, Event, Jovian, Microbe, Plant, Power, and Science) as they may need to be counted for resolving and effect or a prerequisite to allow the play of the Project card.

The game hasn’t even started yet and I start having visions of Analysis Paralysis trying to keep track and understand all these different aspects of the game. Those visions will turn into reality soon enough.

Project card.

Sequence of Play

This is relatively simple:

1. Player Determination Phase (1st Player rotates clockwise)
2. Research Phase (4 new Project cards. Pay 3 credits for each one you want to keep.)
3. Action Phase
 - A) Play a Project card from your hand.
 - B) Use an effect on a card in play.
 - C) Claim a milestone.
 - D) Fund an award.
 - E) Use the action on a blue card.
 - F) Convert 8 plants into a greenery tile (this increases Oxygen level).
 - G) Convert 8 heat into a temperature increase (when you reach 0°C, ocean tiles can be placed).
4. Production Phase

Each round represents a “generation,” reflecting how many years it would take to actually attempt to terraform the planet. Steve mentioned the game is recommended by NASA for all the considerations and aspects the game has for such an endeavor.

Ending The Game

When all three global parameters (ocean, temperature, and oxygen) have reached their goals, the game ends at the end of that generation. Steve was very attentive to this as “free” Terraforming points are awarded for advancing some of these.



Playing the Game

The biggest challenge for the novice player is not having any familiarity with the game, so you have no prior knowledge of the Project cards or any synergies that are possible to build an engine. My biggest challenge was actually *reading* the cards to make sure I understood what each did. I watched as Steve put together some Project card combinations that earned him Terraforming Points that count towards income as well as victory points. I fell behind in that regard. Steve also found several Project cards that increased the value of his Steel and Titanium resources by 2 credits each, while I found none of these Project resource enhancement cards.

Another Project card.

What I did manage to do was increase my income by other Project cards that either increased income directly or gave me options to increase income at the expense of other resources. Other Projects allowed me to swap other resources for credits, so I at least kept parity with Steve or exceeded his income. That allowed me to play more Project cards that generated VPs. I had many Projects that “react” to actions that involved different “Tags.” Each by itself was relatively insignificant, but considering how many times all of them collectively triggered over the course of the game (I’ll estimate 50), it adds up to a lot of resources or 20-30% of your VPs – so missing those opportunities can cost you. I did generate more City tiles on Mars than Steve, but Steve’s were worth more VPs from having more “Greenery Tiles” built around them. Steve outperformed me in every other regard, including Awards, Greenery, Milestones, Oceans and Terraforming Points. I probably wasted too many credits on the colonies, which do not award any VPs. I discovered late in the game that some Projects I happened upon grant a “free” colony (instead of spending 17 credits to create one).

Colony card and claimants.

As more and more Project cards are played, the more there is to review to see what you could play and try to figure out the best time to play it or use it – or if it might help your *opponent* more than you. It truly became “Analysis Paralysis” as I continually looked at or reviewed each card, often with my magnifier lens. I’m sure I consumed more time doing this than Steve, but he was doing the same thing to optimize his game play.

The game ended in the wee hours of the morning around 2:30am and after sorting through all the categories and permutations of each aspect and Project card, Steve won 151 (or 161?) to 127. Not too bad for learning a new game the hard way as a novice by baptism of fire. I can see why the game has a wide appeal, but I have a real problem having to read cards with a magnifier the entire game.





Second Battle of Trondheim. Photos by Bruce.

Norway 1940: Final Battles

by Bruce

We conducted the fourth and final session of the double-blind Norway 1940 campaign -- see the 4/21/2025 AAR for the first two sessions and the 5/23/2025 AAR for the third session -- using *Axis & Allies* miniatures..

We picked up with Turn 12, the afternoon of April 9th and concluded at the end of Turn 15, late morning of April 10th. The game then ended by mutual agreement with some die rolls simulating potential occurrences during the remaining three turns.

Many thanks to the participants, Steve, John, Russ, Dan, James, Phil, and Garth, that made the four evenings fun and exciting.

The Campaign Continues

On the afternoon on 9 April 1940 a light breeze continued over the North Sea. The RAF sent Wellingtons and Blenheims to hit Sola Airfield again, but were met by swarms of ME 110 fighters on CAP, so promptly beat it for home.

British success at the Second Battle of Trondheim.
Photo by Bruce.

Second Battle of Trondheim

The Second Battle of Trondheim then began as *HMS Renown*, joined by two flotillas of destroyers, began to transit the fjord. The Luftwaffe reacted with HE-111 and JU-88 bombers, achieving one hit on the battlecruiser.

As the fleet passed the fort, now operated by Germans, a gunfire exchange resulted in the sinking of *HMS Impulsive*: "The Triple U-Boat Killer." Fortress fire also crippled the *HMS Hardy* before the *HMS Renown* pounded the fort into silence.

The German ships in port engaged the approaching destroyers, sinking *HMS Icarus* and crippling *HMS Hunter* while losing destroyer Z5 and having Z8 and Z10 in turn crippled. *Hipper* traded shots with *HMS Renown* but came up short, being blown up by one 15-inch salvo.



HMS Renown and *HMS Hotspur* sank the two crippled German destroyers, clearing the way to land "Force Wilfred."

The British landing force liberated Trondheim and captured two squadrons of HE 111 bombers that had just transferred in to operate at Vaernes airfield.

Battle for Stavenger.

Photo by Bruce.

Battle for Stavenger

As darkness came, the weather became calm. A cargo task force arrived in Stavenger while nearby Sola airfield was bombarded by *HMS Repulse*, destroying a JU-88 squadron. After midnight *HMS Repulse* again hit Sola, destroying another JU-88 squadron.

Simultaneously, *HMS Valiant* and the 1st Destroyer Flotilla closed on Stavenger port.

Battlecruisers meet.

Photo by Bruce.

Five German cargo ships, destroyers Z9 and Z21, and the tender *Carl Peters* were sunk. *HMS Zulu* was crippled and later scuttled.

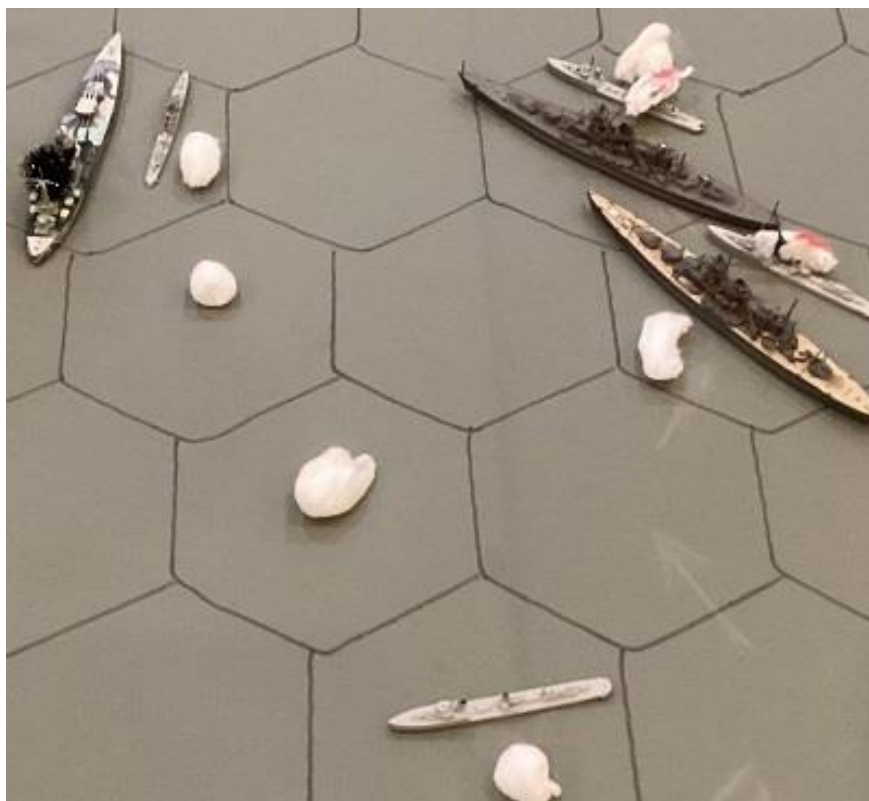
Meanwhile, southwest of Bergen, three suspicious cargo ships were challenged by light cruiser *HMS Galatea* and the 4th Destroyer Flotilla. They were found to be German and all three were sent to the bottom.

Battlecruisers close. Photo by Bruce.

Battle of the Battlecruisers

Northwest of Trondheim, the German battlecruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* escorted by destroyers Z11, Z12 and Z13 sighted the *HMS Rodney* and the Polish Destroyer Flotilla. Generating smoke early, the Germans gained the initial advantage.

In a running gun battle at close range because of darkness the weight of *HMS Rodney's* 16-inch broadsides would have blown up *Scharnhorst*, twice, if not for fortuitous smoke screening (rolling a "6" on a d6). As it was, *HMS Rodney* escaped after being stripped of its screening destroyers while sinking destroyer Z2.



Again at Trondheim

The morning of April 10 saw calm weather.

Third Battle of Trondheim. Photo by Bruce.

The Luftwaffe attacked the British cruisers unloading at Trondheim -- *HMS Devonshire*, *HMS Berwick*, *HMS York*, and *HMS Glasgow* -- with two squadrons of HE-111s while the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* pursued *HMS Rodney* into the fjord. When one squadron was shot down and the other aborted, the mass of Royal Navy ships within the fjord was reported. The two German battlecruisers then withdrew from what would have been the Third Battle of Trondheim.



Last Action

In the final action of the campaign, an invasion force bound for a second attempt at Bergen was intercepted by the 1st Submarine Flotilla, see the tenth attached photo.

In a deadly attack in wolfpack fashion, the four T-Class boats shredded the force without a scratch. The boats sank light cruiser *Karlsruhe*, torpedo boats *Luchs* and *Greif*, 4 S-Boats, and the tender *Tsingtau*. see attached eleventh photo.

With this the German High Command decided to concede the game.

U-boats encounter the Bergen force.
Photo by Bruce.



A Trio of Speculations

At the conclusion of Turn 15, we made some projections as to events for Turns 16 through 18.

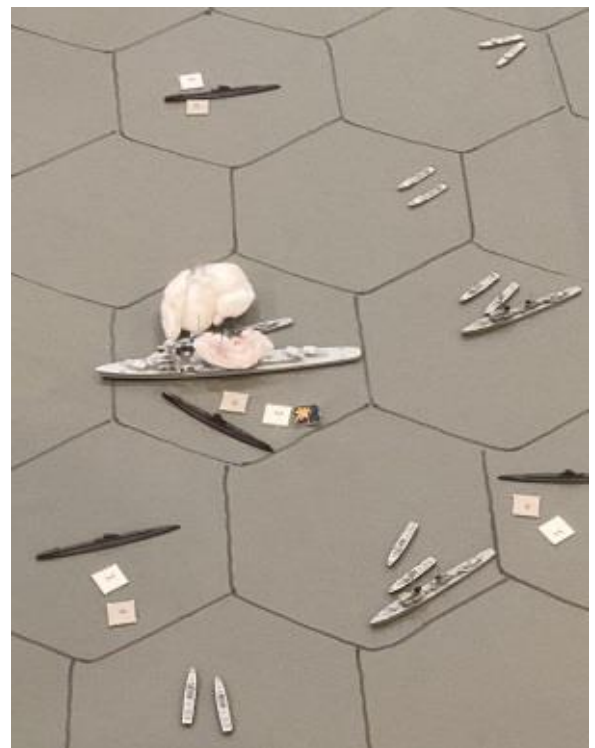
We projected the arrival of the Narvik cargo convoy: 3 Victory Points for the Germans. Bardofoss Aerodrome would fall but still needed snow removal. The new Oslo Invasion Force would arrive from Germany on Turn 17. Two attempts by dice rolls to capture it resulted in "Roll again next turn," so combat for the capital continued post-game.

Victory Points

At the conclusion of the game the points stood at:

Allies: 488 Points

Ships Sunk: 1 heavy cruiser, 4 light cruisers, 1 Training ship/minelayer, 4 torpedo boats, 4 U-boats, 7 destroyers, 4 VP boats, 4 minesweepers, 2 motor minesweepers, 12 S boats, 9 Cargo Ships, 2 S-boat tenders, 1 JU-87 squadron, 4 HE-111 squadrons, and 3 JU-88 squadrons. Total: 367 Points



Norwegian Objectives: 117 Points (Oslo, Trondheim, and Bergen)

Luftwaffe Emergency Declaration: 4 Points

Germans: 199 Points

Ships Sunk: 2 light cruisers, 15 destroyers, 3 submarines, 1 Swordfish Squadron: 155 Points

Norwegian Objectives: 36 Points (Kristiansand, Stavenger, Narvik)

Stealth Cargo Ship Arrivals: 8 Points

Thanks, Bruce: Norway Extravaganza

by Russ Lockwood

Setting up this naval miniatures campaign -- I use the term campaign, not wargame, on purpose -- takes an incredible amount of time and effort. Setting up and umpiring a double-blind campaign even more so. Even pulling together and organizing the *Axis & Allies* naval miniatures (1:1800 scale) is amazing, never mind actually umpiring the game. That's why I call this an extravaganza.

Playing in one of Bruce's double-blind creations is challenging -- *Hide and Seek* meets *Stratego* meets *Craps*. Limited search means it's difficult to find enemy forces, and, hopefully, easy to hide your forces. Yet because it's based on some sort of geographical historical objective, sea routes can be limiting. Ships and planes move, but Narvik or any other port never will. How one side gets to an objective and the other side prevents it creates the delicious tension in the game.

And, of course, dice are dice. The same (rotten) dice used in failed attacks on ports also managed to roll some spectacular naval successes. Go figure, or, such are the fortunes of tabletop war.

So, thanks Bruce, for all your efforts as well as all who joined me in rolling dice.

Marvin the Martian: 2.0

by Phil

This is Marvin 2.0. The original rules had a "Red Martian." But other than the color red, Marvin is unrelated to that poor tormented soul, Marvin 1.0.

Marvin 2.0 with his cluster of A7V eggs and his Illudium Q-36 Explosive Space Modulator. Photo by Phil.

I wrote an article 11 years ago about Marvin 1.0:

<https://philsmartianfront.blogspot.com/2014/10/the-red-martian.html>

Incidentally, Marvin's origin began with a conversation. I was trying to work out how my Martians would look.

So she asked, "Do you think you would paint one like Marvin the Martian?"

I appeared shocked, as she thought she offended my sensibilities, but I replied, "How can I NOT paint one like Marvin the Martian?"

She baked the shoes and the rest is All Quiet on the Martian Front history.

Marvin is a fixture in my blog battle reports. The story line went along the line that he was insane by Martian standards, but because he always managed to survive encounters with the humans, he was regarded as valuable. The Martians should have thought that through. Eventually, his insanity proved contagious. At the battle off Jefferson, Texas, three more "red" Martians showed up, code named Huey, Dewey, and Louie. Totally mixing the universes..

RL: You can read more about Phil's Martian battles and other endeavors at:

<https://philsmartianfront.blogspot.com>





Emperors and Empresses (l to r): Jen, Mitch, Renaud, David (standing), and Michelle. Below: At start.

Struggle of Empires: **Boardgame**

by Russ Lockwood

As part of StableCon, a "convention" in my gaming buddy's basement, Renaud set up *Struggle of Empires*, a multi-player resource management game roughly set in the 1700s. Each of us six players took a major power. I had England, but understand that all powers start off with exactly the same amount of forces and cash. Placement and initial opportunities are random.



End of War 1 (Turn 1).

