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JANUARY 2023
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FEATURED
THIS MONTH

WARGAMES ILLUSTRATED ISSUE WI421 JANUARY 2023

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FROM THE EDITOR

This month's magazine sees an exciting tie-in between printed paper and 3D printing. The paper element you are holding in your hands in the form of this magazine and your free *Thalassa* ancient naval battles rulebook. The 3D printing side of the marriage sees *Wi* giving away free STL files* to all our *WiPrime* Members for the first time. If you are a *WiPrime* Member you will be able to download a whole fleet of ships to take to the tabletop and play out ancient naval battles using your new *Thalassa* rules. Fear not if you don't own a 3D printer, you can purchase the ships and accessories 'ready-made' in resin from NG Castings - see our Building Your Fleet article for more information.

As you are now the proud owner of the *Thalassa* rules you will want to know about the ancient ships that will take the starring role in your games. You can do that by turning to page 72 and reading all about Triemes, or flip to the *Thalassa* battle report and scenario on page 30.

We're not 100% nautical this month, Billhookers (or potential Billhookers) are given an Easy Way In to the *Never Mind the Billhooks* medieval small battles rules with some sample army lists on page 52. We also have some Great Northern War and *SAGA: Age of Alexander* action for you in this issue.

Dan Faulconbridge

Owner and Editor

**Stereolithography. That's the technical name for the digital files used for 3D printing.*

This month's cover artwork is the cover of the Thalassa rulebook by The Creative Studio - Malaysia.

Below: Thalassa Triemes somewhere in the Mediterranean.



CREDITS

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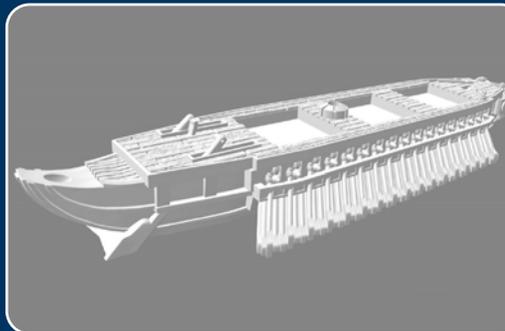
Neil Smith introduces us to the star of this month's theme - the Greek Trireme.



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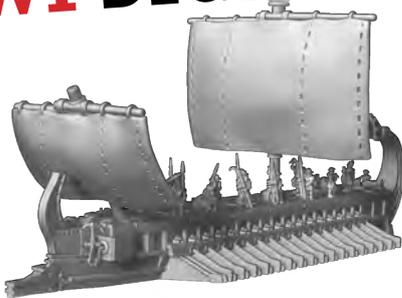
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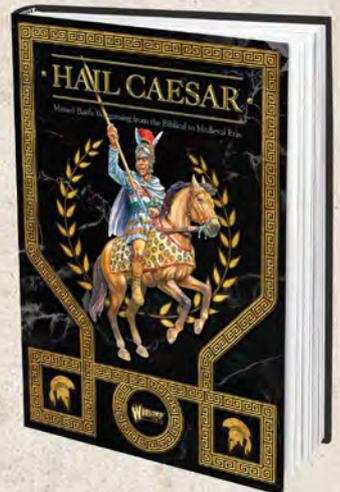


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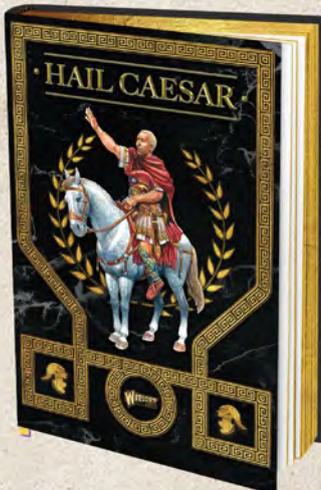
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QUICK FIRE!

Short, quick-read posts from *Wi* readers about their hobby projects, notes, news, and observations.

THAT TALENTED MR PERRY AND HIS MINIATURE FREILICHTMUSEUM

By Daniel Faulconbridge

I devised Quick Fire as a section of the magazine in which gamers share information and photos about projects they have recently completed. In this, my first submission to Quick Fire, I'm breaking my own 'rules'.

My efforts towards completing the project I want to tell you about were merely that I drove the car to get us to an open air museum where the talented Mr Alan Perry studied some of the exhibits; which he then turned into lovely tabletop models. Well done me!

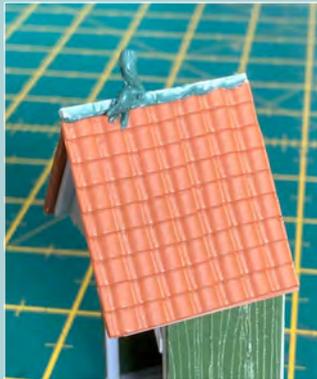
The museum in question was the Mühlenhof just outside Münster in Germany. We had called in there as a group of four wargamers en-route to *Tactica*, Hamburg. If you want to know more about our jaunt, check out Editor's Exploits 16 via the *Wi*Prime Member Area. Here I just want to focus on the models that were knocked up by Alan as a result of our visit.



THE WAYSIDE CHAPEL

This is a 'wayside chapel'. It's probably the smallest building at the museum, but it grabbed Alan's attention because he saw the potential for a miniature version of the chapel brightening up any European roadside.

We spotted several squirrels on our walk around the Mühlenhof, so my first reaction when Alan showed me his mini Wayside Chapel was not "wow that's great" but rather "where's the *Eichhörnchen*?" He duly obliged by adding one of the furry fellas on the roof.



Right: Myself and Nick North Star acting as scale mannequins for Alan.



THE WAGON BARN

The star attraction of the Freilichtmuseum is the *De Bockwindmüel* (post windmill), which would look great miniaturised on the tabletop, but we were taken with the more utilitarian and multi-use Wagon Barn. Expect to see it as an outbuilding on a Perry Miniatures tabletop/photo shoot soon.

If you would like to shine a light on somebody else's hobby project and attempt to take some of the credit, please don't hesitate to contact us!



MORE **QUICK FIRE!** PLEASE!

Send us your Quick Fire! pieces and get a FREE magazine or Giants in Miniature figure.

Please get in touch with a photo or two and less than 500 words of text about anything similar to what you have seen in this column; so that's painting or modelling projects, rules, wargaming notes, and observations.

Send your emails to: wi@wargamesillustrated.net

Use the subject title 'Quick Fire!'.

TERRA ALIEN

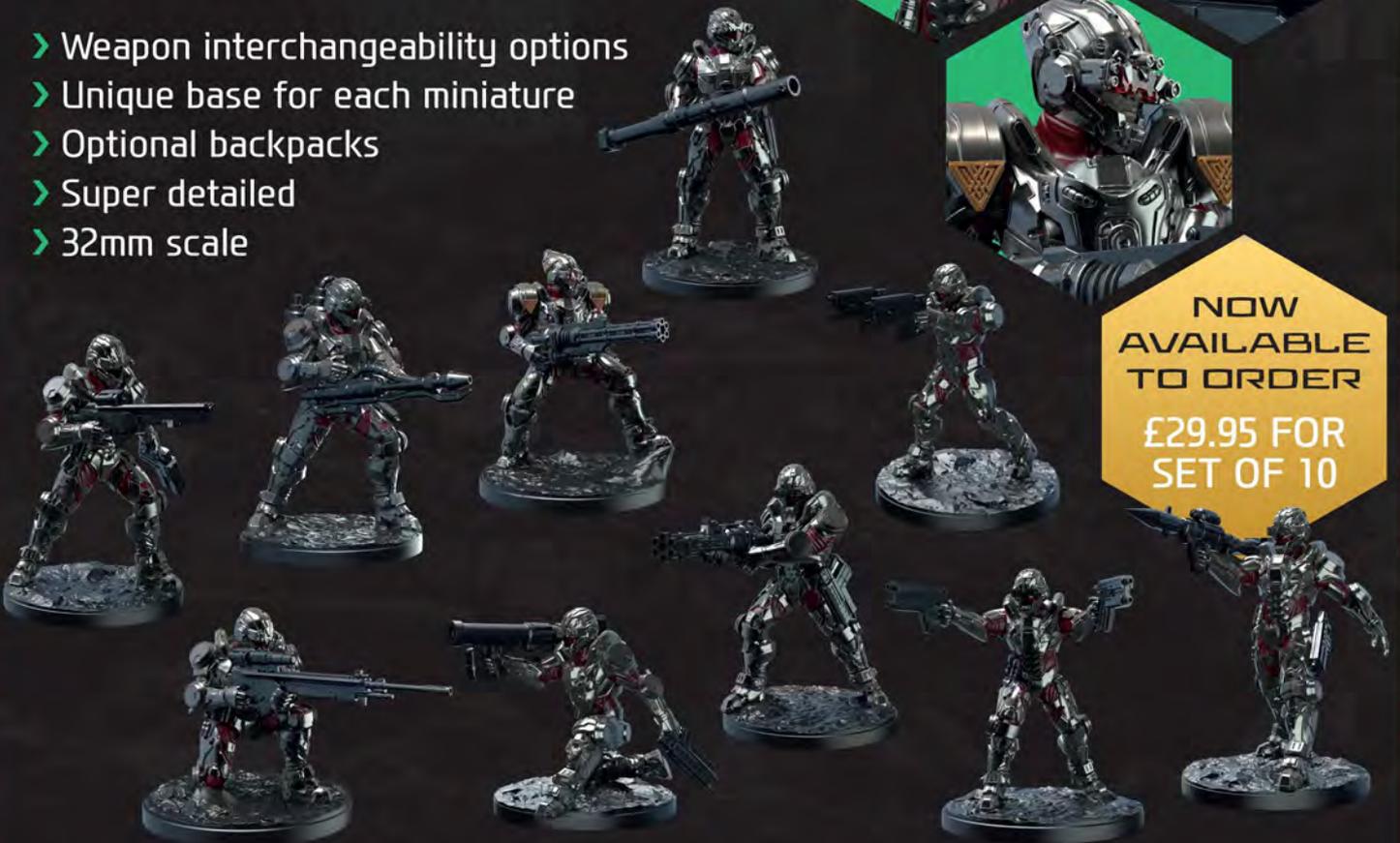
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OBSERVATION POST

New and forthcoming wargames
stuff you need to know about

RULES, SUPPLEMENTS, FIGURES, TERRAIN, HOBBY GEAR, AND MORE

NORTH STAR - OATHMARK: GOBLIN SLAVES

There are few more maligned creatures than the humble goblin; the threat they posed when J. R. R. Tolkien first repurposed the creatures of European myth and legend into the deadly denizens of Middle Earth seemed to all but evaporate over the following decades. Goblins became the diminutive weaklings in various fantasy worlds, and although the tide does seem to be turning, there's still plenty of work to be done to overcome GW's 1990s Goblin Green era of runty lackeys. Thankfully, North Star are here with a new box set for *Oathmark* that's set to change things, thrusting the goblins back into the limelight and giving them a chance to... oh... wait, no, these are Goblin Slaves!

