



# BIG DAMN HEROES, SIR!

**Lee Upton tells us about the construction and application of his award winning participation game which features a twist on the 'standard' World War Two commando raid.**

Earlier this year, Rob Alderman of Hysterical Games asked myself and fellow *Panzerfäuste* enthusiast Ant (from the Anarchy of Anton blog) if we would consider constructing a table to tour the UK show circuit and demo his new set of 'historo-fantasy' wargames rules. We jumped at the opportunity!

Ant and I had discussed a few ideas and both quickly came to the conclusion of "an Orc Commando Raid". How could we not? British Commandos have

a rich history for us to draw inspiration from, with operations like Operation Chariot (Nazaire Raid) and Operation Claymore (raid on the Norwegian Lofoten Islands), as well as Hollywood films such as *Cockleshell Heroes* and *The Guns of Navarone* - our decision was easily justified.

As *Panzerfäuste* is a fantasy setting, we were able to take ideas from wherever we wanted and go mad with creative liberty. We kicked around a few ideas for the setting and decided on a cargo port on the southern coast of Dun-Nomin - the homeland of the Gnomes (which have a distinctly French feeling).

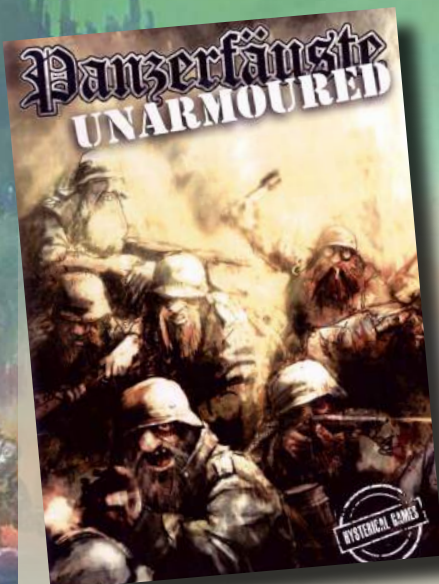
## CREATING A TABLE FOR A STORY

As this was going to be a demonstration table that would be showcasing the

*Panzerfäuste* rules, there were a few important things we needed to be able to represent within the confines of the terrain. Firstly, the basic stuff; moving, shooting, cover and the unique feature of the game - the Guts phase and how the Guts value of the unit effects the game. Most importantly, we needed an immersive story that we would enjoy re-telling to anyone interested in participating in the game at a show.

The Guts value is the target number on two D6 dice that must be rolled to achieve the vast majority of actions. It can increase or decrease during the course of a game, usually as a result of taking hits from shooting, close combat etc.





### WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

*Panzerfäuste* is a historo-fantasy miniatures game, one where standard fantasy races are taken out of their comfort zone of the classic medieval sword and sorcery setting and put into another, historically inspired, time period - here the period of mechanised warfare in the 20th Century.

If you think about it technological advancement in a high fantasy world would not just stop at the equivalent of the early 16th Century and at some stage someone would invent a new, more efficient way of killing enemies.

In our game the Dwarves have long stopped hitting Orcs with axes and over the centuries have shot them with black powder muskets, mown them down with gatling guns and now try and blow them up with hand grenades and howitzers!



Above: Gnome Voltigeurs.

With storytelling firmly in mind, we decided to add a few of our own scenario-specific house rules to the game, for boats, sticky bombs and sentries.

For the additional rules used in this scenario visit the Hysterical Games website:  
[www.hystericalgames.co.uk](http://www.hystericalgames.co.uk)

### THE FORCES

We wanted a small number of Sections, enough to show off the mass battle rules, without playing for hours.

#### The Raiders

The Orc Commandos (representing the British in our parallel universe) were in three - 4 'man' sections.

#### The Raided

The Gnome Voltigeurs (representing the Vichy French) were a full 12 man section.

The Dwarf Grenadiers (Germans) were in two 5 man sections.