As we had six players, only one short of the seven player maximum, Prussia became the non-playing empire and had some forces randomly assigned across the regions. Next came the placement of nine randomly drawn "neutral" region control markers from the 65 in a bag. Next, each player drew five neutral region control markers and placed his own markers in the assigned regions. Finally, each player in turn order



placed five military units (either army, navy, or fort) in any region on the map.

The game consists of three Turns (called "Wars") subdivided into five Phases. Each phase, a player can do two "white" actions, or one "white" and one "red" action. Actions include building units, moving units, attacking enemy region control markers, buying special effects tiles, and so on -- all listed on a player card.

Control of regions generates victory points and most VPs win.

Turn Order Bidding

One key aspect is a system of alliances. You can't attack an ally, although you don't have to help an ally, either. Allies and enemies come about through a series of pre-turn bidding actions.

At the start of every turn ("War"), the player with the gavel starts by picking two powers who are automatically enemies and bids some amount of cash. The next player can pass and accept the arrangement, or, outbid the original amount of cash and change the arrangement by switching out one or both of the powers. This goes around and around until everyone passes.

The winning bidder pays cash and the gavel goes to the next player, who proposes two more powers -- one the enemy of the other. Furthermore, the new player has to decide which of the two new powers will be the ally and enemy of the previous powers. Bidding progresses as before, with players swapping out remaining powers or passing.

In this way, our six-player game started with three allies versus three enemies. Then came the bidding for the neutral power (in our case the Prussians).

Cleverly, these allies and enemies will be bid at the beginning of each of the next two turns. So, your pal in one turn may become your enemy in the next.

Also, and subtly, this bidding process creates the turn order.

Battle for North America. Shields are control markers. Red meeples are my armies.

The Game

With allies and enemies set for the first turn, we commenced with the first player.

In our six-player game, the order was: David (Dutch orange), Jen (Russian green), Renaud (French blue), Mitch (Austrian white), Michelle (Spanish yellow), and me (English red). Hmmm. David did say it was beneficial to go first.

My random region control markers were in North America, Central America, South America, Central Germany, and Central Europe. I decided to go with a colonial strategy based on the New World. I placed one Navy in Africa because I needed one there to pick off Gold Coast trade region control markers in North and South America. I placed another Navy in South American waters to hopefully blockade the continent and gain +1 to an Army attack. I placed two Armies in South America and one Army in North America.

Now began a six-player land grab, or more precisely, region control marker grab.

It is difficult to describe every move, counter-move, attack, and deal that occurred during the first War, much less the entire game. Suffice it to say that we all searched first for easy pickings of neutral region control markers and escalated into attacks on player region control markers.

So began a flurry of attacking neutral region control markers, tile buying, and military unit building. I bought a "use once and discard" tile that gave me 4 VPs during the turn. I can honestly say I was leading for all of the first War until we tallied VPs. I can also honestly say I was in last place at the end of the first War. Hmmm. I suppose it was beneficial to go first.



Mechanic: Allies

The use of allies is a clever mechanic -- a player isn't forced to support every attack or defense by an ally, but a little wheeling and dealing here and there make for entertaining negotiating, bluffing, and other comments.

Game in progress. From l t r: David, Russ, Jen, Mitch, and Renaud. Photo by Michelle.



This is especially true at the beginning of a War when the allies and enemies (and the turn order) are in full diplomatic mode. "I'll put in two gold coins if you put in one and we'll create an alliance." Or, "I can put in two gold and you put in two gold and we'll pick two new players to be allies and enemies."

End of the Battle of the New World: Britain captures top spot in all three areas (sharing Central America with Austria).



I think the highest payday was my effort to grab a bit of Central Europe at the end of the third and final War (Turn).

As Britain, I said to Spain, "I'll give you two gold NOT to support your Dutch allies in Central Europe."

The Dutch immediately countered with, "I'll give you five gold to support me."

I immediately said, "I'll give you seven gold."

Spain took the cash. I left myself exactly two gold to pay for the attack on Central Europe.

As for the attack, it was an even up die roll and David rolled higher, thwarting my VP grab. Such are the best laid plans of mice and monarchs.

Attacking and Defending

Whoever loses an attack or defense loses one military unit (Army or Fort on land and Navy at sea) and randomly pulls an unrest token from a bag. Most tokens are worth 1 (one) Unrest Point, but some have 0 (zero) and some have 2 (two) Unrest Points. If you have 20 Unrest Points at the end of the game, revolution sweeps your kingdom and you automatically lose.

Likewise, if you impose a special two gold tax to generate funds, you pull an unrest token. There is a tile that allows you to remove an Unrest token.

Probably the unluckiest attacker was Russia in the Baltic States: a number of losses against armed neutral region control markers. Granted, most were less than 50% odds of success, but the dice proved harsh.

End Game.

On dice account, I believe I came in second for armed futility with the British Navy in North American waters: three navies sent and three navies sank to the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean. Renaud commented that since I had five Armies in North America versus only one or two enemy, I would be better off not building a Navy. Cheeky fellow! And also really funny. I took his advice and swept North America clean at least for a little while.

End Game

And that encapsulates this resource management game -- all trying to win, and certainly providing "advice" of often dubious quality, but turns passing with wit and humor.

Through the first two Wars (turns), Spain was in the lead. Yet at the end, Netherlands (David) edged out Austria (Mitch) with Spain (Michelle) a couple VPs behind. A little further behind was England (me) and Russia (Jen), with France (Renaud) a few VPs behind us.

As the game mechanic is one player goes at a time, the 15 turns can take a long time, especially with all the interplayer negotiations. I'd say we started around 10am and finished around 5:30-ish, with an hour-long break for lunch. If you figure a half hour per turn, you wouldn't be so far off.

As I was driving home, I thought *Struggle of Empires* could serve as a nice overview campaign system for miniatures.

Thanks, Renaud for hosting, Ann for a rather tasty and healthy lunch, and my fellow monarchs for an entertaining game of Empire building.

I didn't play Outer Rim, but I like the rim-shaped game board. Renaud and Jen contemplate the ramifications of cards. Photo by Michelle.



Solomons Slot: A&A WWII Naval

by Russ Lockwood

I pulled out 1:1800 *Axis and Allies* (A&A) naval miniatures for a WWII Pacific scenario loosely set in the Solomons. I say loosely because if you put the A&A mapsheets together, one half has land on the fringes. This was also inspired by Bruce's 1940 Norway game, which used A&A miniatures to game out the tactical battles.

Each A&A data card is slugged to a specific ship or aircraft and contains individual specs -- dice rolled for each type of attack (guns, torpedoes, AA, ASW, etc.), damage ratings, speed, special benefits, and so on.

It's quite clever at times. The main mechanic is an armor rating, a vital armor rating, and hull points. In a basic attack sans special abilities, a d6 roll of 1, 2, and 3 results in no hits. A 4 or 5 generates one hit. A 6 generates 2 hits. If the number of hits equals or exceeds the armor rating, the ship takes 1 damage. If in one attack (each unit's attack is rolled separately and results are not added together) the number of hits equals or exceeds the vital armor rating, the ship immediately sinks. If the ship eventually takes damage equal to the hull points, it sinks.

Torpedo attacks are slightly different. A d6 roll of 6 generates two immediate damage regardless of armor value or vital armor value. All other rolls are misses.

I should point out that aircraft use the same general mechanic and all attacks are simultaneous within a particular phase. Thus, if an aircraft squadron is shot down in the AA Phase, that squadron does not make an attack in the Air Attack Phase. If a ship is sunk in the Air Attack Phase, it is not firing in the Surface Attack Phase. And so on.

Top: Japanese starting force. Bottom: US starting force. Both: Cards show VPs (white numbers in red circles), number of die to toss (white number in green squares), and special functions (text at bottom of the card).

You can at times, especially for battleships, be rolling the proverbial bucket of dice. For example, the *USS Washington* rolls 17 dice at close (one-hex) range. You generally will get that 50-50 hit-miss ratio, but as dice are dice, you can certainly see wild swings in probability -- good and bad.

That said, special abilities can change the number of dice, the to-hit numbers, and so on. Some cards have multiple benefits, so you need to read carefully if you choose to use special abilities in your game.

The biggest disadvantage to this game is that it's a collectible game, so you have no idea what miniatures are in a sealed box. Buy a few boxes and you'll soon find yourself with a mix of common, uncommon, and rare ships, with far too many duplications. If you're trying to build a specific fleet, good luck on the random purchases. You can go to a secondary market, which can get pricey for the rare ships.

I popped into Ebay and found an official A&A *USS Essex*



aircraft carrier for \$85 plus shipping. I also found a 3D printed, unpainted 1:1800 scale *USS Essex* on Etsy for \$8 plus shipping. The quality may or may not be the same, and the Etsy ship likely wouldn't be acceptable in an official tournament (if any exist), but for friendly play, no problem. In fact, I've played with GHQ 1:2400 scale ships mixed in. Purists may gasp, but I'm a bit more flexible.

Japanese air attack on the USS St. Lo (left) and USS Enterprise.

The Game

In this sink 'em all scenario, Renaud and the Americans (166 pts) steamed out of the Slot as my Japanese (168 pts) tried to steam in. In the air strikes, the Japanese had the advantage six planes to four. I kept back one squadron of Zeros for CAP and sent the other five squadrons (one Zero escort, two Val dive bombers, and two Kate torpedo bombers) to attack the *USS Enterprise* carrier and *USS St Lo* escort carrier. Renaud had one Wildcat fighter squadron on CAP and the other as escort for his SBD and TBD squadrons.

The US attack on my *Kongo* battleship was repulsed with Zero and AA fire. My attack on the *St. Lo* was successful and the ship sank to the bottom. The *Enterprise* was made of sterner stuff, but the next turn she suffered the same sinking fate.

Yet even as my planes succeeded, our main ships headed towards the center of the map. They met in close action and the previously cold Renaud dice all of a sudden turned hot. AA fire drove off many of my air squadrons. He even shot one down.

As our ships traded fire, the *USS Washington* took a hit but pounded the *Kongo* into scrap and the Japanese battleship slipped beneath the waves. The Japanese destroyers soon followed.

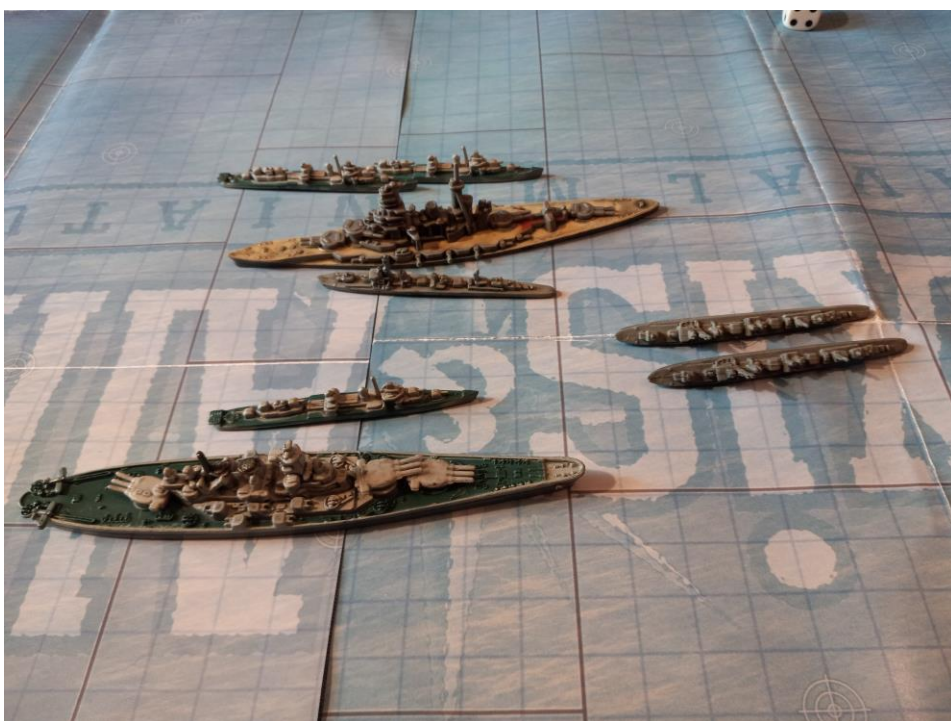
I scooted my carrier into a corner of the map and as far away from the US ships as possible, buying me a turn of aerial attacks on the *USS Washington*. If this was a campaign game, I would have been steaming for Rabaul after the *Kongo* went down, but for game play, I stuck around for my aerial attacks and inevitable US surface gunfire.

USS Washington and DDs engage Kongo, CL, and DD with gunfire.

I put two hits on the *USS Washington* from a successful torpedo strike, but the US BB still sailed. Two of the three US destroyers were sunk and the last one crippled (one damage short of sinking).

Then the *USS Washington* closed to main gun range and sunk my carrier with ease, leaving only my light cruiser as the sole survivor of the Japanese task force.

I will note that at times we both forgot to use special abilities on the cards, but figured them out as we went along. A nice scrappy game.



Lord of The Rings: MB 1978

by Russ Lockwood

This Milton Bradley game from 1978 (or so) offers an easy-to-learn and clever race game to drop the ring into Mount Doom. It even uses hexagons -- a rarity outside of the wargame world at the time.

This is not a cooperative game. You draw a hand of five cards and may either move your token one hex, play a card, roll a d6 to escape a monster, or roll a special die to "escape" a mountain hex.

Renaud chose Aragorn and I chose Legolas. The nine Nazgul tokens populated the board in their assigned starting spots and we started in the Shire.

Cards include: Move 2 or 3 open spaces, Escape Orcs, Magic Escape any monster, Escape Mountain hex, defeat a Nazgul, move a Nazgul, resurrect a Nazgul, Trade Hands, Draw a New Hand, Steal a ring, remove a ring from an opponent, and Cancel a card (except you can't cancel the Magic-labeled cards).

If your token is on a monster and none of the cards apply to escaping that particular monster, you can roll a d6 and on a 5 or 6, you escape and advance one hex. Or, you can hand the monster a ring to escape and advance one hex.

You pick up one ring in Bree and two more in Rivendell. You pick up three at Lorien, but can never have more than three in your possession. Naturally, you need at least one ring to toss into Mount Doom for the win.

Renaud wears his precious while contemplating his cards.



Cutthroat Fellowship

And we were off, playing cards, moving a hex, and escaping monsters. Of course, in this game, when you move a Nazgul off your space, you always try to move it atop your opponent. Stealing the ring was popular, too.

I arrived at Bree and then Rivendell first, but ran out of good cards and the d6 was not my friend. Renaud passed me but I finally rolled a 5 or 6 and made it to the triple split: Over the mountains, through the Mines of Moria (orcs, no Balrog), or the long way around (about twice the number of hexes, but an open path). Both of us opted for the Mountains. I made it through first, grabbed rings at Lorien and hotfooted it into and through Shelob's Lair. I was tossing rings until I only had one left.

Renaud finally made it to Lorien and bypassed Shelob into a mountain hex.

I escaped the orcs at the base of Mount Doom and got rid of the intervening Nazguls on the spiral path up to the Crack. The last monster was Gollum, but I had no escape cards.

That left Renaud a slight opening. He played a Move 3 card and caught me at Gollum. He had three rings.

It was do or die time. I had no other choice. I rolled the d6. Bounce, bounce, it rolled a 5 and I escaped from Gollum and dumped the ring for the win.

Another tight game. It plays a bit better with three and four players, but as you can see, it's competitive with two players.



Lord of the Rings: The Confrontation

by Russ Lockwood



We had a little time left, so Renaud set up this *Stratego*-like game. By random roll, I was the bad guys from Moria and Renaud the good guys from the Shire.