All is not lost though. Yes, these new plastic figures come with manacles on their wrists, and various chain accessories on the frame add to their 'enslaved' style, but these are still some very menacing goblins. They're a far cry from the caricatured, comedy relief style, and if they weren't posed in such stooped poses, they'd come close to human height too, which makes them even more dangerous looking.



Above: *Goblin Unit.*

As with other *Oathmark* sets, this box contains enough parts on the six identical frames to build 30 models with a variety of weapons and some command options. It also includes bases, which is a nice bonus; it's a true 'everything you need' set to build a unit for the game.

You can arm every goblin slave with hand weapons or slings (or combine the two), and there's a standard bearer arm and officer options with a bigger sword and a hefty shield. What this means is that you could have a huge and thematically appropriate horde of 30 goblins led by an officer and standard bearer, or you could create tiny units of five with a standard or officer leading them to send in waves of goblins across the tabletop. We like this sort of versatility a lot!

This isn't the first Goblin set for *Oathmark*; the previous *Goblin Infantry* box has parts to make heavier armoured troops with spears, hand weapons and shields, or bows, and there's nothing stopping you from mixing some parts to add even more variety.



UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

PLASTIC CHALLENGES

There are a few downsides in the production of these figures that we feel need to be raised. The frame has been tooled so the bases of the main figure parts are too close to the sprue for clippers to fit in easily. This means you'll probably end up having to wobble them off the frame with brute force or slip a knife in; that's not ideal, especially when one of the goblins has rather weak ankles, which we almost snapped the first time we wiggled the part free of the frame.



Above left: Standard sized clippers don't fit under the bases...



Above right: ...and wobbling Goblins free can weaken/snap their ankles.

We also found that the standard pole is quite fragile; it snapped under a very gentle knock, and while it will be easily glued back on with some poly cement, the angle will seldom be perfect after such a fix.

Even with those concerns, this is a good set that will help you cover your tabletop in great looking goblins!



DETAILS

- SCALE: 28mm
- PERIOD: Fantasy
- PRICE: £25
- MATERIAL: Hard-plastic
- AVAILABLE FROM: northstarfigures.com

GALE FORCE 9 - TENFOLD DUNGEON

Unboxing our Tenfold Dungeon sets was a rather entertaining and odd experience. There's something unexpectedly amusing about slipping off the soft outer box of your new product to reveal... sturdier boxes inside! What's after that? Like a Russian Doll, the sets reveal more boxes within those boxes and then... yup, you guessed it, more boxes!

Cast your eyes over the images here though, these are no ordinary boxes. These boxes have reached a higher level, designed with care and detail to create an environment and atmosphere that serves a very different purpose to the one that the humble box was first invented for!

Tenfold Dungeon's four sets - Castle, Dungeons & Sewers, Town, and Temple - offer you a 'dungeon in a box', one that comes in glorious three-dimensional detail. At the core of the offering are the various sized boxes with which you can create different environments; each has a decorated exterior and interior (but no lids, of course), which makes a dungeon expand that reveals itself as you move through it and flip the boxes over.

The visual flair on each of these dungeon rooms is wonderful, and combining sets makes for a truly stunning area to play over: stained glass windows cast light on tiled floors, walls are detailed with stunning art and designs, toxic sewer water shines an eerie glow on the surroundings, magical fire illuminates areas, and much more. To join the dungeon areas together, there are plastic clips and doorways of three different sizes along with some extra details for the floors and some three-part stairways.



HISTORICAL IS VERY POSSIBLE

A big reason that we are excited about these sets goes beyond fantasy roleplay; there are loads of uses for a set like this in fantasy, sci-fi, and historical wargaming too. If you can overlook a few details, then WWII sewer or catacomb combat is yours to enjoy, brutal melee through building interiors during a medieval raid on a town, temple exploration in a more pulp scenario; or up close combat after breaching the defences during a siege. This kind of interior gaming is one many wargamers speculate about but seldom play; the expansive Tenfold Dungeon sets could make it possible without the need to take on a specialist hobby project.

The only potential barrier is the price; is £55 per set too much for a collection of very nicely made and cunningly conceived cardboard boxes? We don't think so. The price of admission to the Tenfold Dungeon will unlock near infinite gaming possibilities for your gaming group and might encourage new army and unit building. That's never a bad thing!

DETAILS

- SCALE: 25mm to 28mm
- PERIOD: Fantasy/Historical settings
- PRICE: £55 per set
- FORMAT: Assorted heavy card boxes/buildings, card accessories, plastic clips, and a 24-page softback full colour book in each set
- AVAILABLE FROM: gf9.com



Above: We got these too late for the finale of our Silver Bayonet campaign (see Wi419 and Wi420), but they would have been perfect for it, as this mock up dungeon we made shows!



UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

DO YOU D&D?

Each set includes an adventure booklet for *Dungeons & Dragons* 5th Edition, which wraps a story around the boxes, gives each of the dungeon rooms a particular flavour, and adds special rules. The Dungeons & Sewer set, for example, has an adventure called *The Bellow Below* that sends your party under the town of Marlenburg to discover what evil might be causing the population to suffer terrible nightmares. There's a map of the sewers, and it all culminates in a boss battle against a fearsome and grotesque monster.

Even if you don't play *D&D*, each adventure booklet will provide inspiration for how you might add custom gameplay features to each of the rooms in whatever game or period you do play.



VICTRIX - LATE ROMAN UNARMoured INFANTRY AND LATE ROMAN ARCHERS AND SLINGERS

Victrix has a treat for anyone gaming the later wars of the Roman Empire with these two new packs. The Unarmoured Infantry and the Archers and Slingers sets each include enough parts on their frames to build a total of 36 figures. They come in the standard Victrix 'bagged set' format with build instructions on the reverse of the colour card clip.

These packs will allow you to construct the core of a fine-looking force, but they are just the tip of a 'Late Romans' iceberg ahead; one that may sink many Ancient gamers' army building budgets! This is the start of a new and quite comprehensive range with Armoured Infantry, Heavy Cavalry, Light Cavalry, Horse Archers, and Cataphracts promised - great news for players who like to have company consistency in their armies.

WEAPON ACCURACY

But let's not get ahead of ourselves; we need to examine the frames that are available! These detailed plastics reflect the kind of research you expect from Victrix, and much of the latest archaeological evidence is reflected in the weapons. The Archers and Slingers have composite bows, drawing bows, hand slings, and staff slings. The Infantry have the long spear rather than earlier *pilum*, and across both sets, there's varied styles of headgear: both the sheepskin pillbox (archers and slingers) and conical type are included with a huge variety to choose from on each frame. Not only do these make for great variety in your Romans but they widen the possibilities; you'll be able to make Germanic tribes, Romano British, and Byzantines with the same frames.

The overall variety of poses and arm combinations might be a little bewildering if you are relatively new to this period, but Victrix have you covered with build guides for the figures - not so much step-by-step instructions but suggestions for good combinations of parts. Follow their guidelines, add your own creativity, and there's no reason every single one of your figures can't be uniquely posed.

The interchangeable parts make for an outstanding level of animation, but the figures are time consuming to build because of the number of parts per-figure. That might send fans of one-piece metal minis into plastic purgatory, but it will be heaven for gamers who like to build dramatic and dynamic armies.

DETAILS

- SCALE: 28mm
- PERIOD: Ancient
- PRICE: £34 per-pack
- MATERIAL: Hard-plastic
- AVAILABLE FROM: victrixlimited.com



Above: Slingers (left) and archers (right).



Above: Arthurian variants of the infantry (left) and Late Roman unarmoured infantry (right).

ARMOURY INCLUDED!

The frames include a good range of shields (both large and small), swords (both in and out of scabbards), and quivers and sling pellet bags (called 'sling ammo bags' on the instructions, which will cause an accuracy shudder in some).

As is now common with Victrix releases, there are transfer sheets to go on the shields, available as a complementary range produced by Little Big Men Studios. These will be a fine finishing touch to complete your troops.

As you can see from the photos here, Victrix have produced two new sets of figures that will be well received by wargamers, whether gnarled and knowledgeable veterans, or those entering this period for the first time. Excellent models at an excellent price, and our appetites are suitably whetted for what's next in the Late Roman range!



Above: A Roman standard bearer made from parts on the command frame.



UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

DETAILS ON EVERY FRAME

It is the small touches (that might be ignored by other manufacturers) that take these frames to another level. Pleasing details are a hallmark of Victrix plastics, and it's a pleasure to take a closer look at their frames and pick out a selection:

The basic infantry frame (six included with four figures on each) features staffs that are perfectly... imperfect; completely correct for the period in their 'this one will do' shapes and randomness. Plastic sets from other manufacturers are often made up of copy/paste replicas of the same weapon, so we really appreciate this extra effort.

Command frames (two included with six figures on each) complete the infantry set and add options for more armoured leaders, horned instruments, and bannered command. The draco standard looks excellent and feels more fitting on an infantry unit in the Late Roman period.

Finally, there's the Archers and Slingers frame (six included with six figures on each), and the obvious detail here is how fine many parts are. The arrows and strings of slings are slender but just strong enough to face the rigours of gaming; even the bows are beautifully lean, and there's a dart variation on one of the slingers that would be impossible to produce in other casting materials.

WARGAMES ATLANTIC - DECLINE AND FALL: GOTH WARRIORS

Fresh from the USA, Wargames Atlantic's new plastic Goths provide a complementary (or to be more accurate, clashing) force to any Late Roman army. Part of their Decline and Fall range, these unarmoured figures can be built in a range of poses with all manner of weapons; should you wish, you can also mix them with parts from the other sets in the range (such as the Lorica Hamata) to add more armour and weapon options.

The set includes five figures on each of its six identical frames. That's good value for money - 30 figures for \$34.95/£25 - and there certainly is a broad range of options available with the parts included. The 15 heads, all with animated expressions, bring plenty of variety, and there's a good selection of generic weapons: hand axes, short spears, swords, bows, and slings. All are attached to arms/hands and are well modelled, but the scale, when compared to figures from other manufacturers, rather suggests that the Goths were short, narrow shouldered, and under nourished. That might be a little off-putting to some gamers, especially those with established collections.

DETAILS

- SCALE: 28mm
- PERIOD: Ancient
- PRICE: \$34.95/£25 per-pack
- MATERIAL: Hard-plastic
- AVAILABLE FROM: wargamesatlantic.com



With the above caveat, these figures are a positive addition to the choices the buyer has for the Dark Ages, and it would be possible to use these as Lombards, Franks, or Saxon Fyrd to take the options even further.