The Dwarf Command Unit had 5 figures.





# Panzerfäust UNARMOURED

## ORCS

2 victory points for each Dwarf removed from play

1 victory point for each Gnome removed from play

## SUPPLY SHIPS

(Primary Orc targets)

Orcs: 15 victory points for each one destroyed

Dwarves: 10 victory points for each one intact

## BIG GUN

Orcs: 5 victory points if destroyed

## WAREHOUSES

(Secondary Orc targets)

Orcs: 10 victory points for each one destroyed

Dwarves: 10 victory points for each one intact

## DWARVES & GNOME ALLIES

3 victory points for each Orc commando removed from play.

## OBJECTIVES

The Orc Commandos are trying to blow stuff up! Their primary targets are the two supply ships, scoring 15 victory points for each one destroyed. Secondary targets are the three warehouses, scoring 10 victory points for each destroyed. Destroying the big gun emplacement earns a further five points. Plus, two victory points per Dwarf and one point per traitorous Gnome removed from play.

The Dwarves and their Gnome allies are trying to make sure stuff does not get blown up! They need to repel the invaders and protect the Warehouses and ships. Fifteen victory points for each Orc dinghy destroyed at the end of the game. Ten victory points for each warehouse

and ship intact at the end of the game. Plus three victory points per commando removed from play.

## GAME SET UP

The Orcs get initiative in the first turn and start in the sea corner of the board in six boats (two Orcs per boat). This gives them a couple of turns of sneaky movement to get to the cargo ships.

The Dwarves and Gnomes need a good spread of units around the other edges of the table. We went for the Gnomes, set

out of the way near to the pill box and by the warehouses, and two sections of dwarves, one in the main gun bunker with the command section and the other five-man section in the factory building at the furthest corner away from the Orcs. This gives the participating players a turn or two of movement to get into the rules before the shooting starts.





*Above: Orc commandos stealthily advance.*

## ENDING THE GAME

The game lasts for ten turns or until one side has no models left. After a player has removed all of his opponents models he or she has three turns to either reach more targets and plant bombs, or de-fuse the bombs already planted. After each turn players must roll to see if the bombs already planted explode.

## WINNING THE GAME

At the end of the game all victory points gained are totalled up - the highest score wins.

## EVOLUTION

We have umpired the game at several UK shows so far this year and it has evolved a little each time. All the players have had a lot of fun either stealthily sneaking into a port in rubber dinghies, or taking pot-shots at Orcs stuck in silly little boats in the open water. A couple of memorable little stories from these games come to mind.

In the first demo game we ran, at Hammerhead, Newark, on the second turn, the Gnomes spotted the Commandos as they snuck in and let fly with a hail of little bullets. They poured everything they could at the two boats coming towards them to achieve... absolutely nothing... not one hit. A gentleman standing next to us witnessed the action and shook his head in disgust. I asked him why. He replied that all of his Kickstarter pledge was spent on "useless" Gnomes. Later that day he came back just in time to see another game in which those same gnomes took out three boats full of Orcs in one round of shooting! The dice gods truly are fickle.

The second story is one of those Hollywood moments you sometimes get in wargaming. The Orcs had been really sneaky and got to the first supply ship without being detected. Then the alarm



*Vichy Gnomes tangle with Allied Orcs.*



*Can the Dwarf Grenadiers hold off the Commandos?*

went up. They set the sticky bomb but what next... well, they had a nice long fuse to play with.

*"Come on lads! Up the side of the ship!"*

They climbed on top of the cabin as the dwarves came rushing at them, then..... BOOOOOOM!!! The fuse was not as long as they thought. Of the four Orcs that made that perilous climb, only the

Bren gun-toting hero was left. Like a true Hollywood hero he did not move. He just stood in the flames, firing at the Dwarf Grenadiers until they finally took him down. He was a true Orc hero, posthumous medals abound on his record.

That's our story so far, let's hope there are plenty more of them.



*Orc heroics in the finest tradition!*