Each player has nine characters (hey, monsters are characters, too) to deploy on the game board. Each piece is a tile that stands up so the character, strength points, and special abilities are visible to the owner, but not the opponent.

The game board has four Mountain spaces in the middle and six spaces for each player set up in a triangle formation. For me, Moria gets four tiles, the two adjacent spaces get one tile each, and the three spaces adjacent to those get one tile each. For Renaud, the Shire holds four tiles and the other five set up one per space in his triangle. The four Mountain spaces start empty.

My set up.



Each player also gets nine cards for his hand: six with a strength point value (one to six) and three with some sort of special function. Two special cards are face up. In my case: Palantir (flip one tile to see what it is) and Recall to Mordor (teleport a tile from anywhere on the board back to Mordor space). The good guys cards were Gandalf the White and Shadowfax.

Combat is when a player moves a character tile into an enemy-occupied space. Each player plays a card and the highest strength point value wins and sends the enemy out of the game. Ties send both characters out of the game.

To win, the good guy player must get Frodo to Mordor and the bad guy player either must kill Frodo or put three tiles into the Shire.

One key point: Tiles go forward, but not backwards or sideways (unless the character text allows it).

Second key point: No characters can move or attack sideways in the Mountains, even if the tile text says they can attack sideways.

Third key point: Killing off Gandalf the Gray results in the placement of Gandalf the White. Otherwise, once a character is eliminated from the map, it's eliminated from the game.

Light vs. Dark

I didn't know much about this game, but I knew that the "tunnel" in the Mines of Moria could be clogged by the Balrog being in a specific space. So I moved the Balrog into the Mountain space.

The rest was a game of bluff and counter-bluff, although I didn't do much since I didn't know much. I did use the Wargs to advance multiple spaces and kill off a Hobbit.

Lots of battles were ties, so we depopulated the board quickly. Well, maybe it was quickly. I don't know, this being my first game. One of my characters could move and attack sideways, which I cleverly tried to do in the Mountains, only to be reminded Mountains prevent sideways movement.

In any case, during the late game phase, I was whittled down to only two characters, one less than needed to get into the Shire. I thought that was game over right then.

However, Renaud reminded me that I could win by killing Frodo. I had one tile almost in the Shire and the other just in front of Mordor. So I used the Recall to Mordor card to teleport my most advanced bad guy back to Mordor.

Late game: I try to get to the Shire...

Weak Point

Here is a weak point in the mechanics. When you empty your hand of cards, you reshuffle the discard pile to create a new hand.

As I had used both face up cards (Palantir and Return to Mordor) and Renaud had only used one (Shadowfax) of his two face up cards, he used up his hand of cards first. That allowed him to retrieve all his discard cards, refilling his hand with powerful cards. I had one low-value strength point card left in my hand.

The ensuing combat meant the end of my guy in Mordor. Frodo waltzed in and dropped his dime in the jukebox.

At the time, we couldn't figure out why I had one card left. Thinking about it, the above explains it. If both players pick up their discards when one player does, that would even it out ... but ... that penalizes the player who managed his cards better.

Otherwise, this *Stratego*-ish game had some interesting choices to make at times. I imagine that with only nine pieces (more apparently in an expansion) and limited map spaces, you might be able to figure out character placements and key spaces, not to mention being more familiar with all the special abilities. Of course, replaying any game multiple times provides those benefits.

Still, for a quick game, *LOTR Confrontation* had some good depth and presented some thoughtful decision making. Thanks for the game, Renaud.



NEWS

Inkwell Hexploration Card Deck: Free Download

by Russ Lockwood

Inkwell Ideas raised about \$63,000 to continue producing its Hexploration Card Decks and Tiles. I know them more from their Hexographer and Worldographer mapping software, of which I am a customer, but these items seem a logical extension.

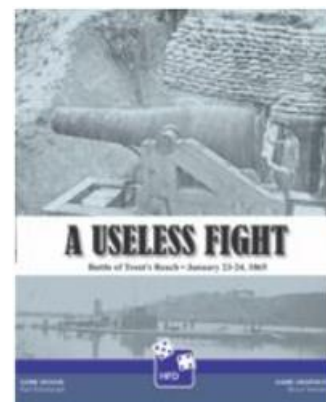
These cards can be used in your adventure RPGs.

The best part is that owner Joe Wetzel is making a 54-card deck a free 65MB PDF download. They look exactly as advertised in his crowdfunding pitch. I also downloaded the scenario and you can also watch a video as well as download a 45-hex tile zip file.

The link:

<https://www.backerkit.com/c/projects/inkwell-ideas/hexploration-decks-hexcrawl-sandbox-rpg-support?syclid=d0u7r69ruv1s73alok5g>

Inkwell home page: <https://inkwellideas.com/>



A Useless Fight: ACW Ironclads Wargame

by Russ Lockwood

High Flying Dice released the wargame *A Useless Fight* that showcases the last major naval battle fought between ironclads during the American Civil War. When all

but one of the USA ironclads guarding the James River were withdrawn for their attack on Fort Fisher, and the winter's rising waters had submerged much of their enemy's defenses, the CSA's James River Squadron seized the opportunity to attack.

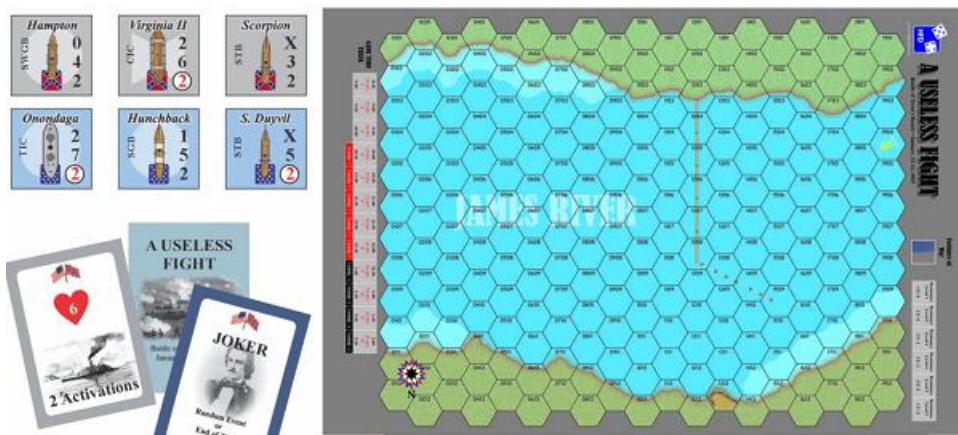
The game contains: One 11x17-inch hex mapsheet; One sheet of 132 single-sided, un-mounted counters; Three pages of game tables and rules summaries; and 10 pages of rules. Cost: \$18.95

plus shipping/handling and state sales tax. Mounted counters can be had for an additional \$8.00. A custom card set costs \$11.00 plus shipping/handling/sales tax.

Each turn represents 30 minutes. Each hex is about 200 yards across. Each unit represents 1 warship or a battery of 6-10 cannon. Players need to provide one standard deck of playing cards, one six-sided die, and one ten-sided die.

Designed by Paul Rohrbaugh and features graphics by Bruce Yearian.

Info: <https://www.hfdgames.com/trent.html>



HMGS Outreach: Growing Historical Gaming

by Dave Allnutt

On behalf of the Outreach Committee, I would like to provide an update on the Committee's progress over the last three months. We are very excited about the opportunities we have to further grow our community.

Our mission is to promote, aid, and assist in the growth of historical gaming and interest in military history to the general public and non-historical gamers.

Let me introduce our hardworking committee: Cliff Brunken, Kevin Carroll, Lee Gaddis, John Hollier, Frank Preziosa, Jim Stanton, and Hayes Wauford. All of these gentlemen share the same passion and commitment to HMGS, Inc. and our hobby.

The Committee has been working diligently on the following: Definition of what an Outreach event is and what it is not; Submitting a budget for outreach activities in 2025; Creating a list of major non-historical conventions that we will put major Outreach effort into this year; and Putting in place key program foundations that are needed to ensure a strong program that will serve as a blueprint for the future, regardless of changes to our Board of Directors or the Outreach Committee.

One of the most important decisions we have made is to divide our geography into territories, each having its own Outreach Coordinator to help steward and guide outreach activities in their area. These new Outreach Coordinators will help enhance and organize current activities as well as look for new ones. The five initial territories are: Greater Boston, Greater Philadelphia, Greater Pittsburgh, North/South Carolina, and Washington DC Metro.

Cliff Brunken and Hayes Wauford have agreed to be the initial coordinators for Greater Philadelphia and North/South Carolina, respectively. We are looking for coordinators for the remaining areas.

Contact the Outreach Committee for more information about being an Outreach Coordinator: outreach@hmgs.org



Cold Wars 2026: And Beyond!

by Frank Preziosa, CW Director

HMGS' Cold Wars 2026 convention will be held February 5-8, 2026 at the Wyndham Lancaster Host and Convention Center (former Lancaster Host). More info about theme, registration, hotel, and so on to be determined.

Cold Wars 2027 will be held February 4-7, 2027 at the Wyndham Lancaster Host and Convention Center. Cold Wars 2028 will be held February 3-6, 2028 at the Wyndham Lancaster Host and Convention Center.

Info: Director@coldwars.org

Medieval and *LOTR*: 3D Printed Figures

by Russ Lockwood

Chris Parker Games announces a series of 3D printed figures.

The Medieval Peasants With Spear And Shield pack comes with six unpainted, single-piece plastic miniatures. Bases are not included. Cost is \$16.00 (28mm), \$22.00 (40mm), and \$36.00 (54mm) plus 75 cents packing fee.

The peasants are revolting!

The Medieval Mounted Archer Drinking From Waterskin pack comes with one unpainted, single-piece plastic miniature (horse and rider). Bases are not included. Cost is \$6.00 (28mm), \$9.00 (40mm), and \$16.00 (54mm) plus 75 cents packing fee.

The *Lord Of The Rings* Elven Courtiers pack comes with two unpainted, single-piece plastic miniatures. Bases are not included. Cost is \$6.00 (28mm), \$9.00 (40mm), and \$16.00 (54mm) plus 75 cents packing fee.

The *Lord Of The Rings* Armored Trolls pack comes with three unpainted, single-piece plastic miniatures. Bases are not included. Cost is \$15.00 (28mm), \$24.00 (40mm), and \$30.00 (54mm) plus 75 cents packing fee.

The *Lord Of The Rings* Elvin King pack comes with two unpainted, single-piece plastic miniatures (one foot and one horse and rider). Bases are not included. Cost is \$10.00 (28mm), \$14.00 (40mm), and \$24.00 (54mm) plus 75 cents packing fee.

The Dragon pack comes with one unpainted, single-piece plastic miniature. Bases are not included. Cost is \$15.00 (28mm), \$24.00 (40mm), and \$30.00 (54mm) plus 75 cents packing fee.

A dragon.

More info: www.chrisparkergames.com



American Revolution Wargame: *Trying Men's Souls*

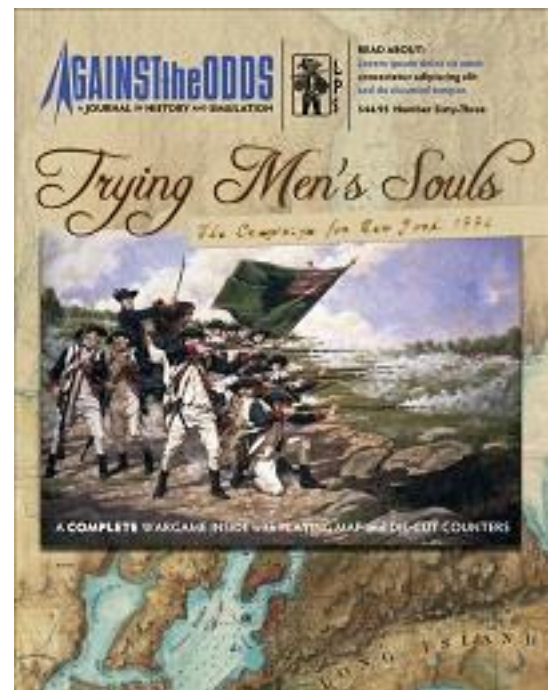
by Russ Lockwood

Against the Odds magazine is now taking pre-orders for the American Revolution Wargame *Trying Men's Souls*, which will be in Issue 63. Info: www.atomagazine.com/Details.cfm?ProdID=191

In early 1776, King George III convinced hardliners in Parliament to raise a massive army and fleet that would bring the colonists to heel and end the rebellion. During July a British fleet of over 400 ships, including 73 warships, arrived in New York harbor and disgorged its troops to initially occupy undefended Staten Island. In August, the fleet ferried over 32,000 men onto the shores of Long Island. Opposing them was the largest American army ever assembled with 23,000 men under the command of General George Washington.

Inside the issue, the game will tentatively contain: Map - One full color 22x34-inch area mapsheet; Counters - 280 full color half-inch die-cut counters; Rules length - 12 pages; Charts and tables - 2 pages; Complexity - Medium; and How challenging is it solitaire? - Average.

Design - Paul Rohrbaugh. Graphics - Mark Mahaffey. Development - Russ Lockwood (me).

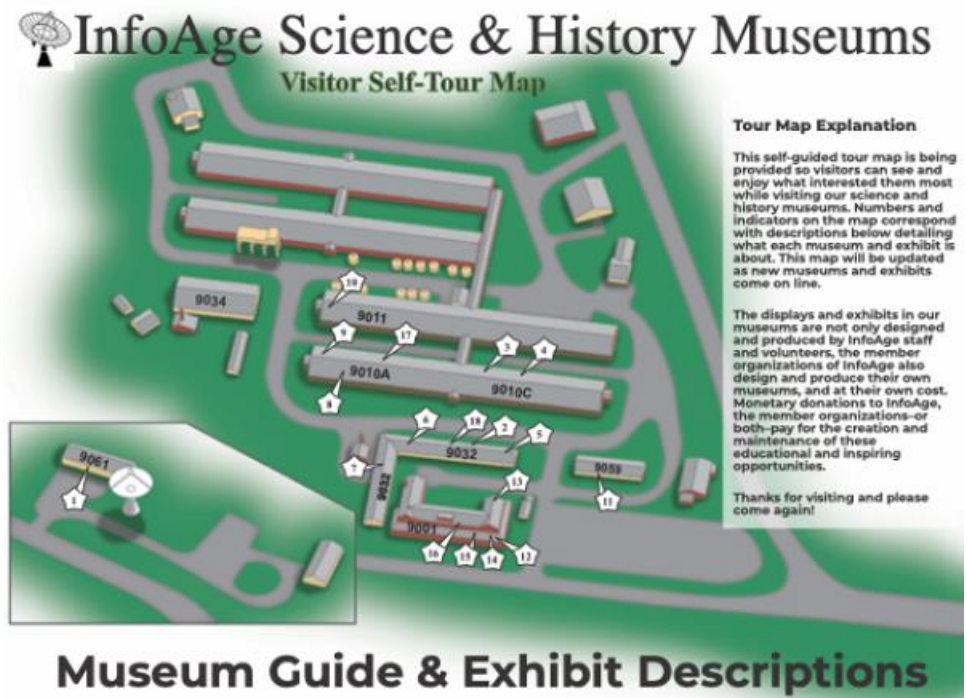


InfoAge: Museum Collective

by Russ Lockwood

On a former military base near NJ's shore stands a collection of museums under the umbrella name InfoAge Science and History Museums. The main draw for me on a Wednesday afternoon was the Computer Museum, but I read about a radio museum, model RR setup, and communications museum also mentioned. As it was on Marconi Road, I figured it has something to do with Marconi.

I had no idea it held far more than those museums, including a WWII military vehicle museum.



Entrance

The building used to be the "hotel" where Marconi housed workers researching radio communications. It's \$12 per person entry fee. Free parking.