MANA PRESS - TRIBAL SECOND EDITION

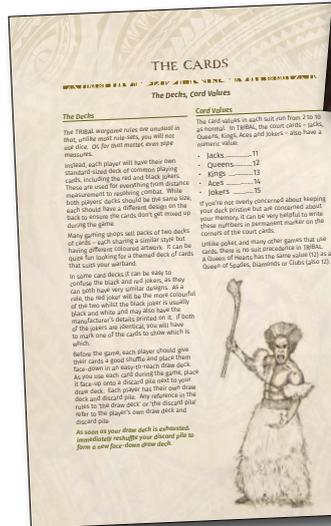
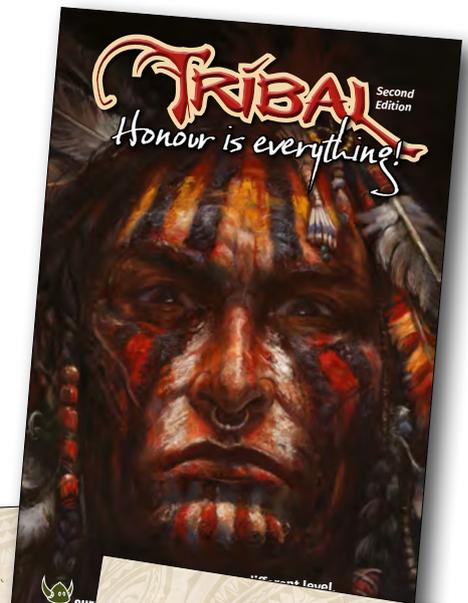
TRIBAL - designed by Lon Teal, Aramiha Harwood, and Adam Gehling - is back with a great looking second edition for all your tribe-based skirmish wargaming needs. A refinement rather than a reinvention, the authors have added clarifications and tighter definitions to the text, but the game remains much the same on the tabletop. Rules are so similar, in fact, that you could stick with your first edition **TRIBAL** book to play against someone with the second edition without a problem. This is common with many second editions and certainly no bad thing when the game worked well the first time around, but now we're looking for the 'extra value'. Happily, the new **TRIBAL** makes a strong case for upgrading; there's a lot of new and exciting content in this visually fresh, nicely compact, new book. If you're new to **TRIBAL** and want a better understanding of the game's unchanged but still quite unique main gameplay features, then look to the 'Under the Microscope' section on the next page; otherwise, read on to get a better idea of those added extras.

A MATTER OF HONOUR

At the end of the main rules, the Matter of Honour section feels refined and much improved. It has neat, numbered play processes alongside well laid out tables that dictate each game's objectives and rewards. Cards are drawn to generate the objective in play, with the suit putting the focus on a different battle element: Clubs are 'Territorial' (with the number determining if it will be hold, defend, or attack), Hearts are 'People' (kill, protect, or rescue), etc. This section acts as an all-in-one scenario generator for your games. It will provide countless variations for **TRIBAL** battles, and they will always be incredibly easy to set up and play.

Gaming ease is also present in another noticeable feature of the book. It has been designed and printed at graphic novel size, sitting somewhere between standard, large format rulebooks and the half-sized offerings that many companies produce. This is a 'compromise' that we rather like as it feels unobtrusive on the table but is more forgiving than mini rulebooks when it comes to staying open on the page you want to reference!

Before moving away from the main rules, there's another addition worth noting: Shamans. These priests, magicians, and wise men and women are given Skills that simulate tribal magic. Available skills are Curse (cause an opposing unit to lose its activation card), Divination (a once per-game opportunity to look at a combination of six cards from the top of either/both player decks), Healing (restore wounds to a friendly unit or character), Rat Cunning (manipulate the card deck at the start of the turn to aid yourself or punish your opponent), and Evil Eye (an Elite skill that marks a unit in line of sight and can then force it to swap an attack card for a randomly drawn one).



A CALL TO ARMS

From page 44, the book puts its focus onto the settings and periods in which games can be played. **TRIBAL** is a versatile system, and we're sure that new players will be inspired by what's on offer here, all very nicely presented with smashing photos of varied figures and terrain, but existing players will also start to discover much that is new in the book. There are new rules and options along with broader settings in this second edition.

Pasifika cultures are presented first and include Maori, Hawaii, Samoa, Tonga, and Fiji. The love for the subject matter is palpable with far more than just suggested rules and army breakdowns featured. Space is limited in the book's tight page count, but a feel for the background of the people and their culture is presented, and there's a nice look at ancient tribal games to mix things up.

Pre and post colonisation tribes are next, and the colonial forces that will oppose them bring new gaming considerations; more on those shortly though because the book then rushes to the Bronze Age and Sea Peoples.



DETAILS

- SCALE: 28mm
- PERIOD: Tribal conflicts
- PRICE: \$35 AUS/£23.50 UK
- FORMAT: Comic book size 66-page softback full colour book
- AVAILABLE FROM: manapress.com.au

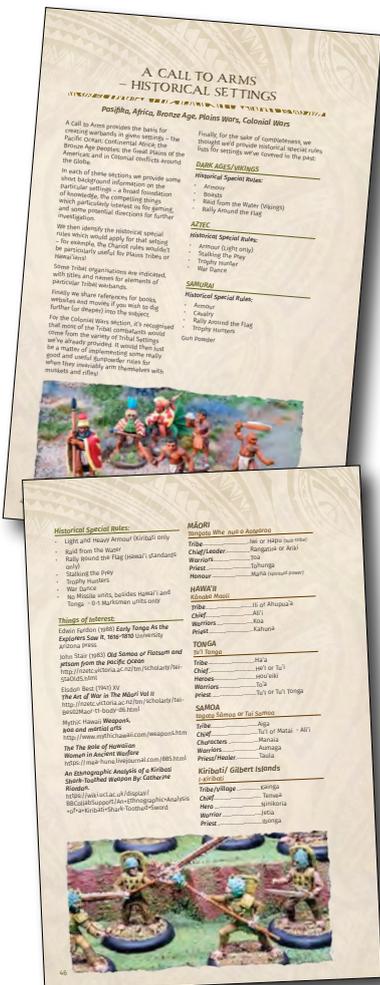
From there, it's the Tribes of the Great Plains: Crow/Apsáalooke, Pawnee, Lakota Sioux, and Cheyenne. Rather than try and cram in too much into each of the settings, a list of suggested further study is provided with some great background reading and rulebooks.

Finally, it's the colonial-era conflicts, and this section includes gunpowder rules. Ranged attacks are generally quite 'fluffy and loose' in *TRIBAL*, so it's good that muskets get some special treatment, but also good that things are kept simple with basic rules for modifiers, reacting, and reloading.

GOING SOLO

The book's not quite done; solo gaming (all the rage since lockdown times) gets a two-page section that efficiently translates the game's existing playing card systems to work alone. Non-player units each activate on the draw of a card, and the number revealed dictates their action. In combat, two cards get drawn for the AI player in each Exchange, and the one with the highest value after modifiers is used. Simple but effective stuff.

Recommended manufacturers, inspirational photos, and a quick reference sheet are the finale in this excellent follow up to one of the more unique skirmish games around. If you've not yet tried a game of *TRIBAL*, there's never been a better time to have a go!



UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

New to *TRIBAL*? Here are the basics. It's worth mentioning two things that don't feature before we cover the core gaming elements; there are no dice and no measures. We'll give you a second to gasp in shock... and now we'll move on!

The game uses different decks of standard playing cards as a replacement for the aforementioned gaming staples; each player gets a full deck of their own, and in each turn, they draw cards from it before assigning one to each of their units. These become that unit's activation card, but they serve purposes beyond that:

- If you choose to take a move action, the size of the card becomes your measure: a walk is a short card-edge distance, a march is a long card-edge, and a sprint is two long card-edges.
- To adhere to coherency, you must be able to lift a unit's card and touch each model with it from above at the end of their activation.
- Should a unit enter combat, their activation card becomes their first combat card.

HAND-TO-HAND - CARD BATTLES ON THE TABLETOP

Each melee consists of moments that the game calls Exchanges; these are determined by playing opposing cards. Players each draw a combat hand and play a mini game of anticipation, aggression, and bluffing for each melee. The first card of your combat hand is your activation card; that means that if you charge a Unit that hasn't yet been activated, they will lose their ability to activate later in the turn, which is a tactical consideration worth keeping in mind. In addition to that first card, the attacker and defender draw additional cards for each wound (if using a Warlord or Hero) or Warrior or Marksman (if using a unit) involved. Bonus cards are also gained by sprinting into combat, fighting downhill, fighting from a defensible position, and having certain skills; this becomes a player's total Combat Hand.

With Combat Hands determined, the first Exchange happens, and the player who initiated combat has the Advantage, so they choose and play their attack card after their opponent has chosen and revealed theirs. Advantage is held by the winner of the previous Exchange as combat continues, so being the aggressor and making the charge puts you at a distinct *actual* advantage!

Once cards are revealed, their number value (royalty and jokers have values ranging from 11 to 15), their suit, and certain Skills become relevant in determining who wins the Exchange. A Jack of Spades would have a core value of 11, but if used by a Hero with a spear, it will get a +1 'preferred weapon' bonus for using the Spade suit. If that Hero also had the Adept Skill, there would be a further +1 to the preferred weapon bonus for a total of 13.

When resolving what the winner of an Exchange, suits cause different combat resolutions. The Hero with the spear would Stab after the exchange because they used the black Spade. A Club would instead have resulted in a bludgeon. Both strike types wound. The red suits represent feints and don't cause wounds; instead, they apply a bonus in the next Exchange. Jabs (Hearts) allow you to change the suit of the card you play next, while dodges (Diamonds) allow you to change your opponent's suit.

It's a very different system to the dice rolling of most wargames with each combat becoming a player managed micro element within the macro of the bigger game; the player who can best pace their attacks through the Exchanges is likely to emerge victorious in the overall battle. That may not appeal to all players, but it is well suited to the style of the smaller skirmish games played in *TRIBAL*, creating moments of focus and high drama.



MILITARY MINIATURE PRESS - MODELLING AND PAINTING VIETNAM WARGAMES

We reviewed Michael Farnworth's first painting guide - *Modelling & Painting WWII German Military Figures* - back in 2019 and declared it a great guide for anyone wanting an all-in-one book on the subject. Now, several years later, the author has cast his gaze over the dizzying complexity of the entire Vietnam War, and in 160 pages, attempts to offer a comprehensive book on the conflict aimed at more experienced hobbyists. Has he been successful?

GETTING STARTED

The first 30 pages offer an 'Introduction to History, Geography, and Wargames' and take the reader on a whistle-stop tour of the war and ways to play it. This part of the book will serve as a useful primer for anyone coming in fresh and has some commendable elements, such as comparison shots of different ranges of miniatures. The roundup of wargaming options is impressively thorough, even including details of games such as Rubicon's unreleased *Oscar Mike* ruleset; clearly the author knows his stuff when it comes to playing the Vietnam War.

Chapter two is a hefty one, taking up 65 pages, titled 'Soldiers'. It features combatants from North Vietnam, South Vietnam, America, Australia, and France in deeply researched detail. Uniforms, equipment, camouflage, weapons, and insignia all feature prominently; the author provides everything needed to recreate them accurately on your figures with paint suggestions and examples of finished models. The various nationalities all have multiple pages of full colour photos showing their uniforms, kit, and weapons; these pages will be perfect for paint matching.

The information behind why various models are painted in their different colour schemes is great, but Farnworth's brushwork never really surpasses an average tabletop level. In a guide aimed at experienced hobbyists, that's a bit unfortunate, and though this section offers useful colour references, the practical painting advice and examples will not drastically improve the techniques of anyone practiced with a paint brush. If you want to level up your painting, this is not the book for you; if you want to get the colours and details right on your Vietnam War figures, however, it is an excellent book to study and features a ton of detail. Even the humble water buffalo, a Vietnam farmer's prize possession, features in the book's exhaustive paint scheme coverage.

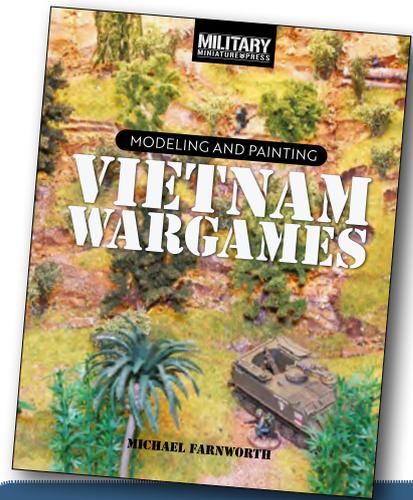
"CHARLIE DON'T SURF!"

Tanks, APCs, trucks, jeeps, helicopters, and boats all feature in chapter three. This section starts with a guide to the different materials kits are produced in (including advice on 3D printing) and how to prep them before covering a plethora of options. More of a historical guide than a how to paint section, this should still provide a good bit of inspiration. The chapter ends with a five-page run through of how to build and paint Empress Miniatures' PBR Street Gang and crew, based on the boat from *Apocalypse Now*.

Terrain takes up chapter four, and this part of the book provides great practical techniques to represent natural details - palm trees, bamboo, banana trees, and rice paddies - on your table as well as the slope from Hamburger Hill. MDF and resin kits get covered after that, and there's a section on the making of an impressive Hue citadel. Photos throughout this section, and indeed the whole book, ensure visual learners are well catered for.

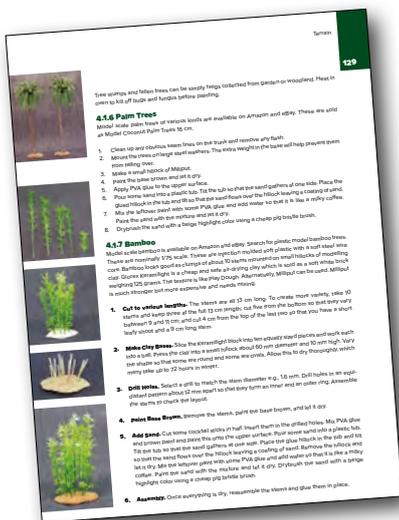
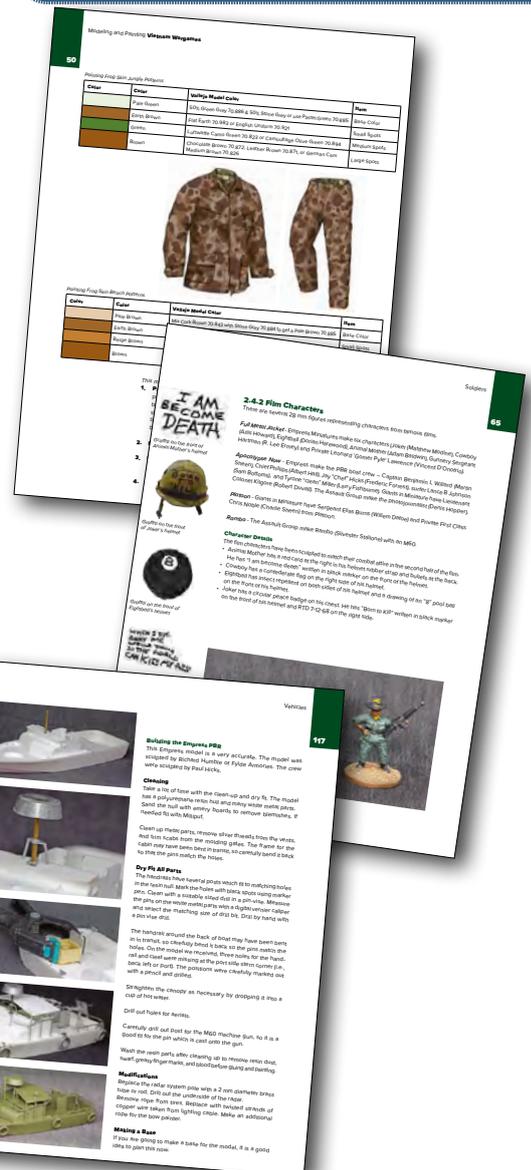
Things finish with some useful appendices that cover suppliers, books, websites, TV shows, and films, then a glossary that offers descriptions of various acronyms from the conflict.

Modeling and Painting Vietnam Wargames is a great book, and it has clearly had a huge amount of work and research put into its creation. While some of the painting left the more experienced hobbyists in the *Wi* team wanting more, the rest of the book, with its detailed images and text, provided the 'more' they were after and then some!



DETAILS

- **SCALE:** 20mm and 28mm are covered, but the advice is broadly applicable
- **PERIOD:** The Vietnam War
- **PRICE:** Book £29, PDF £19
- **FORMAT:** 160-page softback full colour book or PDF download
- **AVAILABLE FROM:** militaryminiaturepress.com



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RELEASE RADAR

Dom Sore's fired up his Release Radar to help you locate some great new and upcoming hobby goodies.

BETTER BASES, APPEALING ARMOUR, FULL FOLIAGE, AND PRISTINE PAlettes

Ammo by Mig Jimenez (migjimenez.com) have various sets on the way that combine hobby products with helpful guides on how to use them. Going under the broad title of 'Ammo Wargaming Universe', this batch of offerings is primarily targeted to specific basing techniques, with three different kits that cover Volcanic, Deserts, and Steppes. These contain basing products (texture paints and materials, foliage elements, etc.) and paints/pigments/shaders along with a full-colour guide on how to use them. Because the products are all specialist in some way or other, you should get great results if you follow the guide's step-by-step advice.

These sets aren't cheap at about £60 each, but with 'faces and bases' a common mantra for making your army stand out on the tabletop, you'll be halfway there with one of these sets. The final kit is for weathering Combat Armour; similar in its offering, but without the basing materials, this one concentrates on paints and effects like washes and oils, and though it puts a focus on sci-fi, much of the advice will be transferable to various historical periods.



I don't know about you, but I've had my fill of turkey... for now, at least. Let my Release Radar guide you around some of the great new models and hobby gear available in early 2023; I guarantee these are all winners, no turkeys here!



Want to add some extra 'pop' to your bases? How about these vibrant leaves from WWS (wwscenics.com)? This new product offers laser-cut, dinky little leaves in five colours - yellow, brown, orange, red, and green. They are flocked with 1mm static grass for texture and come in three styles: maple, elm, and ash. They'll be great if you want to recreate leaf scatter but can add colour to your other terrain or bases too.

If Christmas stocking fillers prove anything each year, it's that there's always room for something we don't really need if it seems intriguingly gimmicky in some way or another. Does the Turbo Dork (turbodork.com) silicone palette fall into this category? I'll let you decide. This is a sizeable (7.75" x 2.75" x 0.5") palette made from silicone; it contains eight wells for paint, two brush rests, and a large mixing spot in the centre. Usable only with acrylics, the silicone finish should make it easy to wipe clean. It is an interesting addition to the painting gadget market, but it's not a cheap one, so you'll have to weigh the price against the 'cleanability'.

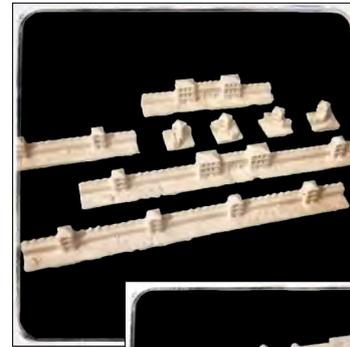


FOR TABLETOP ARCHITECTS AT ALL SCALES

Rome wasn't built in a day... but maybe it would have been if Korhyl Miniatures' (korhylminiatures.bigcartel.com) latest releases had been available. You can use their new Roman City Tiles to realise your empire building dreams in micro scale resin! There are two options at 2mm scale: a city one that covers the main buildings you would expect, and another that provides you with walls for said city. The city includes a large amphitheatre, a large forum type area, and many streets to include a common district, theatre district, and pantheon (temple) district, while the full walls set includes corner turrets and two gateways. These are 'large' pieces in a small scale and the detail on them is fantastic; they'd be a great start to an epic 2mm tabletop, and ideal for *Strength & Honour*.

If a whole Roman city is too much, how about a desert fort in 6mm scale from Rapier Miniatures (rapierminiatures.com)? This is still a large resin piece, with sides 22cm long, and you can buy the full set or pick up the various pieces separately. That means you can expand the fort or make some form of desert town walls, which is a nice option to have. This terrain is versatile too, handy for anything from early medieval through to modern battles; if you squint it could almost be Bir Hakeim.

The next structures come from Vital Ground (vital-ground.co.uk) and offer something very different: an Elephant Slide and a UK Bus Stop. Both are 28mm scale MDF kits that you will need to build and paint; once you do, they will provide some characterful points of interest on a modern wargaming board. Note: the Elephant slide is a slide in the shape of an elephant, not a slide for elephants! It is based on the one famously found at Pripyat - in the Chernobyl exclusion zone - which adds a melancholy edge to an otherwise rather charming kit. The bus stop is a far more mundane offering, but one that will fit well onto post-1945 tables set in the UK. You'll need to add obscene graffiti and questionable stains to get the realistic UK bus stop look just right, of course; perhaps that could be a new specialist weathering set for Ammo by Mig to make!



Right: Roman City Tiles in 2mm scale.
Below: Desert fort in 6mm scale.



Above: Elephant slide (right) and bus stop (left).

BECKER'S 'FUNNIES', ASSAULT REINDEER, AND WEIRD FRENCH ARMOUR

Mad Bob Miniatures (madbobminiatures.co.uk) continue producing unusual WWII vehicles; the Raketenwerfer auf Somua MCL is this month's treat. This multi-part resin kit comes in either 20mm or 28mm and marries German ingenuity with French and Soviet designs thanks to the cut and shut antics of German engineer and artillery officer Alfred Becker. This kit is a great way to add some unusual area effect capability to your German army, and it looks smashing.



The latest MarDav release (mdminis.co.uk) is 20mm and 28mm Finnish World War Two troops. These are all 3D printed figures in winter gear, except for the vehicles, which you can opt to paint ready for the season of your choice. There are a lot of figures to choose from: Officer team, Forward Observer Team, Medic, Infantry Squad, Jakaari squad, Flamethrower team, AT Rifle, Sniper, Panzershreck, 81mm Mortar, Medium Machine Gun, 45mm AT gun, BA-6 Armoured Car, BT-7 Tank, and (best of all) a reindeer team!