Down the hall are a number of exhibit rooms, mostly with photographs and videos: Women's History at Fort Monmouth and Camp Evans, African-America History, and September 11. Other rooms held covered the American Revolution and War of 1812, including dioramas of various battles.

A room for WWI also contained a number of dioramas, photos, and videos.

Of note is the recreation of a fall-out shelter: double beds, cupboard with cans, closet of clothes. It's a little tight in there and there were only two of us.



Model Railroad

A special exhibition of the Raritan Valley Model RR Club took up a large room using S-gauge scale. The trains chugged around a long oval, with a wide variety of buildings all lit up.

We exited the main buildings and headed for the renovated barracks.

Raritan Valley Model RR Club special exhibition. Impressively long layout filled with interesting mini-dioramas.



Outside

Two outside exhibits: one was a Beechcraft RC-12 Guardrail signals intelligence aircraft introduced to the US fleet in the 1980s. Its mission was to intercept signals via a variety of sensors.

The other seemed to be some sort of radar or communications units.



Military Technology

This collection of trucks, jeeps, a M-22 Locust light tank, and variety of other military equipment was a complete and pleasant surprise to me. The article that clued me into InfoAge talked about the model RR and the computer museum, but not this marvelous collection of WWII vehicles.

Dodge vehicles.

Of note, a couple of one-of-a-kind vehicles.

Before there was a DUKW, the AquaCheetah was first -- designed by Roger W. Hofheins and built in Buffalo, NY. He apparently approached the US Army just before WWII with an idea about an amphibious vehicle. Wikipedia notes that four prototypes were made for testing.

AquaCheetah.

According to one of the docents, the vehicle on display is the only surviving AquaCheetah.

As you wind your way down one side of the barracks and back around again, you'll find a Ford two-person jeep-like prototype that is still operational. The Army cancelled the development contract after one prototype was built. As there was no contract to be bid for, some shortcuts were taken in marrying US and British parts on the prototype.

For example, that yellow square is the original Bakelite to prevent some sort of electrical problem. The radiator is dented because the headlight assembly didn't quite fit.

Ford prototype light vehicle.

Elsewhere, a collection of real and replica helmets trace the designs used to protect soldiers' heads. Uniforms and other equipment are interspersed in rooms and in between vehicles.



One gallery held a 37mm AT gun and a 40mm Bofors AA gun -- amazing what a 3mm difference can mean in the size and weight of the total package.

37mm AT Gun and an Air Drop Dozer.

Lots of jeeps were there, including one holding an XM-28 "Davy Crockett" recoilless gun that fired a tactical nuclear warhead. Wikipedia says that it was called the Battle Group Atomic Delivery System and deployed between 1961 and 1971.

The jeep and the gun on display are an original match -- an odd path of history saw the gun abandoned in a field and later reunited to appear in the museum. Just to be clear, the tactical nuke warhead and projectile is a reconstruction.

There's much, much more, including post-war civilian Jeep models.

Davy Crockett tactical nuke system attached to the side of a jeep.

Another RR

Actually, there were two more model RR layouts in the museum when I visited. One was under construction by Garden State Central RRers in a separate room. It looked to be two 50-foot long

sections linked by a short six foot connection at the end. Even though it was not fully functional or operating, the wiring underneath the layout was quite impressive. I believe it will be HO scale.

The other model RR was operating and was HO scale. This oval layout had a number of whimsical dioramas, including a small Godzilla movie in production.

The rest of the exhibit of halftracks and other military vehicles was closed to make room for this layout.

Filming Godzilla as the train with tanks passes by.

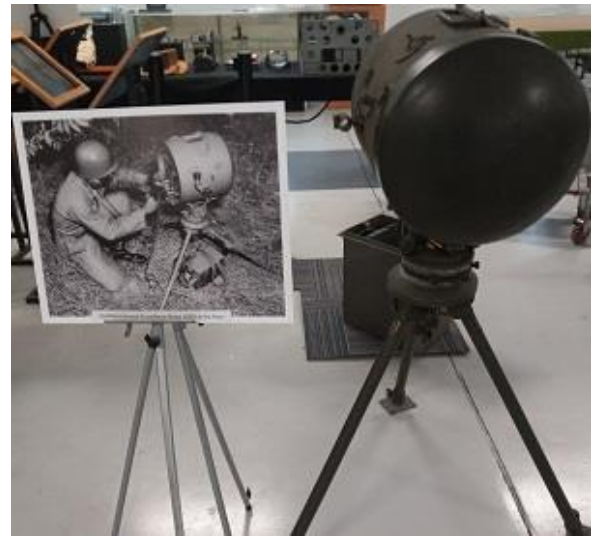


Radar Love

In another barracks was the Military Radar and Electronics museum. Lots of equipment was on display.

I didn't know any of it, although I found an odd item: a Hot Wheels radar gun. A little web searching found a manual -- it had 1:1 speed and a special 1:64 speed specifically for Hot Wheels cars. Whaddayaknow?

AN/PPS-4 Ground Radar system.



WWII Room

This was actually a couple of rooms, mostly with a sizable collection of photos, models, and dioramas. Nothing unusual for us grognards, but likely new to school groups that wander through. A few yellow school buses were in the parking lot.

Chatting with Steve Lang, the VP of marketing and a trustee of InfoAge, he noted that 140 kids were in the museum when we were. Other than one time, never ran into the group -- that's how big the museum is.

Shipwreck Museum

A double-sized room contained artifacts, mostly off NJ from what I can tell. gathered by divers. I didn't think I would spend as much time as I did reading the various explanations and recaps of items on display, but I did.



WWII Homefront

This was a clever display. The room is circa early 1940s with two easy chairs facing a fireplace and a large cabinet-sized radio in the corner. A touchscreen allows you to select different radio programs -- music, sports, etc. This was a pleasant 10-minute interlude, especially because we had been walking for a few hours by then.

These models and photos were in the World War I (not II) room..



Radio and TV

An old radio and TV collection formed another museum within the InfoAge complex. Programs ran, a kids room allowed for hands on exhibits (big kids, too), and a black and white TV camera from WOR in NYC showed live feeds from the museum floor.

Silly me, I couldn't figure out why it could track me in focus as I walked away from the unit. The docent noted that it was a button camera taped to the top that was doing the actual video. That's technology for you. All the functions of a big unit embodied in a camera the size of a postage stamp.

Computer Museum

Speaking of technology, the Computer Museum was a delight -- a real trip down nostalgia lane for me. Best of all, all the early personal computers worked. Even the PDP-8 worked -- big as a small refrigerator, of course, but I remember playing *Adventure* on a PDP-8.

A DEC PDP-8 that still works.

That said, I mis-remembered. It was a PDP-10 and was called *Colossal Cave Adventure*. I also recall being eaten by a grue, but I mis-remembered that as well. That was *Zork I*, also on a PDP-10 and later on a personal computer (InfoCom was the company).

One display had a large guided missile computer from a 1960s US Navy ship. Next was a wall of TRS-80 (with cassette storage device), Apple II, IBM PC, and other personal computers.

Doug, the docent, asked if I had been in the industry. I replied, "Sorta. I was an editor for various computer magazines."

"Which ones?"

Let's see how far back he goes. "*Creative Computing*."

"Ah, Dave Ahl's magazine."

"And his *Basic Computer Games* book. First million seller

computer book."

So he brought me over to the Dave Ahl shelf. Dave had donated some items, including a TRS-80 Model 100 -- a sorta early version of a laptop -- and a copy of his book. Both items signed. I remember him using the Model 100 at CC. I probably bored Doug with memories, hopefully correctly remembered ones.

Dave Ahl signed the Model 100 and the book.

I'm not sure what I still have in the attic from those days, but the museum's expanding and will take donations. I have no idea if my computers still work after all these decades. Maybe I'll get my own shelf.

A nifty museum.

Working dinosaurs, er, computers from the heyday of my computer magazine career.

More Not Seen

The museum is open Noon to 5pm on Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays. We couldn't see all the buildings because we had spent a solid four and a half hours walking around.

I will have to go back to see the other museums,



including a space museum and a computer makerspace set up. There is also a Marconi Tower historic site I missed between InfoAge and Rte 18. The first commercial TransAtlantic communications installation was here, sez the web.

They have more buildings in need of renovation, so plenty of room for expansion. Maybe we need a national wargame museum here?

InfoAge is at 2201 Marconi Rd., Wall, NJ 07719. web site is www.infoage.org and phone is 732-280-3000.

InfoAge is about one minute off Rte 18 and easy to get to via I-195/Rte 138 and also real close to the Garden State Parkway. From Trenton, NJ on I-195 it's about an hour.

More Photos

Still from original AquaCheetah testing video.



St. Mere Eglise diorama in WWII room.



Fallout shelter pantry.



Trailers and gear on display.



Tarawa diorama in WWII room.





Medieval naval warfare.

HMGS Next Generation: History With Miniatures

by John Spiess

June was a very busy month for Next Gen. We are really trying to push the Historicon convention. We have events scheduled in New Canaan, Somers, Trumbull (new client), Greenwich, and Ridgefield. This is in addition to our new summer camp program at the Hackley School in Tarrytown. That runs the entire week starting June 23rd. Sessions are three hours per day. Jim Stanton and I will run those classes with some help from Sarah Prosser, who has agreed to be one of our new facilitators.



Medieval Navies in Darien: CT

I ran the medieval cog game again today at the Darien library. We will be running this game all day on Friday (three sessions) at Historicon as part of the kids program, so I wanted to get a bit more practice at running the game.

I had a full house of 13 kids. At first, 11 signed up, but then two girls just walked in and wanted to play. They left for Karate class before I could take the group photo, but you can see them in the other photos.

The game was complete and joyous bedlam. Even though the doors were shut, I was still worried that the amount of screaming was carrying into the entire library. As they didn't shut us down, I guess we were okay.



Bunker Hill in Rye: NY

Since the 250th anniversary of Bunker Hill is next week, Rye had requested this game as part of their summer program. We also had some kids from Larchmont attend since they keep track of each other's events. I was also pretty happy to find out that four of these nine kids will be at Historicon with at least one parent.

The battle went pretty much as expected. The British first wave got hammered. You can see before and after photos of the first line. The game ended with the British combined grenadiers charging into the redoubt forcing the Patriots to withdraw.



Books I've Read

By Russ Lockwood

The Resurrected Pirate. by Craig S. Chapman. Hardback (6.3x9.3 inches). 256 pages. 2025.

Subtitle: *The Life, Death and Subsequent Career of the Notorious George Lowther*

This biography is a generally fast and sweet read about a British Royal Navy sailor who signs up on a ship that's part of an expedition to reassert British hegemony over Gambia in Africa.

Alas, the expedition is under the aegis of the Royal African Company, sort of like a poor relative of the East India Company. Led by a corrupt RN commander and even worse local RAC officials, the expedition suffers starvation and disease until George Lowther schemes with an Army captain to seize the warship, defang the fort, and sail away to begin new careers as pirates.

It's all delightfully told, not only the sea-going escapades of Lowther and company, but overall pirate life in the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico in the early 1700s. Forget Hollywood. Forget the *Pirates* computer game. Most captures were simple affairs of shot across the bow and surrender. Every once in a while, some outgunned merchant ship put up a fight, but not for long. Far more dangerous were the rare warships which patrolled the seas.

Nice to know that Lowther once may have considered heading into Lockwood's Folly (North Carolina) as a safe harbor (p120).

Lowther comes across as a relatively humane pirate, as opposed to his fellow pirate Captain Low, who cuts a murderous swath through the region, especially against ships out of New England.

Lowther even manages to survive, marry, and remain alive in obscurity. He eventually aids the British during a war with Spain and receives a pardon. He becomes a Royal Navy lieutenant aboard the British flagship. That's all the more amazing since most pirates ended up dancing on air at the end of a rope.

The book contains 20 black and white illustrations, five color illustrations, nine black and white maps, and five color photos.

What an interesting book.

Enjoyed it.

All The World At War. by James Charles Roy. Hardback (6.5x9.5 inches). 772 pages. 2023.

Subtitle: *People and Places 1914-1918*

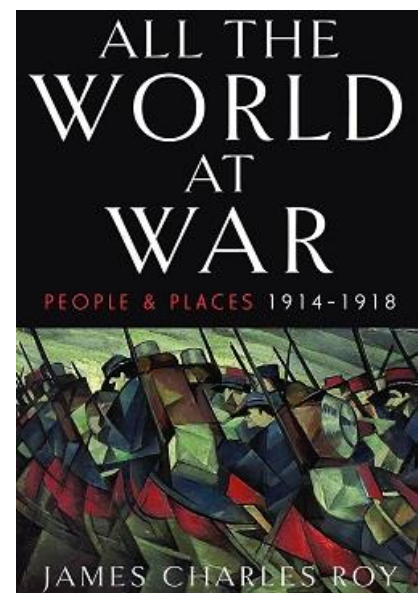
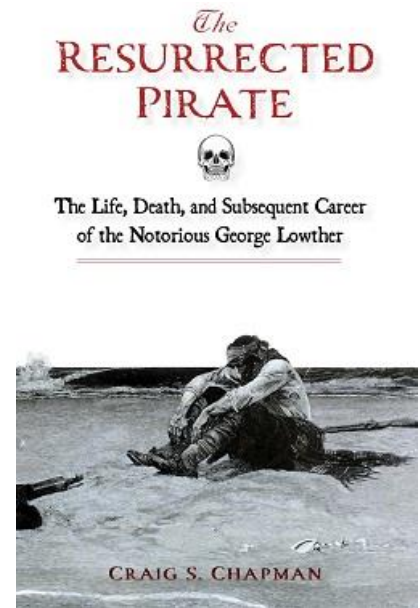
This thick tome looks imposing, but the smooth prose makes this an accessible recap of notable battles and officers of WWI. Certainly, many a battle on a wide variety of fronts are missing, but enough are presented to analyze the war's impact on the soldiers and society.

Covered are: Pre-war posturing and manipulations, Liege, Tannenburg, Gallipoli, Verdun, Passchendaele, Ireland, Jutland (and the navies in general), Russian revolution, Lawrence of Arabia, Von Richthofen (and the air war in general), and the Versailles Peace Talks and resulting Treaty of Versailles.

That list is just a list. The information within is quite well ordered, well written, and results in explanations of the impact of each of these on the war as a whole.

One typo: "tao" (p162) should be "to." Also, one curious off-hand remark about post-war problems claims that France did not develop a bomber in the 1930s that could deliver a full payload on Berlin (p562), which is suspect. The French Air Force, which suffered a whole host of problems, may not have bombed Berlin in 1939, but bombers with range were available.

The book contains four black and white maps, 83 black and white photos, five black and white illustrations, five color photos, and 10 color illustrations.



It's a credit to Roy's skill that this was such a readable account of WWI. Sure, it "only" hits the highlights of the war, but it includes plenty of chronological highlights to offer insight into how the war started, how it progressed, how it ended, and how the victors set up the next world war. Well done.

Enjoyed it.

Paper Dreams: A History of Play-By-Mail Gaming. by David K. Spencer.
Softcover (5.5x8.5 inches). 193 pages. 2025.

A long time ago, I played in a couple of *BattlePlan* play-by-mail (PBM) games run by Flying Buffalo. Played out on a *Risk*-style map of Western Europe, you built your forces, attacked, and tried to conquer NPC neutrals and player countries.

So, I was interested in this new book about PBM-ing. Of the text, pages 1 through 113 covers the history and the rest are lists of companies, games, and footnotes. Interesting that some games continue to this day, albeit via e-mail.

As for the history, decade by decade, the book presents a breezy overview of companies that started and failed, games that began or not, and trends in the rise and fall of PBM. The vast majority are turn-based games: players send in a turn by a deadline, the company processes turns within each game, and the results are mailed back.