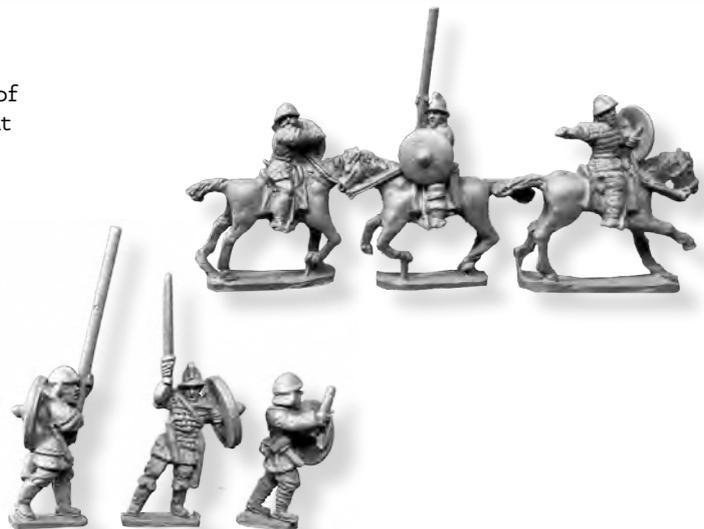


CP Models' (cpmodels.co.uk) latest release makes this section a trilogy of World War options... sort of. This is a 'not quite' World War One 'French' tank. We're in the world of 'weird wars' here, and the design elements on this tank will fit into imaginations interwar settings or pulp games. With a big gun in the turret and a hefty machine gun in the hull, it is perfect for chasing down those pesky rebels or holding an archaeologist's father captive!



TIME TO GET MEDIEVAL

The medieval period is vast, covering the fall of the Roman Empire up to an indeterminate point in the early 1500s... maybe. For my purposes, it certainly covers the new 15mm white metal Peter Pig (peterpig.co.uk) Carolingians. There are nine new packs in this range: armoured and unarmoured spearmen, swordsmen, bow and javelin armed skirmishers, armoured cavalry, spear and skirmisher command, and the important generals. An excellent way to begin your 9th Century Northern France-based army.



At the same scale, but much later in the period, are the 13th Century medieval figures from Khurasan Miniatures (khurasanminiatures.tripod.com). This already substantial range adds knights with lances at 45 degrees, bannerets with hand weapons, and dismounted knights. Caparisoned horses gallop in too, and these are closer to 'true scale', meaning they are slightly smaller than Khurasan Miniatures' standard horses and more like the horses of the time.

At 28mm, new white metal Saxon Gedriht from 1st Corps (1stcorps.co.uk) have caught my eye. These are the elite of Saxon armies, tasked with protecting the chief. These ones are provided with separate weapons and can be equipped with bucklers or larger shields. All are charging or attacking with plenty of armour, as befits their status, and I suspect they will grace the retinue of many an early medieval Warlord on the tabletop.



MISCELLANY

I start this month's miniature miscellany with two English Civil War Generals from Empress Miniatures (empressminiatures.com). Both are cast in white metal at 28mm scale and represent generals who initially fought together then ended up on opposing sides in the English Civil War: Hopton and Waller. Both are mounted, but Waller seems the happier of the two, likely because he won. These men are a microcosm of the whole of the conflict: friends who somehow ended up on opposite sides and fighting each other. They will make for excellent commanders in your ECW force, or they could be used as regimental officers.



Above: Waller.

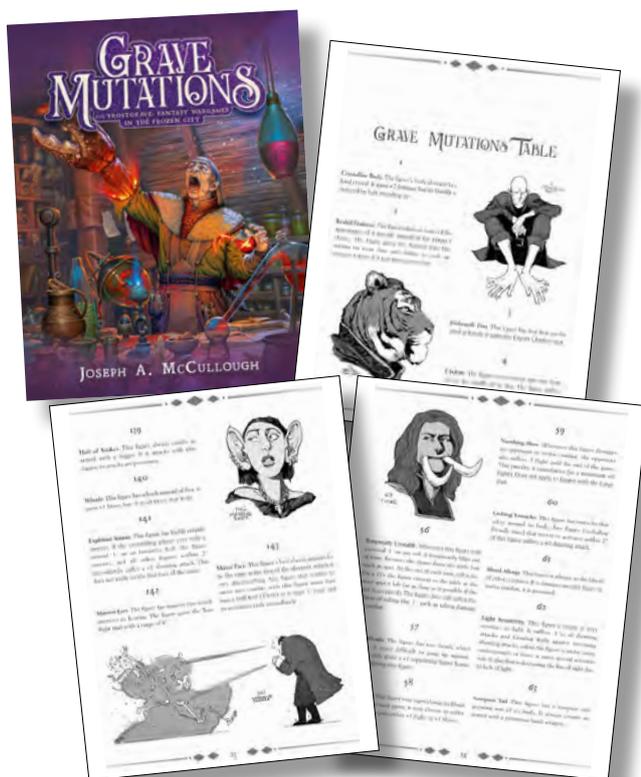


Above: Hopton.

Khurusan Miniatures make their second appearance this month with some 6mm sci-fi Parasachnid figures. What is a Parasachnid? I think the scientific terminology is 'gribbly, chitin-covered alien beetle thing'! This new range has warriors on 'foot', flying warriors, ogre beetles, and a leadership caste consisting of queens and brains on legs. Consider my interest piqued!



Above: 6mm sci-fi Parasachnid figures.



Moving from miniatures to a new book; *Grave Mutations* is available from DriveThruRPG (drivethrurpg.com) as a digital PDF or a print on demand physical document. It is a new and unofficial supplement for Joseph A. McCullough's *Frostgrave*; interestingly, it's written by... Joseph A. McCullough! Does this self-publishing indicate a big bust up between Joe and Osprey Publishing? No, nothing so dramatic; this expansion was deemed a bit too abstract for the full Osprey treatment, so Joe put it out there himself. The book offers a way to add extra weirdness to your *Frostgrave* games with a thousand mutations to bring to your characters. The list of possibilities is nicely illustrated ('explosive sneezes' is a favourite), and although it is primarily created for *Frostgrave*, you should be able to adapt the mutations to fit your games of *Stargrave*, *Ghost Archipelago*, *Rangers of Shadow Deep*, or even a game Joe didn't design.

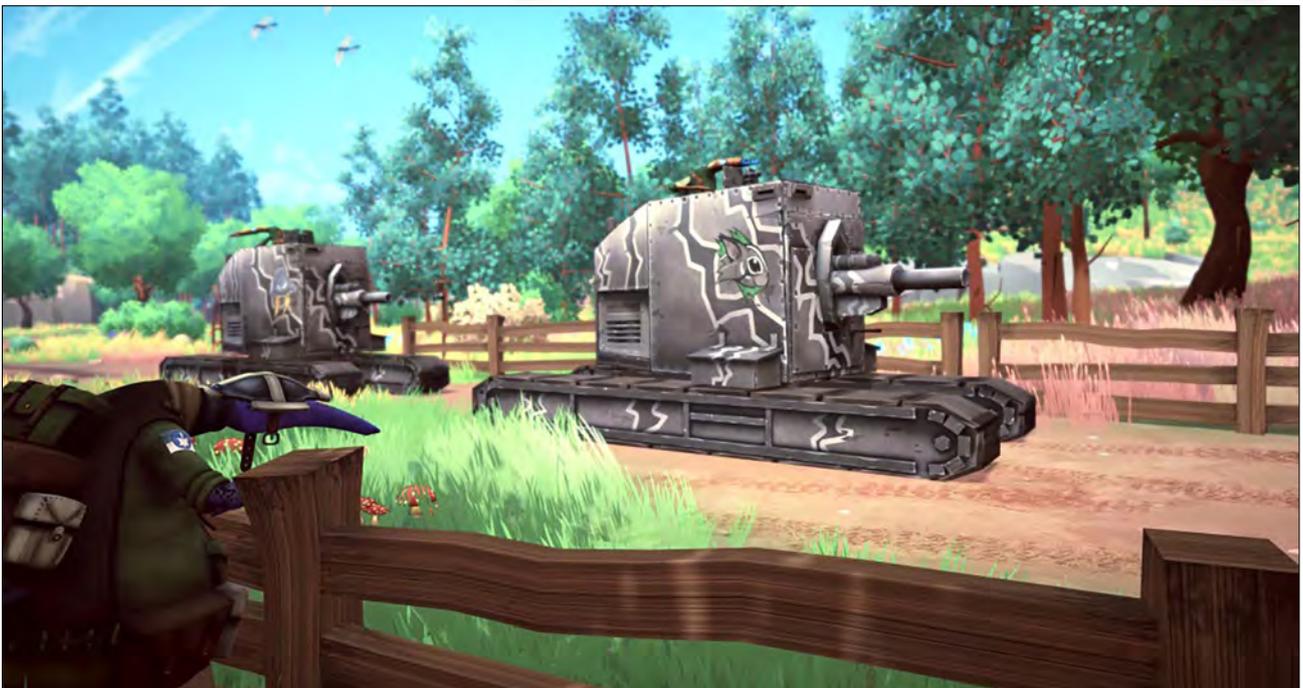
WARGAMES ATLANTIC MEETS ZOMBIESMITH

I'll finish with my most anticipated upcoming release in this month's Release Radar; out at some point in 2023, and it's a new plastic set from Wargames Atlantic (wargamesatlantic.com) in conjunction with Zombiesmith (zombiesmith.com). This is a very personal pick as I'm already keen on Zombiesmith's charmingly odd, anteater-like alien race - the Quar. If you do not know of these intriguing miniatures and their associated game, then you should correct that; get yourself to the Quar section of Zombiesmith's website and do some research into the long-nosed combatants! I have enjoyed many a game with the existing Quar miniatures at the local club, and the upcoming Wargames Atlantic frame looks to be packed with everything you could need to build waves of varied Quar infantry. If you've bought any of WA's plastics before, you know what to expect; nicely designed torsos and legs with a huge selection of head, arm, and equipment options to build them in practically infinite poses. Thank goodness I didn't make a 'no new armies' 2023 New Year's Resolution!

Until next time, fare thee well, and happy gaming!



Digital renders of the Quar showing completed figures, various weapons and kit, and the work in progress frame layout.



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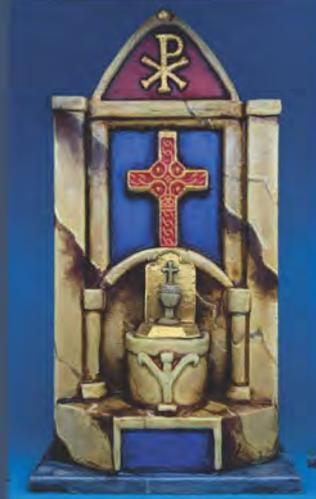


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NEW BOOKS FOR THE DISCERNING WARGAMER

BY NEIL SMITH

What is the one rule included in just about every set of rules that we almost never use? I opt for the weather rule. Yet weather has played a pivotal role in many conflicts throughout history, from snow in eastern Europe, to storms that ground vital air support, to jungle rain and desert heat. I mention this because weather comes up as a factor in some of our books this month, and it is something to keep in mind when refighting campaigns and battles.



ANCIENT

We have quality straight out of the gate this month with Adrian Goldsworthy's *Caesar's Civil War: 49–44 BC* (Osprey). If you don't know who Julius Caesar was, I probably can't help you, but some readers might be less aware of Caesar's exploits after he disposed of Rome's Gallic 'problem'. Essentially, his expected role as the most powerful man in Rome was whipped out from under him by Pompey the Great. He mistakenly believed that he could beat Caesar but in the ensuing Civil War, it was Caesar that triumphed, though not without significant difficulty. Civil wars are always interesting to wargame with the balance of forces usually being equal. This war is better than most because of the two great commanders in opposition and some brilliant battles to study. You should also be aware that Goldsworthy knows his stuff, having written the superb biography, *Caesar* (Orion, 2007).



MEDIEVAL

Imagine being an ordinary Lithuanian soldier in the late 14th Century, just doing what you're told and hoping to get home in one piece, when suddenly, charging straight at you are these armoured men all dressed in white with black crosses emblazoned on them, some with horned helmets, riding rather large horses. If that conjures an image, you will enjoy Mark Galeotti's *Teutonic Knight vs Lithuanian Warrior: The Lithuanian Crusade 1283–1435* (Osprey). The charging men were the Teutonic knights, the pre-eminent military order in the Baltic region, who swept all before them quite easily until they hit a proper enemy in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Then things weren't so easy. This is the story of relentless conquest, tenacious defence, and some epic battles. Galeotti's book will get you started on your armies, and there are some excellent figures out now for this fascinating conflict.

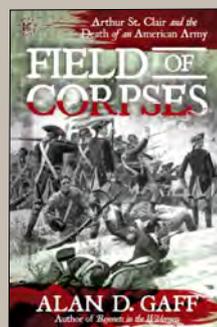
EARLY MODERN

Our Early Modern period book this month is a 'two-fer' for wargamers. Speaking from the simulation end of our wargaming spectrum, there are few better gaming experiences than reconstructing a major historical battle on the table; getting the terrain, forces, deployment, etc. just so – as far as we can do it, that is. Andre Schurger's *The Battle of Lutzen 1632: The Battle Reassessed* (Helion) presents one of the most dramatic battles of the 17th Century when the Swedes under Gustavus Adolphus took on the Holy Roman Empire army commanded by Albrecht

von Wallenstein; both of them brilliant in their own way. Gustavus famously lost his life leading a cavalry charge, perhaps the pivotal loss of the 'Thirty Years' War. Lutzen is a great battle to refight, though don't do like I did and roll a Blunder on Gustavus' first move and have him rout off the table! But here's the 'two-fer': Schurger has studied the archaeological evidence for Lutzen in an attempt to provide a more accurate account of the battle. And that means variables that we can play out to see what we can make happen. Who could ask for more?

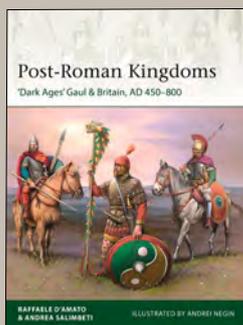
18TH CENTURY

I wasn't sure how to categorise this battle of the early American Republic. Let's call it post- Revolution and move along. This conundrum is brought about by Alan Gaff's *Field of Corpses: Arthur St. Clair and the Death of an American Army* (Knox Press) that tells the story of General St. Clair's expedition into the Northwest Territory and its terrible fate in November 1791. St. Clair was marching through western Ohio on 4 November when he was ambushed by Native Americans, lots of them! In three hours of desperate fighting, St. Clair lost half of his men and then some more along the road his remnants fled along to escape the northwestern confederacy pushing the invaders out. This remains one of the darkest days in American military history and should be better known; perhaps this book will do that. It also brings up a textbook example of the problem of wargaming ambushes. If you are playing St. Clair, how do you not prepare your army for what is about to happen? And if you are the northwestern confederacy, there is almost no risk involved. My suggestion is to co-op the Americans against a programmed Native American attack where the players each command a section of the American army and try to avoid repeating history.



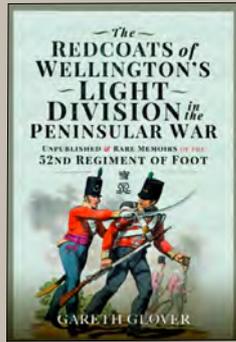
EARLY MEDIEVAL

It would be difficult to describe the British Isles after the Romans left as anything other than a mess. Admittedly, the Empire had been falling apart for a while, but when the Romans evacuated in 410, they took any central authority with them. Raffaele D'Amato surveys what happened next in *Post-Roman Kingdoms: 'Dark Ages' Gaul & Britain, AD 450–800* (Osprey). He finds an array of contenders across Britain and Gaul, which suffered much the same fate, and discusses who they were and how they fought. That opens up all sorts of possibilities for wargaming, from small and large groups of local and regional forces to Romano-British holdouts and foreign invaders. This is a popular wargaming genre with great support by way of rules and figures. So, if you're pondering a new project, this book should help you with that.



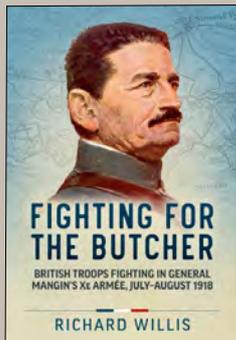
NAPOLEONIC WARS

You have to admire someone who spends his life ferreting around in archives to bring us couch potatoes personalised accounts of wars we thought we knew. Gareth Glover is a case in point: his *The Redcoats of Wellington's Light Division in the Peninsular War: Unpublished and Rare Memoirs of the 52nd Regiment of Foot* (Frontline) recovers memoirs of the war from men in the first regiment of the Light Division to be trained as Light Infantry. If it is anything like his parallel volume from the 43rd Light Infantry, then you are in for a rare treat. Memoirists are a special source for telling it like it really was, so they bring you as close to the action as you are likely to get. This is a boon for skirmish wargamers a bit weary of stories from the 95th Rifles and perhaps looking for some more 'ordinary' accounts to whet their appetites and spark their imaginations.



AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

The Battle of Shiloh, 6-7 April 1862, is an often overlooked engagement in the American Civil War – the focus tends to be on the eastern theatre where Lee and Grant duked it out after the former had disposed of a series of failed Union commanders. Yet Shiloh was an extraordinary battle that swung both ways at the cost of thousands of men. As is the case with Schurger's book on Lutzen, Dave Powell's *Decisions at Shiloh: The Twenty-Two Critical Decisions That Defined the Battle* (University of Tennessee Press) offers some delicious opportunities to play with a historical battle and affect the outcome. Unlike Lutzen, we know the forces involved, the deployment, and the orders for the battle, and we can fiddle with all of them if we want to. I'm not sure I can think of twenty-two critical decisions for Shiloh, but that's why we read the book.



COLONIAL

From an understudied battle to one that has arguably been studied to death. We know everything about the heroic defence of Rorke's Drift, fought on 22 January 1879 during the Anglo-Zulu War, right? If you say 'yes' then Ian Knight, Lee Stevenson, and Alan Baynham-Jones have news for you in their book *Rorke's Drift By Those*

Who Were There: Volume 1 (Greenhill). As with any combat, there is nothing like memoirs to get you into the action, and what an action this was! This book is an updated release, but it is added to this month's column because the authors have included even more first-hand accounts to set the imagination running. Also, wargaming Rorke's Drift is an almost impossible task because only a complete wally would lose playing as the Zulus. However, at the granular level, there are many ways

to play this through; for example, as a skirmish or co-op game, or even an RPG. This book will help with that.

WORLD WAR ONE

Ponder the dilemma of a soldier sitting in a cattle train as it rattles along the tracks, taking him to the frontline, though he doesn't know where to, or what will happen when he gets there. That was the experience of the soldiers in Richard Willis' *Fighting for the Butcher: British Troops Fighting in General Mangin's Xe Armee, July - August 1918* (Helion). The Germans had broken through earlier in 1918, but the influx of Americans combined with the loss of German impetus had resulted in an Allied counter-offensive in the Marne region. Twice sacked General Charles Mangin commanded the operation, and he was known as 'The Butcher' for reasons you can imagine. I'm probably a bit out of the loop on this, but I was surprised recently to be invited to a 1918 wargame campaign. I shouldn't have been, however, because you could argue this was the true birth of modern warfare, with planes, tanks, artillery, and infantry working in combined operations,

along with the resumption of mobile warfare. What was probably a nightmare for the men on the train does sound like quite the attractive gaming proposition.

WORLD WAR TWO

The recent BBC show *SAS Rogue Heroes* was a bit of an eye-popper for its modernistic portrayal

of the founding of the elite SAS special forces unit in the African desert. It didn't suit everyone's tastes, that's for sure, but it certainly brought attention to the Desert War and Britain's special forces there. To follow up on that renewed interest, we have a couple of books this month to entertain and inform, though without the rock music. Brendan O'Carroll's *The Long Range Desert Group in North Africa* (Pen & Sword) is the latest in Pen & Sword's long established Images of War series. The content of these books is heavily photograph based, but especially in this case, that is no bad thing. The LRDG was just about as unconventional as it gets



when it comes to fighting units. Travelling light in a variety of vehicles across the desert, they penetrated deep behind enemy lines in lightning raids, then endeavoured to get out as quickly as they could. The men dressed 'as needs must' to survive and fight, and they armed themselves with whatever weapons they could carry to do maximum damage. A collection of

photographs is necessary, therefore, to describe the LRDG adequately. Wargaming the LRDG is great fun. These games are all about manoeuvre and dodging and weaving while under heavy fire (because our Axis players know what's coming and usually have time to prepare a hot welcome). The LRDG is also fun to play as a co-op game with each player in charge of a vehicle and its crew.