There's not a lot of depth for each company. The majority get a sentence at best, and games are often mentioned in passing. Every so often, you'll get a paragraph or two, but that's rare.

The problem is much of the documentation is lost. In the early days, one-man companies lasted a short time and folded. Very few live interviews were available for the book, although a 2024 Richard Lockwood interview of Neil Packer (creator of the game *Saturnalia*) is listed in the footnotes. That said, I'm amazed that Spencer found as much material from the 1970s as he did. I get that Flying Buffalo claimed more than 10,000 players during its heyday, but the book contains references to a multitude of companies and games.

Note: this book does not cover Massive Multiplayer Online (MMO) games or privately run, non-commercial games. The former is outside the scope and the latter is uncountable with any accuracy.

One typo: "noting that it some found it offensive" (p31) should have the first "it" deleted.

The book contains 15 black and white images.

I enjoyed this stroll down nostalgia lane, even if I had never heard of 95% of the games and companies mentioned. If I have a complaint, it's that I wanted to read more about the individual games, companies, and creators behind it all. And yet, the sheer number of games and companies he found even sketchy information on is amazing.

Enjoyed it.

Persia Triumphant in Greece: Xerxes Invasion. by Manousos E. Kambouris.
Hardback (7.1x10.0 inches). 226 pages. 2022.

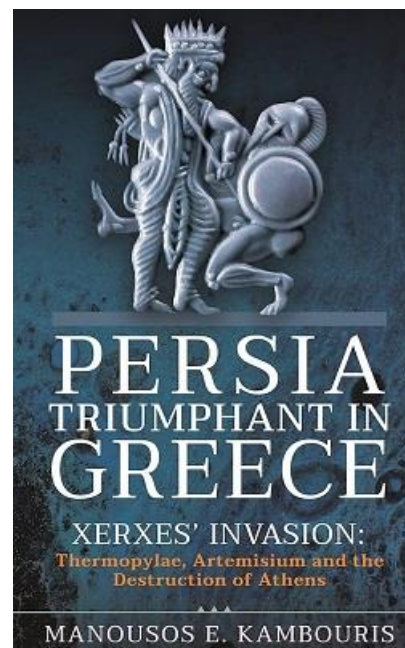
Subtitle: *Thermopylae, Artemisium and the Destruction of Athens*

The second book in a trilogy examines the Persian invasion of Greece.

This enlightening examination and comparison of ancient sources discusses the composition of the Persian Army, from its loss at Marathon to its invasion under Xerxes. Of particular note is an idea that the ancient numbers may not have been exaggerations as conventional wisdom insists. A significant amount of time is spent on logistics and comparisons of other Persian recruitment drives and levies. The 1.8 million Persian figure may include a number of other bodies, not necessarily main combatants.

On the flip side, his analysis of Spartan and Greek numbers at Thermopylae may indicate more Spartans than the 300 mentioned. As an example, he asserts the Persian Immortal unit of 10,000 troops contained 1,000 elite troops and 9,000 veteran troops. Likewise, he asserts the "Spartans" were 1,000 Lacedaemonians in number, of which 300 were the elite King's bodyguard (p75).

The initial battle for the pass was a Persian attack off the march with light troops. It was repulsed. Another attack, reinforced by those 1,000 elite Immortals, was also repulsed. The tactics used by both sides get an extensive analysis. The



discussion about what constitutes the "wall" (or gates) at the pass is fascinating.

The Spartan strike against Xerxes himself is an interesting special operations move taken in part out of desperation. The attrition in Spartan men and weaponry is well told.

The ship tactics, fleet strategy, and numerical analysis are quite good.

One goofy description that should have been edited out: comparing Thermopylae terrain to the "Doors of Mordor" from *Lord of the Rings* (p71). Ah....no. You might as well speculate about the use of a Rhinoceros from the movie *300*.

One odd language quirk: comparing the stand at Thermopylae with the Texan stand at "Los Alamos." I get the Spanish nomenclature, but for the American audience, "The Alamo" will do fine. The sentiment about being a delaying action until mobilization could occur is indeed apt.

One typo (p144): "Tthe" has an extra letter t.

The book contains three color photos, 22 color illustrations, and 11 color maps. The maps and most images are all rudimentary, and that's being kind, but get the points across.

You may or may not agree with his depiction and analysis of the forces and Battle of Thermopylae, but it is well presented and well reasoned. The grappling of ancient sources, numbers, and descriptions makes you think, and rethink, how this famous battle played out. I gave a positive review of his first book in the trilogy: *The Rise of Persia And The First Greco-Persian Wars*. The same goes for this second book. I eagerly await the third.

Enjoyed it.

Black Hearts and Painted Guns. by Kelly C Eads and Daniel S. Morgan.
Hardback (6.3x9.3 inches). 176 pages. 2023.

Subtitle: *A Battalion's Journey Into Iraq's Triangle of Death*

This boots on the ground view of fighting in Iraq from 2005 to 2007 describes the tension and accomplishment of the 2nd Battalion, 502nd Regiment, 101st Airborne Division. Eads spent two tours helping clear a deadly infestation of insurgents in the Yusifiyah area.

His service certainly will give you an education about the different types of IEDs the insurgents created, from pressure-plate mines to buried 500-pound bombs. In the Yusifiyah area, the insurgents often laid multiple IEDs of different types as part of an ambush. His unit, often led by Morgan, fought through many ambushes and disarmed many IEDs to accomplish missions.

It was not without cost. Losses accrued from IEDs and firefights, even with Apache helicopters and drones overhead.

When he transferred to the Scout platoon, he and his team laid ambushes for insurgents. One interesting intel coup: insurgent Garmin GPS units. These recorded waypoints for the insurgents and when captured, were sent for downloading and analysis. This info was then returned to troops in the field for operations to interdict supply lines, grab caches, and lay ambushes.

The book contains 57 color photos and one color illustration of the Black Heart emblem. The Painted Guns part of the title refers to camouflage painting of Scout platoon guns.

Interesting examination of modern counter-insurgency warfare.

Enjoyed it.

The Crimean Offensive 1944. by Ian Baxter. Softcover (6.7x9.3 inches). 128 pages. 2025.

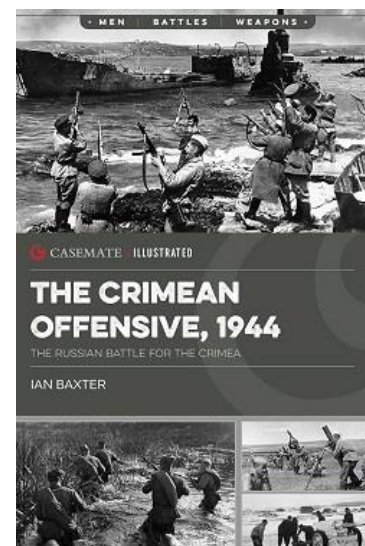
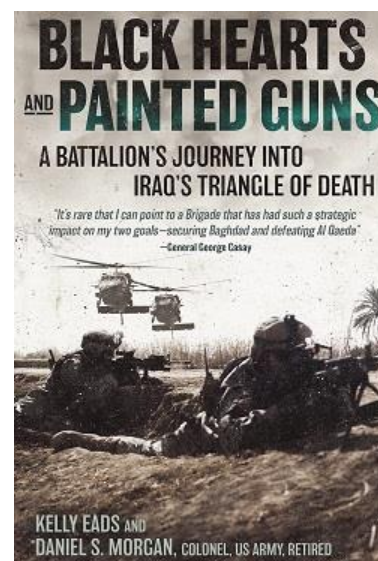
Subtitle: *The Russian Battle for the Crimea*

Half of this *Casemate Illustrated* volume has little to do with the Crimea -- it starts with 1941 and the initiation of Operation Barbarossa. A four-page timeline covers from Oct 1943 to May 1944.

The 1944 Soviet attack starts on page 58 with the Kerch-Eltigen offensive and the bare-bones overview continues all the way to the fall of Sevastopol. Lots of commander mini-biographies and first-person accounts are included.

The booklet contains 144 marvelous black and white photos, one color photo, 16 color uniform illustrations, three fairly useless color maps, and four color camouflage tank profiles.

Casemate has the illustration aspect down pat, but the text is skimpy in regards to matching the book title.



Roman Empire at War. by Don Taylor. Softcover (6.2x9.2 inches). 216 pages. 2022 reprint of 2016 book.

Subtitle: *A Compendium of Battles From 31 BC to AD 565*

Back in 2000, Greenhill Books published *Battles of the Greek and Roman Worlds* by John Montagu that offered encyclopedia-like entries of 667 battles up to 31 BC (BCE), including 33 black and white maps and battle plans. *Roman Empire at War* duplicates the format, bringing the chronology forward to 565 AD (CE) and concentrating on only the Roman Empire battles. Indeed, even the "battle plans" are identical in format -- colored rectangles and bars on minimalist (if any) terrain.

The 243 battles (p46 to p187) begin after a nice overview of the changes to the Roman Army and Navy over the centuries and a discussion about the who's who in ancient sources.

Each battle description consists of a short recap and the ancient text sources used as well as 37 black and white maps scattered through the descriptions. Only the major battles are listed, so this book might be a good place to start if you heard about a battle and wanted just a smidgen more information.

A couple typos (p85): the commander "Thorismund" in the text is "Torismund" in the accompanying map, and later in the page, "ecentre" has an extra "e" at the beginning of the word.

Troop numbers are often representative instead of actual in ancient texts, so the numbers have been omitted in the book. Taylor makes no attempt at "intense analysis" -- this is straight up "harmonizing" and summarizing of ancient authors' accounts (p vii).

I read through the first half of the book and the consistency is quite good, although I would be remiss not to mention that 25 years of internet expansion make these Wikipedia-like entries a bit quaint. That said, this is still going on my bookshelf next to *Battles of the Greek and Roman Worlds* as a paper reference of battles through to 565 AD (CE).

Enjoyed it.

Night Fighter Aces of the Luftwaffe 1943-45. by Neil Page and Jean-Louis Roba. Softcover (6.7x9.3 inches). 128 pages. 2025.

This overview of nightfighter operations offers the usual format of timeline, mini-bios, OOBs, and battles. First-person accounts from aces pepper the text, supplemented by the usual and much appreciated illustrations: 109 black and white photos, two color photos, and eight color camouflage aircraft profiles.

As WWII progressed, the nightfighter efforts increased, but like the rest of the German military, Allied numbers told no matter how heroic the defense or superior the technological advances.

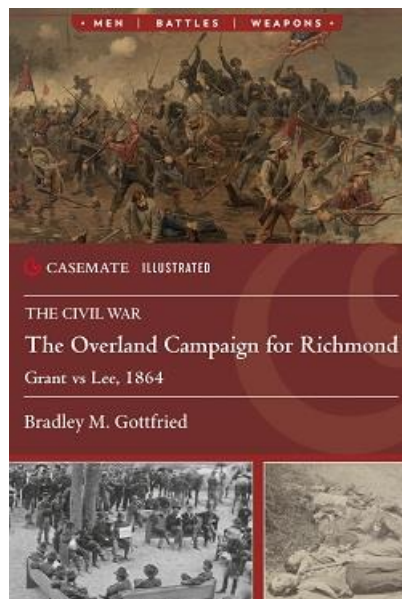
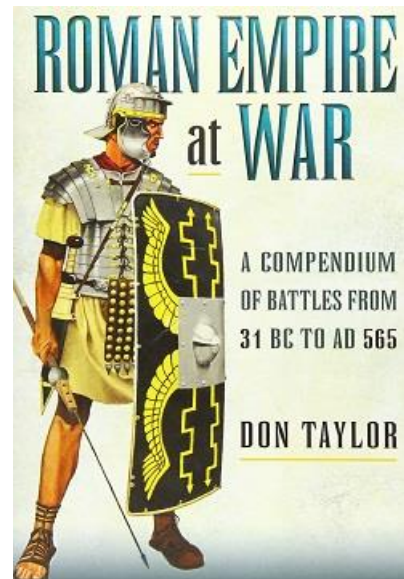
Enjoyed it.

The Overland Campaign for Richmond. by Bradley M. Gottfried. Softcover (6.7x9.3 inches). 128 pages. 2025.

I was quite impressed with the battle maps of this volume in the *Casemate Illustrated* series. So much so, I went poking around to find out who this Gottfried fellow was -- prolific American Civil War author who has created a number of The Maps of books, such as *The Maps of Second Bull Run*, *The Maps of Gettysburg*, *Maps of Antietam*, and so on.

The prose covers the brutal campaign that includes the battles of Wilderness, Spotsylvania, Cold Harbor, and North Anna. The Union started with about 120,000 men (p9) and ended with 66,000 (p13). The Confederates lost about 32,000. Both sides lost about half their army (p125), but the Union could better weather the losses. The combat overviews offer sufficient insight into plans and realities for each of those major battles and the maneuverings in between.

It was good to read that Brigadier General Henry Lockwood was commander of the Union Second Division (p110), but V Corp Commander Maj. Gen. Warren apparently sacked my probable distant ancestor as a scapegoat for



Cold Harbor. I can sympathize -- during wargames, many of my C-in-Cs wish they could sack me from the tabletop. No word what happened to Lockwood after that in the book, but Wikipedia says he was shipped back to command the Middle Department through the end of the war.

The OOB could be better -- goes down to brigades, but not any numbers. You'll have to poke through the prose for regiments and strength.

The booklet contains 53 black and white photos, 22 color photos, 47 black and white illustrations, five color illustrations, and eight color maps.

Oddly enough, Gottfried is not listed as the copyright owner. My guess is that Casemate is following Osprey practices and paying a flat fee for all rights to the booklet. No matter, you can pull the basics for scenarios, even if you may need additional research to get troops strengths.

Enjoyed it.

The Waffen-SS in Poland 1939. by Massimiliano Afiero. Softcover (6.7x9.3 inches). 128 pages. 2025 translation of 2019 book.

This overview of the small contingent of Waffen SS regiments in Poland 1939 concentrates on military operations. The general advance and actions are peppered with first-person accounts and short biographies of officers. Although not a big part of the overall offensive, the regiments filled in as well as can be expected given their green status. Indeed, SS units so infused with Nazi ardor suffered heavy casualties at times.

OOBs go down to battalion and sometimes company level. Actions in the text often have a small tactical map to go along with them, which is helpful for the basics of a scenario.

The booklet contains 167 black and white photos, three color German armored car camouflage scheme illustrations, six black and white maps, and three color maps. Casemate sure put the illustrations in this *Casemate Illustrated* volume.

The Waffen SS would eventually grow from the three regiments and a couple odd units in Poland to 38 divisions, but the baptism of fire against an outnumbered foe was the proving ground for later successful actions.

Enjoyed it.



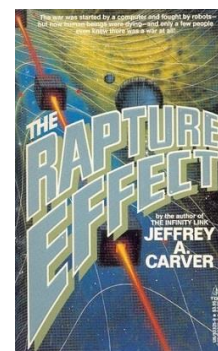
The Rapture Effect. by Jeffrey A. Carver. Paperback (4.2x6.8 inches). 371 pages. 1987.

Rescued from a discount bin, this sci-fi novel posits a more positive take on artificial intelligence and the state. AI controls everything except the military. Politicians still run that. Except the politicians failed to mention to the populace that war with an alien species has gone on for three years. So the AI asks permission to take over the war and facilitate a peace process. And amazingly, it's granted.

Since AI is all pervasive, it taps an obscure group of artists and dancers to communicate with the enemy. But first it needs an enemy combatant.