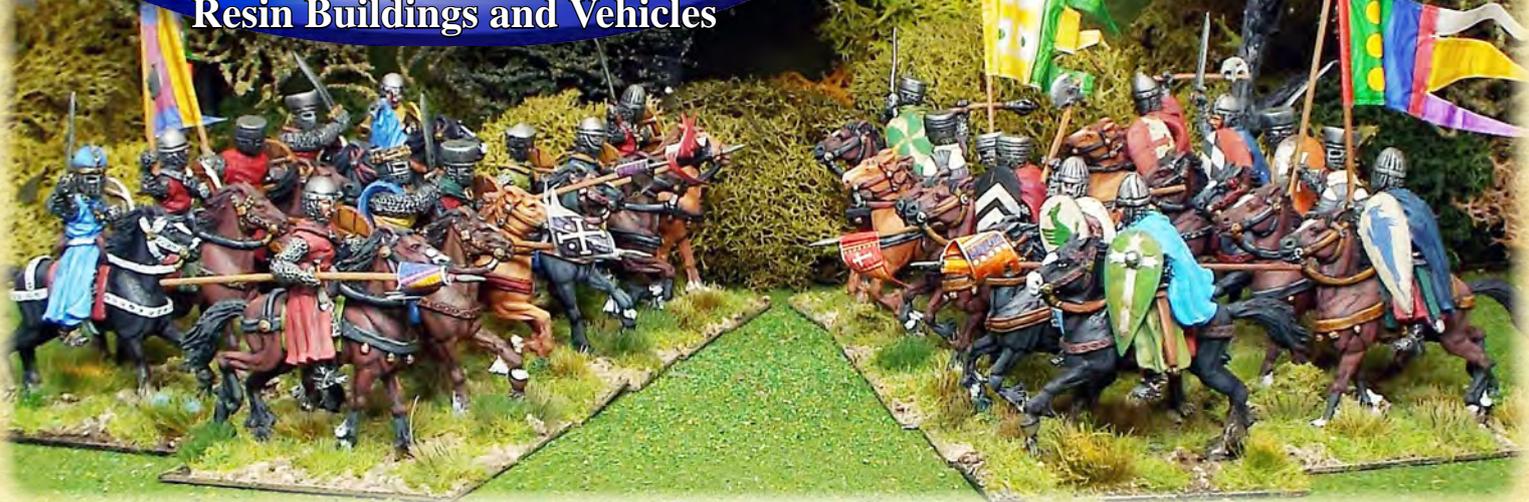
The LRDG also features in our second book on special forces, Malcolm Atkin's *British Special Operations in the Second World War: By Stealth and Guile* (Pen & Sword), but he broadens out to include many other special forces raids, many of which have entered British military legend; for example, the Cockleshell heroes, Pegasus Bridge, and the Jedburgh teams. Atkin takes his analysis of Special Operations deeper than most studies, which should make for some interesting reading. Most WWII wargamers I know play skirmish games, so Atkin's book will keep them happy with scenario ideas in many different theatres and environments.



And that's all for this month, but check out my reviews of new military history books on Facebook at Full Paper Jacket or my website hamsterwrangler.com/beatng-tsunok/. Happy reading (and gaming)!

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THALASSA: BATTLE REPORT

Ricard Fortun (*Thalassa's* designer) reads his Spartan fleet to face the first wave of an oncoming Athenian attack (commanded by resin fleet manufacturer Tim Baker) in a battle report using this issue's free *Thalassa* rules.

This game uses the scenario rules on page 38 of this issue and was played with small fleets costing just 375 recruitment points to better show off the finer workings of *Thalassa's* rules. Tim's Athenians are the vanguard of a massive invasion fleet, while Ricard's Spartans are the first line of defence; the ships clash in the water close to the coast. The game was played on a 4' x 4' board.

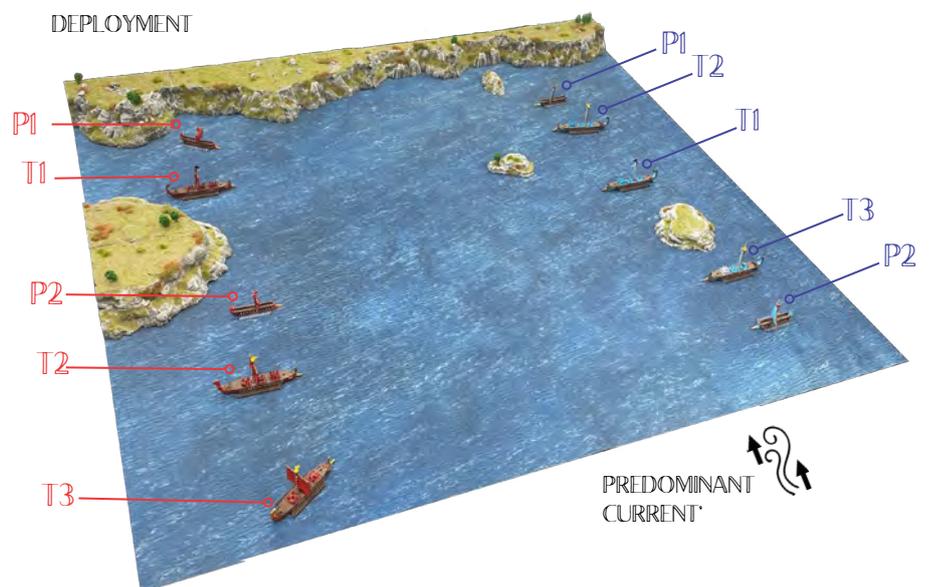
While all of *Thalassa's* usual victory point (VP) conditions apply to the defenders, each side can grab bonus points by fulfilling scenario specific objectives:

Attacker mission - break the blockade

The attacker's goal is to push through the defenders and get as many ships as possible off the opposing board edge. Each Trireme (labeled T1 - T3, right) that makes it through will gain 6 VP, and each Penteconter (labeled P1 and P2, right) will gain 4 VP. If the flagship leaves (T1), it will gain a bonus of 2 VP.

Defender mission - buy time

The defender's priority is to cause as much damage and disruption to the attackers as possible. VP are gained as usual for sinking ships, but any enemy vessels that haven't made it off the board by the end of turn 5 will count as sunk. Sinking the enemy flagship will gain the defender a bonus of 5 VP.



THE ATHENIAN ATTACKERS - TIM BAKER - 375 POINTS

The core of Tim's fleet was a trio of Triremes that shared the same upgraded crew options. One crew stand was boosted to Hoplites for extra power during boarding actions, another got upgraded to Toxotai. Tim gave these archers incendiary arrows at an extra cost so their hits would cause fires on enemy ships. He made one Trireme into his flagship - a free upgrade - and gave the Navarch on board the vessel the 'Strategist' ability. The other two Triremes got their mastery upgraded to Experienced, making them more likely to activate fully each turn.

With just 100 pts left to spend, there was the budget for two Penteconterers at their standard Neophyte mastery level but with their crew upgraded to hardy Marines. These smaller vessels bring manoeuvrability and speed, both of which would be essential if Tim's ships were to push through the Spartan fleet.



ATHENIAN FLEET: 375 PTS					
SHIP	MASTERY	CREW 1	CREW 2	CREW 3	TOTAL COST
Trireme 1 (Flagship) (75 pts)	Navarch: 2+ (Strategist) Upgrade: Incendiary (+6 pts)	Hoplites (+4 pts)	Toxotai	Oarsmen	85 pts
Trireme 2 (75 pts)	Experienced: 3+ (+10 pts) Upgrade: Incendiary (+6 pts)	Hoplites (+4 pts)	Toxotai	Oarsmen	95 pts
Trireme 3 (75 pts)	Experienced: 3+ (+10 pts) Upgrade: Incendiary (+6 pts)	Hoplites (+4 pts)	Toxotai	Oarsmen	95 pts
Penteconter 1 (40 pts)	Neophyte: 4+	Marines (+10 pts)	-	-	50 pts
Penteconter 2 (40 pts)	Neophyte: 4+	Marines (+10 pts)	-	-	50 pts

THE SPARTAN DEFENDERS - RICARD FORTUN - 375 POINTS

Ricard's fleet was similar in its construction to the Athenians, with three Triremes (upgraded to Experienced) and two Penteconterers. The Triremes opted for a unit of Hoplites each to match their enemy but didn't take any archers. They did, however, drag an Oxybeles aboard one Trireme to add some siege capability to it and upgraded another vessel to their flagship, giving the Navarch 'Legendary Warrior' status.

Where Tim opted for incendiary archers on his Triremes, Ricard decided to spend his last 12 points on mastery upgrades for his Penteconterers. As Experienced vessels, they would activate on a 3+ rather than a 4+.



SPARTAN FLEET: 375 PTS					
SHIP	MASTERY	CREW 1	CREW 2	CREW 3	TOTAL COST
Trireme 1 (Flagship) (75 pts)	Navarch: 2+ (Legendary Warrior)	Hoplites (+4 pts)	Oarsmen	Oarsmen	85 pts
Trireme 2 (75 pts)	Experienced: 3+ (+10 pts)	Hoplites (+4 pts)	Oarsmen	Oarsmen	89 pts
Trireme 3 (75 pts)	Experienced: 3+ (+10 pts)	Hoplites (+4 pts)	Oxybeles (+6 pts)	Oarsmen	89 pts
Penteconter 1 (40 pts)	Experienced: 3+ (+6 pts)	Marines (+10 pts)	-	-	56 pts
Penteconter 2 (40 pts)	Experienced: 3+ (+6 pts)	Marines (+10 pts)	-	-	56 pts

NAVARCH STRATEGIES AND FLEET NATIONALITIES

Fleet Navarchs (the ancient Greek term for the rank of admiral) pick from one of three archetypes before the battle; each add extra flair to their flagship's ability or their fleet's options:

- **Strategist (Tim's choice):** Change one of your command dice rolled in the command phase. This allows the controlling player to prioritise the command they think will be of the most importance in the turn ahead.
- **Legendary Warrior (Ricard's choice):** The flagship can roll two additional D10s on every boarding action. In addition, all attacks receive +1 to hit during a boarding action. Ricard was hoping to dominate in melee using this skill along with his nationality special rule.
- **Inspiring Leader:** Any friendly ships within 10" of the flagship receive +1 to Mastery tests and can benefit from a High Command Blessing token once per turn.

Each nation gets a special rule in addition to the Navarch's specialism:

- **Athens (Tim) - Professional Fleet:** Ships can reroll a 1 when making a mastery test.
- **Sparta (Ricard) - Death Before Defeat:** May reroll 1s to hit in the first round of a boarding action.
- **Crete - The Honour of Artemis:** May reroll 1s to hit when making shooting attacks.
- **Corinth - No Coin Without Corinth:** Ships, crew, and upgrades cost 10% less.

TURN ONE - OPENING MANOEUVRES

FLEET COMMAND DICE

Every turn begins with players rolling special D6s called fleet command dice. In our game the players began rolling 5. These can be used during the turn to modify results or perform extra actions. If a player is unhappy with their result, they can change dice using abilities or reroll some/all dice. If they choose to reroll, their flagship is penalised with a Chaos token (which makes a ship disadvantaged).

In this first turn, Ricard used the 'Pantheon of Gods' rule (available to all fleets) to switch a Fleet (🚢) result to a Blessing (🙏). Blessings are versatile command dice that can be used to make a reroll, remove Chaos, or perform other abilities. In addition, any unused Blessings are converted to victory points at the end of the turn; so these can be a great way to sneak ahead, especially in the late game if the result hangs in the balance.

Tim's Navarch, with his Strategist skill, enabled him to switch one of his dice. He chose to convert a Fleet dice to a Manoeuvre (🚢), which would give a ship an additional move or turn during its activation; something that would be important for the Athenians to get off to a flying start.

With command dice locked in, the player with the most Manoeuvre dice gains the initiative; Ricard won with 3 vs 2 and chose to activate first.