Such is most of the book -- capture an enemy and create a communication method to end the war. I sometimes wearied of the overly descriptive expositions, but plodded along after a bit. The back third of the book proved far more interesting than the front two-thirds. World building is fine and dandy, but half of it could be edited down or even out without any chilling effect on the plot. So, ties go to the author.

Enjoyed it.



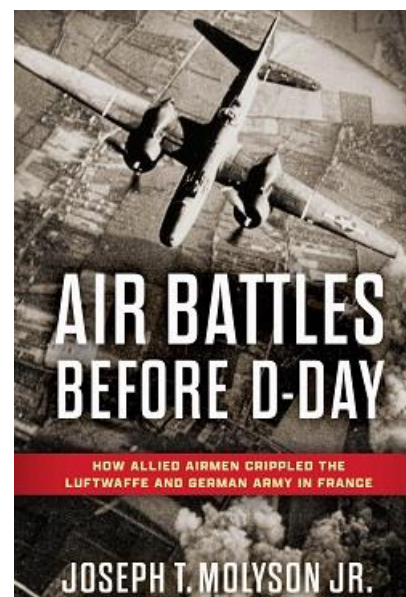
Air Battles Before D-Day. by Joseph T. Molyson jr. Hardback (6.3x9.3 inches). 347 pages. 2025.

Subtitle: *How Allied Airmen Crippled the Luftwaffe and German Army in France*

The book covers aerial warfare on the Western Front from the start of WWII, although coverage intensifies the closer the Allies get to D-Day.

As the Western Allies stepped up bombing of the German industry as well as transportation lines across Europe, the Luftwaffe devoted more and more resources to the Western and Mediterranean Fronts. By early to mid 1943, only 27% of Luftwaffe fighter planes were on the Eastern Front and 40% of new builds were heading to the Mediterranean (p110).

Round the clock strategic bombing by the USAAF (day) and RAF (night)



generated a level of attrition the Luftwaffe could not support. Pinpoint raids that destroyed bridges, railroads, marshalling yards, and river shipping outpaced repair efforts and slowed the flow of war material to the French coast.

The book contains 39 black and white photos, eight black and white illustrations, and 40 black and white maps.

One curious remark: German DFS 30 glider pilots were trained to fight with infantry after landing (p144).

Having just reviewed a book about the DFS 230 (see the May 23, 2025 AAR), the pilots were not considered infantry, although they sometimes joined the infantry to get out of immediate danger.

Other than that, the workmanlike prose follows Allied air efforts and German counters in WWII up until D-Day. The events selected and analysis presented offer an overview of how the Allies slowly wrested air superiority from the Germans.

Enjoyed it.

Normandy 1944: Air Campaign 54. by Julian Hale. Softcover (7.25x9.75 inches). 96 pages. 2025.

Subtitle: *The 'Transportation Plan' to Cut D-Day Communications*

The Allied destruction of railroad lines and bridges hamstrung the German efforts to send war material to the French coast prior to D-Day and combat troops to Normandy after D-Day. How the Allies overcame internal dissension between the USAAF commanders who wanted to go after oil installations versus those who wanted to go after transportation infrastructure forms an important element of this analysis.

The overall results of the 'transportation' bombing campaign were so-so: night bombing was fairly ineffective while daylight bombing could at times be incredibly effective. Overall 1944 daily running distance of trains in France and Belgium dropped from 120km to half that (p91). War-related trains were soon prioritized by the Germans at the expense of non-military and economic trains. Logistics still felt the pain, as train car loadings in June 1944 were only 20% that of March 1944 (p89).

One factoid from a late 1944 German survey: 12.2% of USAAF bombs failed to explode and 18.9% of RAF bombs failed to explode (p18). The damage could have been a little bit worse had all exploded...but it also explains why modern construction unearths so many unexploded WWII bombs.

One probably map typo (p28): The "12th" Panzer Division is likely the 21st Panzer Division. The 12th SS Panzer Division is correctly on the map.

The booklet contains 54 black and white photos, eight color photos, six color maps, two color diagrams, and three color two-page action illustrations. Of note is a pair of photos: Aulnoye (France) RR marshalling yard before bombing (p8) and after bombing (p56). Multiply that type of damage over lots of yards and you get an idea of the amount of damage the Germans had to repair ... or -- in many cases -- not repair.

The book *Air Battles Before D-Day* provides an overview of the entire bombing war in the years before the Allied invasion. *Air Campaign 54* concentrates on the bombing campaign from January to June 1944.

Enjoyed it.

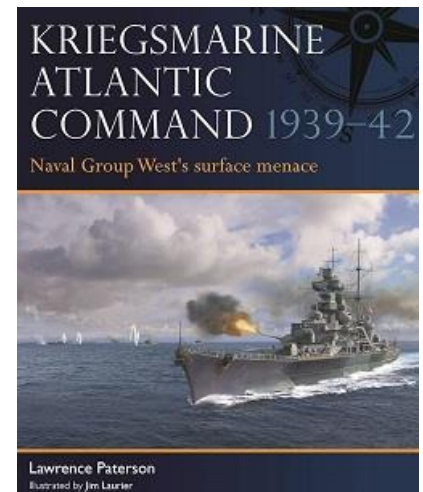
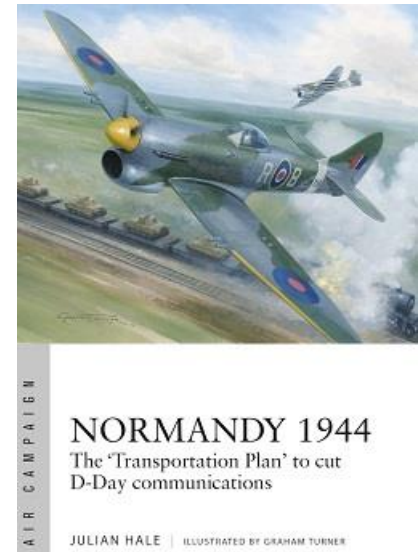
Kriegsmarine Atlantic Command 1939-42: Fleet 11. by Lawrence Paterson. Softcover (7.25x9.75 inches). 80 pages. 2025.

Subtitle: *Naval Group West's Surface Menace*

I thought I had reviewed a similar Osprey, so I went looking. Aha, close: *Big Guns in the Atlantic: Raid 55*, which covered Germany's battleships and cruisers that went hunting for British convoys from 1939 to 1941. So, there is a bit of duplication between the two titles. Certainly ship specs and common actions receive the same overview treatment.

This volume covers the German raiders who scoured the Atlantic and Indian Oceans in the first half of WWII. Specs, actions, and so are receive an overview to ease you into the topic.

How Naval Group West operated offers a high-level recap and analysis of command and control, including how to deal with numerous British air raids of German capital ships in French ports, Hitler's initial hamstringing of operations as he expected to sign a deal with the British to end the war in the West, and a somewhat convoluted command structure.



One probable typo regards the Z Plan (p7): Germany would be "ready for Atlantic warfare by June 1936" with six battleships, four carriers, four cruisers and 247 U-boats. The date is likely 1946, as Hitler only became Chancellor of Germany in 1933 -- a lot to build in three in a half years if the 1936 date is correct.

The booklet contains 41 black and white photos, three color maps, three color diagrams, and three color two-page action illustrations.

Obviously, you'll find differences between *Fleet 11* and *Raid 55*. *Kriegsmarine Atlantic Command* covers an extra year than *Big Guns in the Atlantic* and this volume discusses more of the command and control issues facing the Germans. Put both together and you'll have a relatively comprehensive overview of operations. Add in *Battle of Atlantic 1: Campaign 408* and you'll get the U-boat component as well -- hmgs.org holds the reviews of *Raid 55* and *Campaign 408*.

Enjoyed it.

Partisan Warfare in Greece 1941-44: Men At Arms 562. by Phoebus Athanassiou. Softcover (7.25x9.75 inches). 56 pages. 2025.

The usual *Men At Arms* mix of weaponry and uniforms coverage extends to Greek partisans -- along with a goodly dose of operations that could make for a skirmish scenario or two.

Greece eventually generated 100,000 partisans out of population of 7.5 million (p4), which is more than enough to cause the undermanned Axis garrisons fits, even if it was an unequal struggle. The Greek guerrillas killed about 15,000 Axis troops, wounded 8,000, and captured 3,000 to 5,000 (p41). In return, the Axis killed about 500,000 Greeks -- about half through famine (p41).

The Germans had 140,000 troops by the end of 1943 and only 100,000 by August 1944 (p22) while the Italians kept 172,000 troops on the mainland and various islands (p35). Bulgaria sent 70,000 troops in June 1941, which slowly dropped to 40,000 by September 1944 (p36). The Germans counted 15,000 to 20,000 collaborators.

The booklet contains 48 black and white photos and eight pages of uniform illustrations (12 color uniform illustrations of resistance fighters, nine of Axis occupation troops, and three of collaborator troops).

This volume concentrates on the two largest blocs: the monarchists (EDES) and the communists (ELAS). The latter all but destroyed the former until the British sent Greek war-time units back to Greece to reinforce the EDES. That averted a communist takeover and successfully defeated the communists in the Civil War that followed WWII.

If, like me, the *Guns of Navarone* movie is your source of info about Greek partisans, this volume will offer real information about the WWII guerrilla movement in Greece.

Enjoyed it.

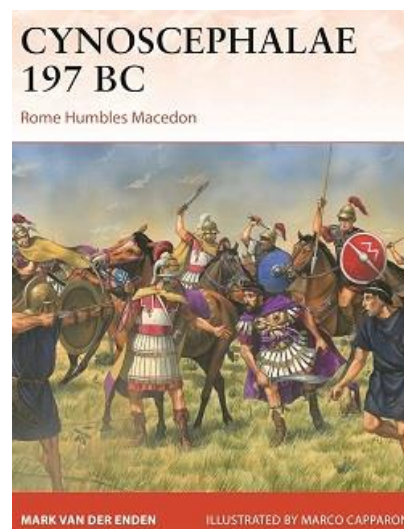
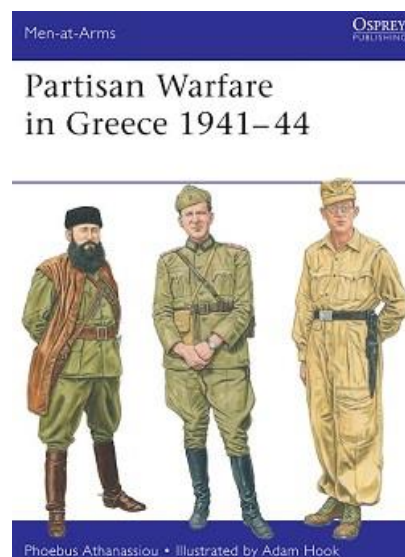
Cynoscephalae 197 BC: Campaign 416. by Mark van der Enden. Softcover (7.25x9.75 inches). 96 pages. 2025.

Subtitle: *Rome Humbles Macedon*

Macedonian phalanx went up against Roman legions in this campaign, which rotated in and around Greece. Philip V of Macedon tried to extend his reach southward and the city states decided to call in Rome when their battlefield efforts failed to stem the Macedonian tide. Rome, although involved with Carthage at the time, eventually accepted the invitation. The resulting campaigns provided victories and defeats for both sides.

Cynoscephalae was the last battle of the war, but the campaign showed how Roman land and naval assets could wear down Macedonian armies and fleets. If Greece had been relatively united, as it eventually was under Alexander versus the Persians, and joined Carthage in running around Italy, the war may have turned out differently. Ah, but Rome knew how to exploit the politics of the situation better than Philip V.

The booklet contains five black and white photos, six black and white illustrations, 59 color photos, three color illustrations, six color maps, two of the less-than-useful 3D color battle maps, and three color two-page action illustrations.



Philip V was a bit of a hard-luck enemy of Rome. Although a talented commander and at times victorious on the battlefield against the Romans, fighting Romans and Greeks proved too much. He was forced to sue for peace. Like Carthage, for a while it looked like he could keep Rome on its side of the sea, but the wars ended his ambition to control all of Greece like Philip II.

Enjoyed it.

Central European Wars 1918-1921: Men At Arms 563. by Philip Jowett.
Softcover (7.25x9.75 inches). 56 pages. 2025.

Subtitle: *Revolutions and Border Wars in the Former Austro-Hungarian Empire*

To me, Osprey volumes shine when tackling relatively obscure topics. Such overviews can inspire further research into the topic. Such is the case with this volume.

Conventional wisdom says WWI ends with the Versailles Peace Conference, where the Allies dictate terms, countries split off, all the troops go home, and trouble starts up in the 1930s. If you are a little better read, German Freikorps battle communists across Germany. This eye-opening volume covers the troops from a number of countries who battled over post-war borders.

In my ignorance, I had no idea the new countries of Central Europe, including Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (i.e. Yugoslavia), and Romania were shooting it out in a series of mini wars. Hungary even had a Communist government for 133 days before a civil war toppled 'The Lenin Boys.'

The booklet contains 44 black and white photos, one color photo (1895 Mannlicher rifle), and eight pages of uniform illustrations (24 color uniform illustrations and two color badges).

An excellent introduction to the topic. I'd certainly be interested in Jowett writing a full Osprey book on all these battles and wars.

Enjoyed it.

The Jugurthine War 112-106 BC: Campaign 415. by Nic Fields. Softcover (7.25x9.75 inches). 96 pages. 2025.

Subtitle: *Rome's Long War in North Africa*

Sallust's ancient text forms the basis of what we know about Rome's Numidian war. Jugurtha killed off his two half-brothers to secure the throne of his North African kingdom, but he went too far in trying to secure and expand it.

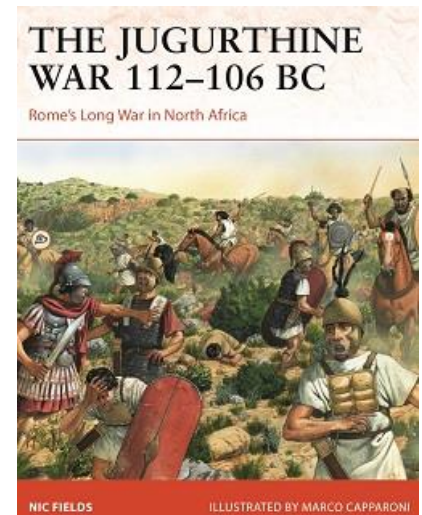
That led to confrontation with Rome, but Jugurtha was smart enough to bribe senators and generals to keep Rome at bay for quite a while. Even when losing a largely guerrilla war, he was able to pay off the reparation amount and still maintain independence.

Then he went far too far and Rome sent the incorruptible Marius, who prosecuted the war with single-minded fervor. A couple of stand-up fights and many ambushes later, even he was unable to bring the wily Numidian king to submission. Marius hit upon a simple scheme: bribe the Numidian second in command Bocchus. Jugurtha was soon brought back in chains for the Roman triumph.

The booklet contains four black and white photos, 56 color photos, three color illustrations, five color maps, two of the less-than-useful 3D color battle maps, and two color two-page action illustrations.

Rome confirmed that Bocchus would become a king of half of Jugurtha's original kingdom, with Rome taking the other half.

Enjoyed it.



RAF Jaguar Units in Combat: Combat Aircraft 156. by Michael Napier. Softcover (7.25x9.75 inches). 96 pages. 2025.

This Anglo-French cooperative design began with the goal of producing a trainer and light attack jet. The first prototype flew in 1968 and other versions, including recon, were added. This volume covers its main deployments with many, many extensive first-person accounts.

The jet was primarily sent to the Gulf War 1990-1991 and to the Balkans 1993-1998. In both, it was used strike and patrol capacities.

In the Gulf War, its first mission took a decided goofy turn. While attacking a barge, several jets fired off their complement of CRV-7 rockets and all missed. Several strafings with 30mm cannon also failed to sink the ship. In the subsequent bomb runs by four aircraft, two missed, one near hit, and one scored a deciding hit.

It turns out that the rocket software was calibrated to the training rockets, which for some reason were different from actual rockets with warheads. The CRV-7s were withdrawn from service and a new software version eventually implemented.

The Jaguars did much better in the Balkan missions.

The booklet contains six black and white photos, 47 color photos, 22 color camouflage illustrations, and 18 color nose art illustrations. I would like a larger font, but this is an old complaint of mine for the Osprey air-related booklets.

Enjoyed it.

Jagdpanther vs. 17-Pdr Achilles: Duel 143. by Frank Baldwin. Softcover (7.25x9.75 inches). 80 pages. 2025.

Subtitle: *North-West Europe 1944-45*

Design, development, and deployment of both types of tank destroyers notes that these two armored fighting vehicles rarely met on the field of battle. There weren't many of either: 1,019 M-10s and 415 Jagdpanters.

UK modified a M-10 turret to take the 17lber (76.2mm) AT gun. The Jagdpanther modified a Pz V hull to take an 88mm AT Gun, but without a turret, it could only traverse 12 degrees left or right of the center position.

The two AT guns were effective, but in action, the 88mm was 89% accurate to 1,000 yards and 47% accurate to 2,000 yards (p73). German tank doctrine was to fire at 2,500 yards -- assuming a clear field at that range.

The 17lber on first round was 46% accurate to 1,000 yards and only 10% accurate to 2,000 yards (p74) against a Tiger tank-sized target. On subsequent rounds, the accuracy increased to 94% accurate to 1,000 yards and 50% accurate to 2,000 yards (p74).

However, the M-10 was far more reliable and mobile, only breaking down 1% of the time on road marches. The Jagdpanther had a 10% to 20% breakdown rate. In addition, more bridges could bear the lighter M-10's weight than the heavier Jagdpanther (p38).

The booklet contains 40 black and white photos, 22 color photos, 16 color camouflage illustrations (eight M-10 and eight Jagdpanther), four color illustrations, two color maps, and two color diagrams.

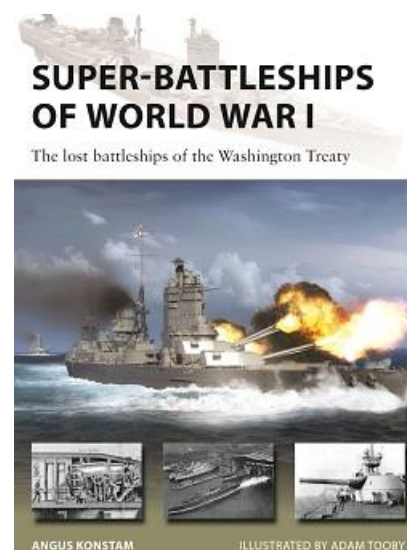
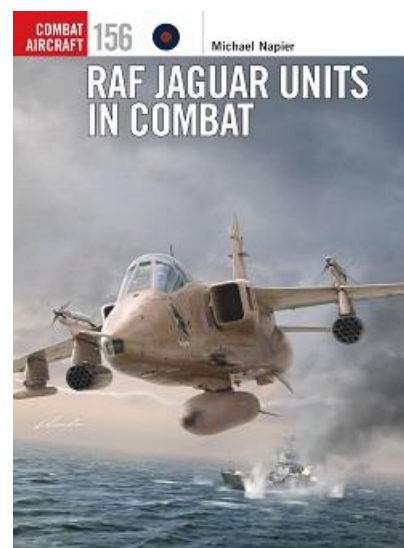
Enjoyed it.

Super-Battleships of World War I: New Vanguard 338. by Angus Konstam. Softcover (7.25x9.75 inches). 48 pages. 2025.

Subtitle: *The Lost Battleships of the Washington Treaty*

This is more a volume about the US, UK, and Japan scrapping ships than deploying them. A quick history of battleship development from the Dreadnought on segues into production decisions at the close of WWI. As most countries' economies were exhausted at the end of the war, the Allies drafted a Treaty to limit construction of expensive capital ships.

After the Treaty was signed, most, but not all, construction on battleships



and battlecruisers was halted. Some ships became aircraft carriers, but most were scrapped. Drawing board designs were cancelled. The decision-making behind what limits per type were acceptable or not proves interesting.

The booklet contains 25 black and white photos, one color photo, 14 black and white illustrations, one color illustration, one color two-page cutaway illustration of the HMS St. George, two color one-page action illustrations, and eight color camouflage illustrations.

If you wanted to wargame an extended WWI scenario or campaign, this would be a nice addition for the naval aspects.

Enjoyed it.

Spitfire I: Dogfight 13. by Tony Holmes. Softcover (7.25x9.75 inches). 80 pages. 2025.

Subtitle: *Phoney War and Battle of France*

The Dogfight series strives to match first-person accounts of flying the featured airplane with ribbon diagrams of how the aerial dogfight progressed. Depicting 3D action is very challenging and the ribbon graphics come the closest to explaining the moves and counter-moves of the pilots.

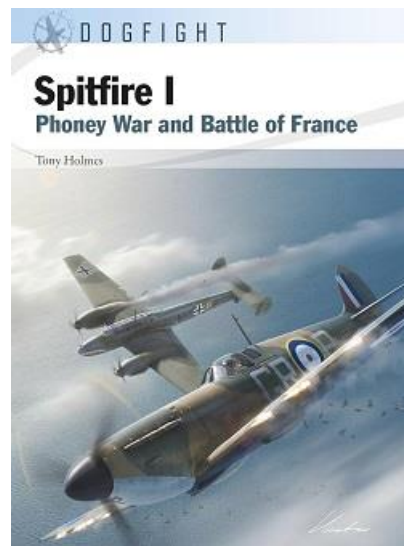
Design, development, and deployment find the Spitfire over Dunkirk (France) and the UK. Training, tactics, and combat follow. You'll have a good idea of what it was like to fly a Spitfire in battle by the end of the booklet.

Interesting factoid: A Spitfire took twice the number of hours to build as a ME-109 and 2.5 times the number of hours to build a Hawker Hurricane (p17).

The booklet contains 53 black and white photos, two color illustrations, two color diagrams, one color map, one color one-page action illustration, and three color ribbon combat illustrations.

Plenty of Spitfire books arrived over the years and to a certain extent, I didn't find too much that was new. Of course, if you've never read anything about the Spitfire, this will all be new. I find the ribbon diagrams the best a 2D page can do to depict 3D combat.

Enjoyed it.



German Tanks in Barbarossa 1941: New Vanguard 339. by Steven J. Zaloga. Softcover (7.25x9.75 inches). 48 pages. 2025.

Here's another Zaloga WWII tank book. His *German Tanks in France 1940: New Vanguard 327* covers much the same ground as this volume when it comes to tank specs, design, and development.

The key difference shows up in the magnificent charts he always includes in his booklets. This is the sort of numerical analysis much appreciated by the wargame community -- or at least me. That said, I do have a couple questions about the data...

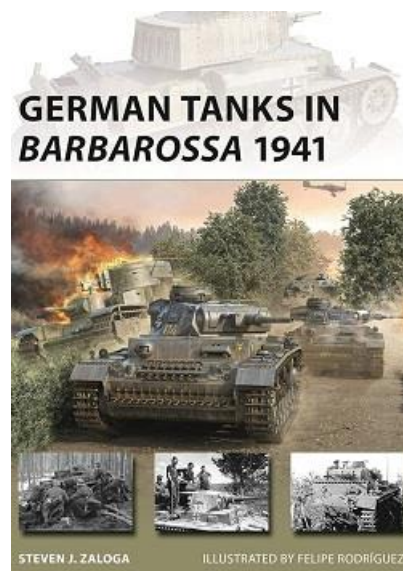
German tank strength chart (p14) shows German tank strength roughly equal from June 1941 (5,556 tanks and AFVs) to December 1941 (5,487 tanks and AFVs). Yet, he notes that German tank losses were 3,328 from June 1941 to December 1941 -- 2,839 on the east front (p42). It is not well explained, but I believe, based on the latter chart, the numbers represent all the German tanks on all fronts, including training? Other charts offer subsets of losses and operational tanks. As the Germans usually held the battlefield, do these numbers include retrieved AFVs and/or those in the various repair shops (local, theater, and Germany)? I don't know.

And yet, this is the first time I read that Hitler held back replacement tanks from front line divisions as operational tanks dropped to about 30% of TO&E in September 1941. Releases to the front were hard-won concessions from Hitler, who wanted more panzer divisions created.

The booklet contains 40 black and white photos, one color photo, 12 color tank camouflage illustrations, five color insignia, and one color two-page action illustration.

So, perceived hiccups in the chart explanations, a bit of new-to-me information, and a lot of the same information (can't be helped -- specs are specs are specs) from his other booklets. It's a little more uneven than expected, but ties still go to one of the most prolific authors in the industry.

Enjoyed it.



American Civil War Amphibious Tactics: Elite 262. by Ron Field. Softcover (7.25x9.75 inches). 64 pages. 2025.

I admit I never thought about how troops were ferried from ship to shore during the American Civil War. It's a bit more than get in a longboat and row.

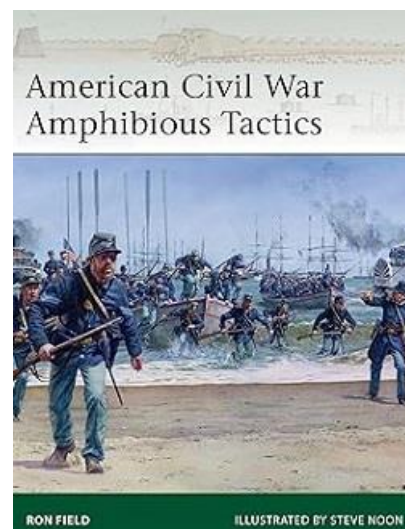
The US Army developed an armed launch with a clever innovation that mounted a cannon at the bow that could be aimed. When beached, a limber in the rear was landed and the cannon carriage lifted and mounted. Then the troops could pull it into position. Talk about learning something new every day...

The booklet covers a number of Union amphibious operations up and down the coast -- some successful, some not. Many would make for a good scenario as the Union Army and Naval Marines scramble ashore and try to form up before Confederate troops can hit them. Some unit mini-biographies are included.

Of course, the best part of the book for me was the Battle of New Bern in 1862. Why? Because the US Navy sent the steamer *John L. Lockwood* near the Pimlico River to guard the flank of the operation (p24). Always fun to think that some distant ancestor I never heard of was important enough to have something named after him.

The booklet contains 29 black and white photos, one color photo, 22 black and white illustrations, 15 color illustrations, one black and white map, and five color insignia, and five color one-page action illustrations.

Enjoyed it.



Dogwood: A National Guard Unit's War in Iraq. by Andrew Wiest. Hardback (6.4x9.5 inches). 351 pages. 2025.

The US invaded Iraq to overthrow Saddam Hussein, keep the world safe from weapons of mass destruction, and begin the domino theory of bringing freedom and democracy to Iraq and then the Middle East. Well, things didn't quite work out as planned, but you couldn't fault the 150th Combat Engineer Battalion of the Mississippi National Guard.

After call up and a few months of training, they were sent into the so-called Triangle of Death in Anbar Province. This is the same deadly place discussed in the book *Black Hearts and Painted Guns*.

The good news is that the 150th was an engineer unit, so it could build just about anything. The bad news is that it was mostly used as a combat unit, driving around in unarmored or under-armored vehicles trying to spot IEDs and capture insurgents. The jury-rigging of armor on the Humvees and M113s helped mitigate, but not negate, some of the IED damage.

Indeed, the second day of deployment at Forward Operating Base Dogwood, a patrol ran over an IED and one soldier was killed. The unit brought in a psychologist to help deal with the grief.

The worse news is that they deployed companies elsewhere and were short the manpower needed to police the territory assigned. Only later did a detached company return and the battalion could do proper seal, search, and detain ops. The armaments they found buried in all sorts of places would amaze you.

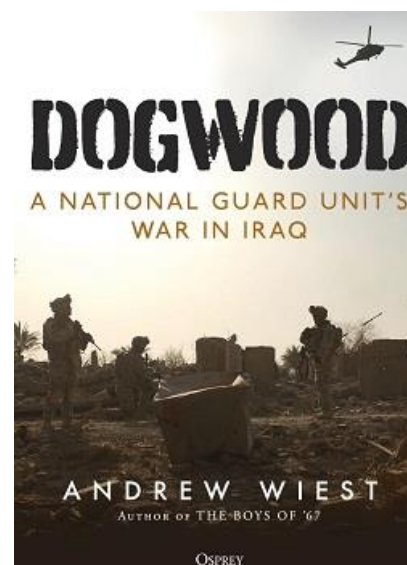
The key "win hearts and minds" component of counter-insurgency relies on a relatively safe environ. The insurgents killed any who even looked like they were helping the US and threatened the rest. Finally, after about eight or nine months, the manpower returned, an informant pointed out the insurgent terrorists, and those that did not surrender were killed trying to attack or flee. It wasn't easy and many Guardsmen were killed or wounded from IEDs, but the 150th slowly gained the upper hand. Medical and dental care was a big plus towards convincing villagers that Americans were not so bad.

Eventually, the unit was rotated home and the US drew down its fighting strength. FOB Dogwood was abandoned only to be re-occupied by a later counter-insurgency effort...and later abandoned.

The book contains 39 color photos and three black and white maps.

Of course, there's much more to this unit history than my summary. Wiest is at his best delving into the individuals, their personal situations, and how the deployment affected them over the months. His interviews with members of the unit offers the details and nuances that can be lost in a more operational book. The return home highlighted some of the PTSD problems that plagued some of the troops. Well done.

Enjoyed it.



Aside: During this same time, I had a retaining wall rebuilt by a local mason. His son in the NJ National Guard, trained as an engineer, came back from Iraq. He stopped by to have a beer with his dad. I couldn't help but overhear.

The son expected to go over and rebuild Iraq. However, in the 18 months he was in Iraq, he helped build only one bridge. The rest of the time, he humped a rifle on patrol, usually with a special forces soldier as an experienced guide.

Different unit. Same result.

Through The Lens 5: WW2 Vehicles. by Tom Cockle. Hardback (Horizontal: 12.0x8.5 inches). 123 pages. 2025.

I always enjoyed the *Through The Lens* books -- the images are fresh to me and I've seen a lot of WWII photos. Better yet, they are printed one to a page, so you can see details on vehicles and uniforms that you cannot on smaller imagery. Finally, the majority are sharp, not blurry. Whatever photo retouching he's doing, I urge him to keep doing it.

The photos are divided into sections: RSO/1 Tractor, Austria 1945, Sauer RK-7, STuG III of Abt 203, and M-10s in French service. Each section has much to commend, from rarity of image to a reference source for modeling nuances.

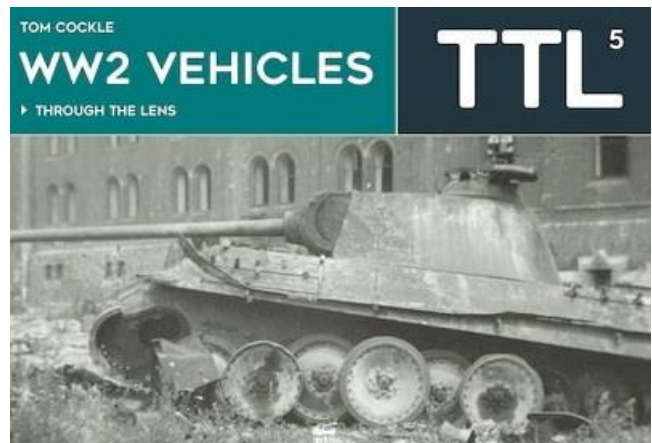
The book contains 120 black and white photos.

My favorite? A STuG III rolls into a Russian village, motorcycle rider to the right, the front of a car to the left, and infantry marching towards the open fields. This nicely composed photo (p95) is worthy of a diorama.

Runner up? A RSO with integrated 75mm AT gun (p23). I've seen the Germans mount AT guns on lots of chassis, but never on a RSO.

Tied for Honorary Mention: In Austria (p59), a Turan tank, FT-17 (on its side) and upside down T-26. Also in Austria (p60), a row with a Packard P-178 armored car, Belgian T13 B2 tank destroyer, T-15, and H-35 tank. First time I've heard of a T13 and T15, although the shot isn't the greatest, it beats the late-war tanks in various stages of destruction.

Enjoyed it.



The 452nd Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battalion. by Samuel de Korte. Hardback (6.5x9.5 inches). 351 pages. 2025.

Subtitle: *Destroyers of the Luftwaffe and Jim Crow*

The 452nd AAA formed on May 9, 1942 and by the end of the year was staffed with 50 white officers and 843 black enlisted soldiers (p61-62). On May 13, 1943, Lt. Col. Lamar Radcliffe was assigned as commanding officer and served as CO for the duration of the war.

On Nov 3, 1943, it was in the UK. Battery D landed at Utah Beach on June 23, 1944 (p71) with most of the rest of the unit landing later.

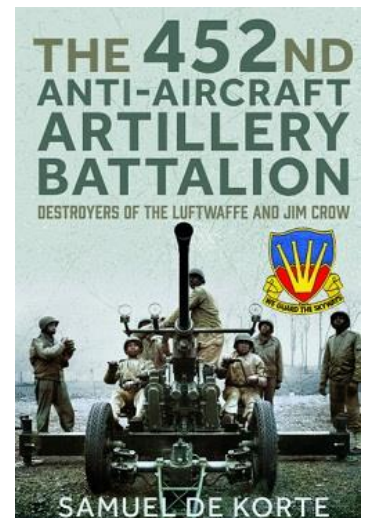
It faced the same type of discrimination as other black units. As with the other black units, they compiled an impressive record while guarding bridges, supply dumps, and field artillery units from the Luftwaffe. The Army credited the unit with 68 enemy aircraft shot down. It had a mix of 40mm AA guns and 50-cal MGs.

The book is well-researched and quite thorough. It reads well, although somewhat repetitious in the back half because de Korte latched onto the day-by-day unit log. An author only has so many ways to note locations, aircraft shot at, and the number of shells fired. Only a *Campaign for North Africa* player will revel in tracking ammo expenditures.

The book contains 21 black and white photos and two black and white maps.

I appreciated the introductory text that outlined what constitutes an AAA battalion -- weaponry, equipment, organization, vehicles, and other elements -- and the deployments the 452nd performed. Often, these were with other units. By the end of the book, you'll have a great feel for AAA battalion action in WWII.

Enjoyed it.



Hitler's War of Extinction. by Simon Forty and Ian Stewart Spring. Hardback (7.2x9.9 inches). 288 pages. 2025.

Subtitle: *Rare German Colour Photographs from the Eastern Front*

Ian Stewart Spring's collection of WWII German color images is indeed impressive. These are color images, not colorized black and white photos. I'm not sure how much image modification the photos underwent, but most of them are sharp. Sure, some clunky blurry ones, but maybe only a dozen or so.

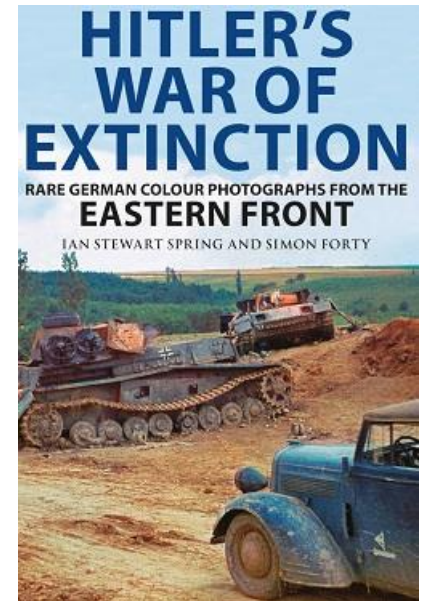
The book contains 289 color photos as well as extensive captions with facts and figures. For example, among the photos of locomotives and train cars, you'll discover a Type I train consisted of a 28 goods cars (guessing that's a "boxcar" to us Yanks), 26 flat cars, and a brake car (p43). It could transport 350 men, 20 vehicles, and 70 horses. An infantry division needs 70 trains and a panzer division needs 90 trains. Think about that when you want to get a division transfer via rail across a map. Note that the average infantry march rate was 20 miles per day (p49). And German railheads were located about 100 miles behind the front lines for Armee and Corps supply.

The photos cover a wide range of topics, weather, and locations, including some of wrecks in 1946 Berlin. My favorite photo is of a SdKfz 6 halftrack towing an 88mm AT gun over a narrow rickety bridge that looks like it would collapse at any moment (p161). Certainly one of the passengers seems concerned about collapse or sliding off into the water.

One gaffe: the same photo is on p155 and p167.

Colorized black and white photos are often a best-guess interpretation of color. These are real color photos -- a nice reference for all the modelers and miniatures painters out there.

Enjoyed it.



Home Front: Alfred T. Palmer's WWII Photography. by Mary M. Cronin and Bruce Berman. Softcover (6.5x9.3 inches). 191 pages. 2025.

I never heard of Palmer, but he became a color photo guru in the mid to late 1930s and was hired by the US Office of War Information to take photos across the US to rally Americans to support the war against the Axis. This "Strategy of Truth" campaign covered factories and farmland and showed resolve, industrial might, and agricultural bounty.

Palmer took 8,000 photos for the OWI, using a specialized set up with flash and carefully curated trim and attractive workers, bright work clothes, and carefully styled hair and makeup.

Besides the bio of Palmer, you get a layman's lens-view of how the photos were staged, the techniques involved in focusing in on the pose and machinery or produce, and how these pseudo-propaganda photos were used and disseminated. For example, he often used clothes that were predominantly yellow and red because those provided the best color saturation for Kodachrome film at the time (p95).

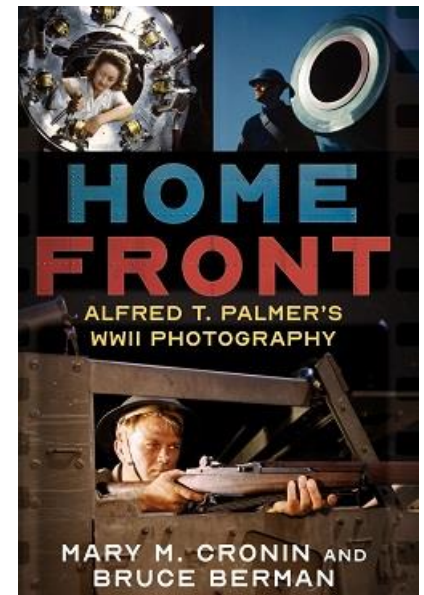
One typo: "and170,000" (p85) needs a space before the number.

The book contains 72 color photos and 34 black and white photos.

Palmer made his mark in commercial photography, especially on maritime topics, but also Ansel Adams at work and even was staff photographer at National Geographic for a time. He later went back into commercial photography and film making.

It's an interesting story -- far more interesting than I expected. The color photos highlight the best of the US home front in the 1940-1943 timeframe when he was with OWI. Well done.

Enjoyed it.



US Coast Guard Cutter 37: Legends of Warfare. by David Doyle. Hardback (Horizontal: 9.3x9.3 inches). 144 pages. 2025.

Subtitle: *Formerly Known as USCGC Taney*

The US built seven cutters for the US Coast Guard (USCG) from 1935 to 1936. As the USCG was under the Treasury Department at the time, these seven ships were named after former Treasury Dept. secretaries. Number 37 was named for Sec. Roger B. Taney. The ships were transferred to the US Navy on Nov. 3, 1941.

The *Taney* was in Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941 and fired AA. The next day, she was patrolling outside Pearl Harbor and dropped depth charges. She saw service in the Pacific Theater until 1943, when she was sent back to the US for refit.

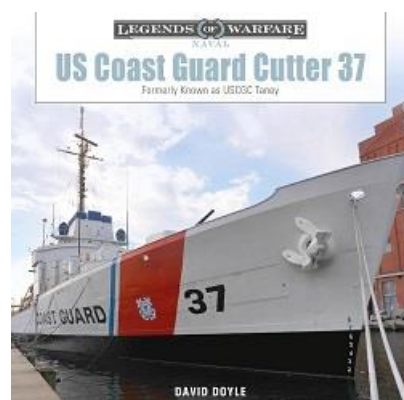
The ship ran a number of convoys across the Atlantic Ocean and into the Mediterranean Sea. In 1944, she was converted to an Amphibious Command Ship and sent back to the Pacific, this time for the invasion of Okinawa.

Post war, she was converted back to a cutter and performed routine patrol work. She was converted to a weather monitoring ship for a while. She was mobilized again for the Vietnam War and intercepted 1,000 vessels in patrols off the Vietnamese coast. In 1989, she was turned over to Baltimore, MD, as a historic harbor museum ship. Her last commander was named Winston G. Churchill.

The book contains 89 color photos and 158 black and white photos. Specs are in the appendices, including a chart showing weaponry changes and the year performed.

Another fine volume in the *Legends of Warfare* series.

Enjoyed it.



Nagato-Class Battleships: Legends of Warfare. by Hans Lengerer and Lars Ahlberg. Hardback (Horizontal: 9.3x9.3 inches). 144 pages. 2025.

Subtitle: *IJN Super-Dreadnoughts Nagato and Mutsu*

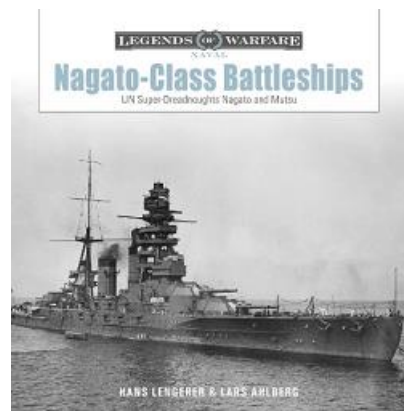
This thorough profile of the sister battleships *Nagato* and *Mutsu* noted their construction start during WWI and post-war commissioning. Indeed, the *Mutsu* was launched in some haste to beat the deadline for the 1921 Washington Arms Limitation Conference. This scheme didn't fool anyone and the US was allowed to build the *USS Colorado* and *USS Washington* and the UK to build the *HMS Rodney* and *HMS Nelson* in response (p5).

Upgrades were in 1934 through 1936 and the chapters cover all the major systems, including machinery, armament, propulsion, and so on. Quite thorough.

Extended captions to the 133 black and white photos provide additional ship information and details. I was amazed to learn that the crew practiced bayonet drill (p81). The book also contains 17 black and white illustrations.

An overview of both ships' operational history are included. *Nagato* survived the war as a front-line ship, but *Mutsu* was soon relegated to be a training ship and suffered a fatal magazine explosion in June 1943 and sunk. A full chapter covers *Nagato*'s role in the Battle of Leyte Gulf and attack on US Taffy 3. *Nagato* was one of the ships sunk during the post-war Bikini Atoll atomic bomb test.

The *Legends of Warfare* series continues to provide superb ship documentation and a quick overview of service. Enjoyed it.

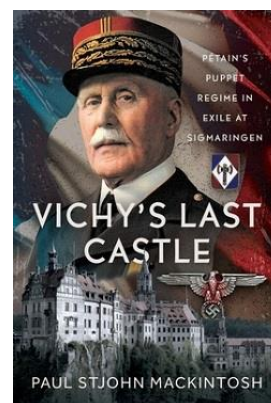


Vichy's Last Castle: Petain's Puppet Regime in Exile at Sigmaringen. by Paul St. John Mackintosh. Hardback (6.5x9.5 inches). 241 pages. 2025.

The Vichy government doesn't get a lot of play among the wargamers community. The British took out most of its navy in 1940. It contributed modest troops to the SS. Its forces in North Africa surrendered after less than a week of fighting in 1942 against the Allied forces of Operation Torch. Then the Germans overran Vichy France.

Yet within the political sphere, Marshal Petain did what he could to maintain the pseudo-independence of Vichy France, even if his efforts proved limited. Not that Petain was effective in all respects, but that he was in a no-win position.

That said, Vichy seemed like a political swirl of republican and fascist egos competing for scraps through four years of German occupation. Internecine political warfare



among the French and competing agendas with the Germans mark most of this book. The voluminous and often repetitious excerpts of speeches and letters make for a dull read -- at least to me. While accurate for the period, I skipped around the excerpts and text.

In late 1944, despite Petain's objections, he and his entourage were moved to a castle at Sigmaringen (Germany). For the next five months, French exiles also arrived, where they proceeded to argue protocols and political comebacks. It was all like rearranging deck chairs on the Titanic, so to speak.

As the Allies approached, the Germans tried to move Petain again, but he objected. Indeed, his wife forcefully objected and they were eventually allowed to travel into Switzerland. Post war, the Swiss turned all over to the French -- at least those that didn't escape.

The book contains 18 black and white photos and one black and white illustration.

One typo: "remarkably modern in its approach" (p20) should be "modern."

Petain was tried and sentenced to death, but deGaulle changed that to life imprisonment. Other members were executed. Some escaped to Italy and Spain and lived out their lives. Others were sent back to France and executed.

While covering a little-covered topic and generally well-researched, it's not a smooth read and there is little that can translate to the tabletop.

Black Devils' March: A Doomed Odyssey. by Evan McGilvray. Softcover (8.3x11.9 inches). 153 pages. 2025 reprint of 2010 reprint of 2005 book.

Subtitle: *The 1st Polish Armoured Division 1939-45*

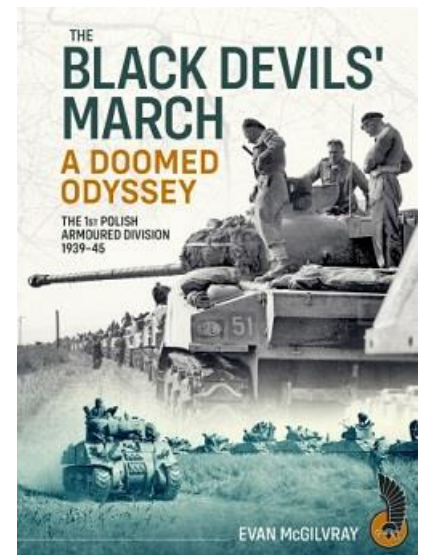
This history of the 1st Polish Armoured Division covers its formation with various exiled Polish troops and volunteers. Landed after D-Day, its first action was during Operation Totalize. Combat descriptions of the division's various subunits receive extensive treatment, along with its drive to close the Falaise Gap and its subsequent desperate struggle to holf the gap closed.

The workmanlike prose then covers movements of the subunits as they moved across France and into Netherlands. The 10 black and white maps are adequate to track the advance through a bewildering array of towns, but a little closer placement to the text would have been appreciated. I really would have liked a more tactical map of the Falaise Gap battle for a tabletop recreation. A full Polish OOB is in the back, but you'd need to research a German OOB, or at least a reasonable approximation of the kampfguppen.

The book also contains 82 black and white photos filled with uniform and vehicle details. As the division was part of the Canadian corps, British kit predominates.

It's a competent unit history, which is why it was reprinted.

Enjoyed it.



A Few More Photos from the InfoAge Museum:



Helmet Display



Battle of New Orleans Diorama