Ricard

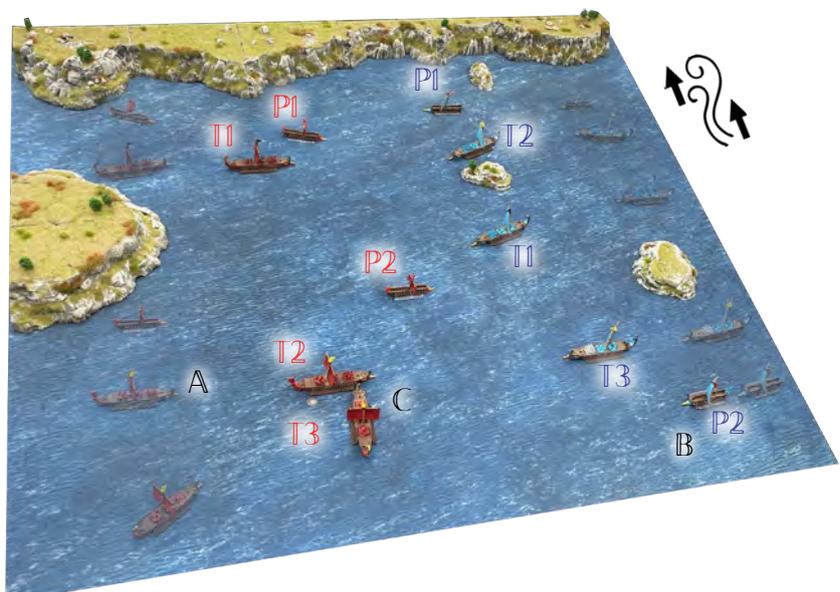


Tim



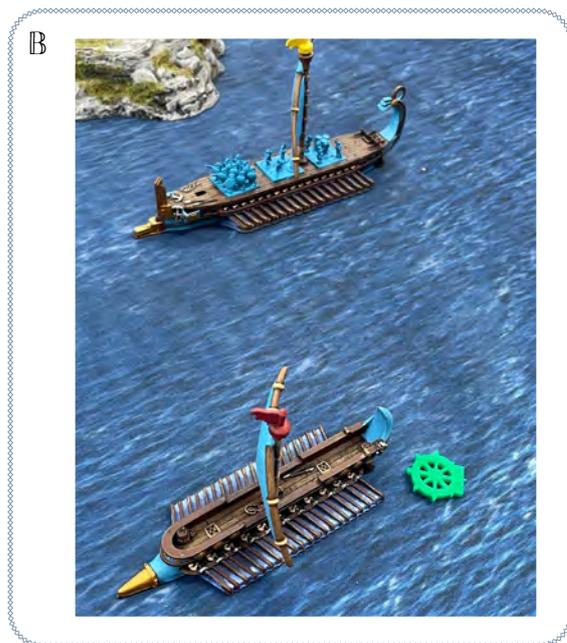
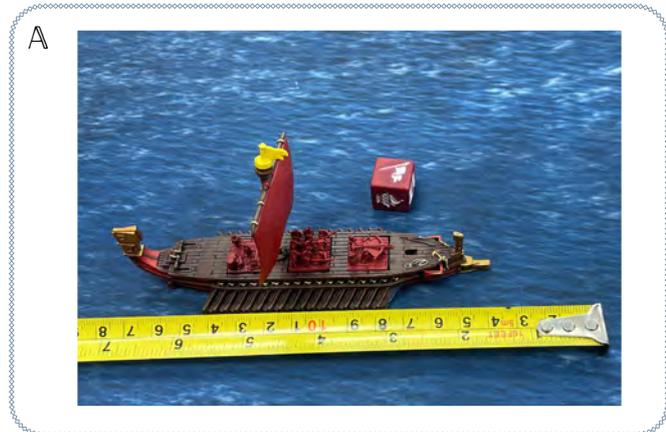
See page 3 of the *Thalassa* rulebook for a full description of each dice result, plus how regular D6 dice can be used as command dice.

The Spartan fleet started the turn reasoning that a strong offence makes for a strong defence; Ricard's far right Trireme (T3) passed its mastery test (rolled on a D10 as with all in-game tests) and used all three of its manoeuvre options. It moved 3", turned to reposition, then moved another 3" before burning a Manoeuvre command dice (see A, overpage) to make one more 3" move.



Activation went back and forth with both players moving their vessels ahead, and for a while, it looked like the most eventful moment in the turn would be Tim's leftmost Penteconter (P2) failing its mastery test. It rolled a 2 but needed a 4+, and although Tim could have chosen to burn any of his command dice to reroll, he decided against that, reasoning that the speedy lighter vessel would catch up with the fleet next turn (B).

Other ships activated and moved, some using Manoeuvre (M) fleet command dice to edge further forward, but then, with a glint in his eye, Tim picked up a Drift (D) command dice and pointed to two of Ricard's Triremes (T2 and T3) that had finished their moves close to each other: "I'm going to drift one into the other!" (read more in 'C - drifting into a collision' below).



C - DRIFTING INTO A COLLISION

Drifts are one of *Thalassa's* standout gameplay features, and they represent how the predominant current (shown on the board overview image) can be used to reposition vessels. While drifts can be used by a ship's captain to make an extra and more nuanced manoeuvre, they can also be played on an enemy to turn opposing ships out of position or smash them into something - in this case, another Trireme!

Tim placed the playing card sized drift template at the target Trireme's port side (see below left), where the predominant current was flowing to. He then had the option of moving the Trireme, so its mainmast was anywhere within the template, and turning it up to 90°. This caused it to collide with Ricard's other Trireme.

With the two Spartan Triremes smashing into each other, Ricard took a collision test for each, needing to pass a mastery test or take structure damage. He passed both and the vessels' hulls remained intact, but each ship received a Chaos token in the confusion (right).



END PHASE

Once the final ships had advanced, it was time to clean up the dice and counters in play and prepare for turn two. Before discarding the command dice, each player can convert any unused Blessings to victory points. Ricard had used the Blessing he rolled, but flagships generate a Blessing per-turn, and he had not used his; this became 1 VP. Tim had two leftover Blessing command dice and had not used his flagship Blessing so converted them all to a total of 3 VP.

END OF TURN VICTORY POINTS	
RICARD - 1	TIM - 3

TURN TWO - ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE!

COMMAND DICE

Ricard



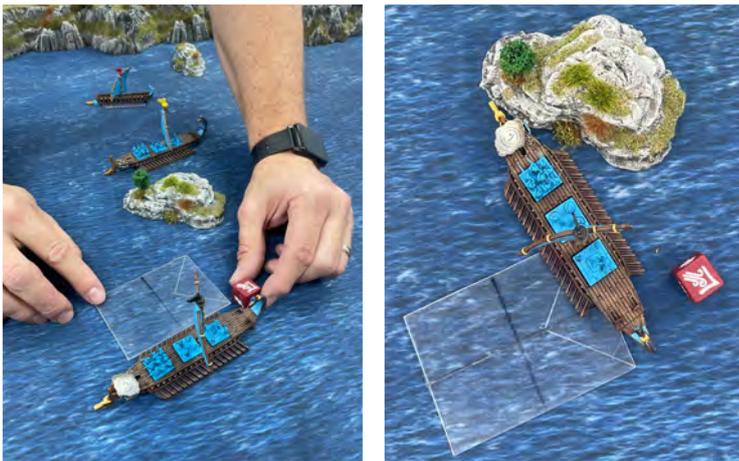
Tim



After the relative calm of turn one, the storm hit; the game's pivotal moments were packed into the start of this wild ride of a turn! Ricard had the initiative and as soon as his flagship passed its mastery test he growled that he was going to get some drift payback. One of Tim's Triremes (T1) was in a prime position to be pushed into a small island, and Ricard didn't miss the chance, burning his Drift fleet command dice to run Tim's ship ashore. Tim passed his mastery test, so the vessel only suffered Chaos rather than structure damage, but it was now out of position (D).



D



Things were only just getting started, and Ricard's flagship (T1) surged ahead, taking two moves to get to full speed, using a Manoeuvre fleet command dice to move again, then declaring a captain's order (an extra order that can always be used before or after manoeuvring actions are performed) to ram the Trireme (T2) in front of it (read more in 'F - ramming speed' on the next page).

COORDINATED MANOEUVRES

With the ramming and boarding done, Tim was ready to get started with his activations; but Ricard wasn't quite finished. Once per turn, the active player can choose to perform coordinated manoeuvres; these allow them to take a mastery test with another ship, and if passed (with a -1 modifier), they can perform its activation out of the usual sequence. Ricard did just that, and his Penteconter (P1) was out to finish what his flagship had started. The lighter vessel surged forward and rammed at the already weakened enemy. With all his blessings spent, Tim had no rerolls to save him, and his ship was split in half, with the Penteconter surging on through the wreckage and netting Ricard another 3 VP (E).

CAUSING A CONFLAGRATION

Away from the ramming carnage, Tim finally got to activate some ships! He moved his Penteconter (P2) but declined the ramming opportunity ahead, taking a more cautious approach

E



(and perhaps conceding a tactical opportunity to show off another of the game's offensive options - thanks Tim!). He shot at his opponent from range, and his on-board archers caused a wound and applied a Chaos token. Taking inspiration from Ricard's coordinated manoeuvres, he followed up with more ranged attacks from his Trireme (T3) and reached for the trusty *Wi* box of wool as fire arrows flew across the sea. They hit home, killing a stand of crew, setting the ship ablaze, and causing chaos (G on page 36).

In the middle of the table, Ricard's Penteconter (P2) rammed the flagship (T1) he had previously drifted into the island, but despite hitting the weak side armour, his lightweight ship couldn't penetrate the hull. He chose to bounce off as he would be no match for the larger crew in a boarding action, but Tim was well aware of this and responded by manoeuvring away from the island, slipping alongside the Penteconter, boarding it, and wiping out the enemy crew. He left the ship unmanned and floating in the sea; a ghost ship that showed it wasn't just Spartans who could do damage in a boarding action (H on page 36)!

A DRAMATIC TURN

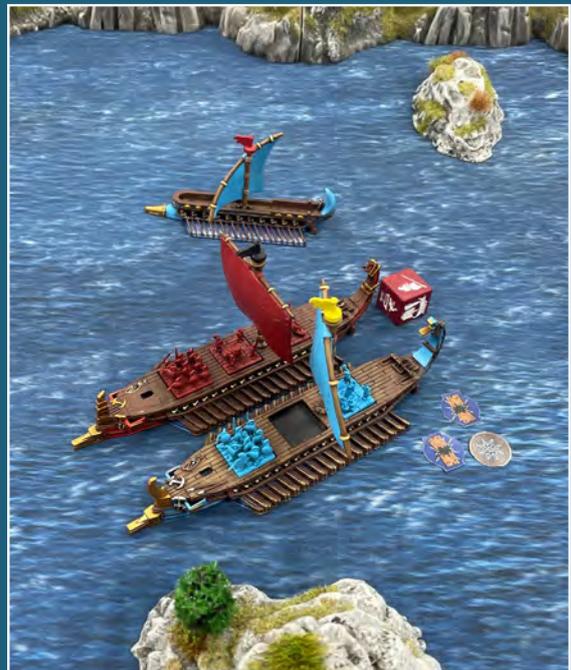
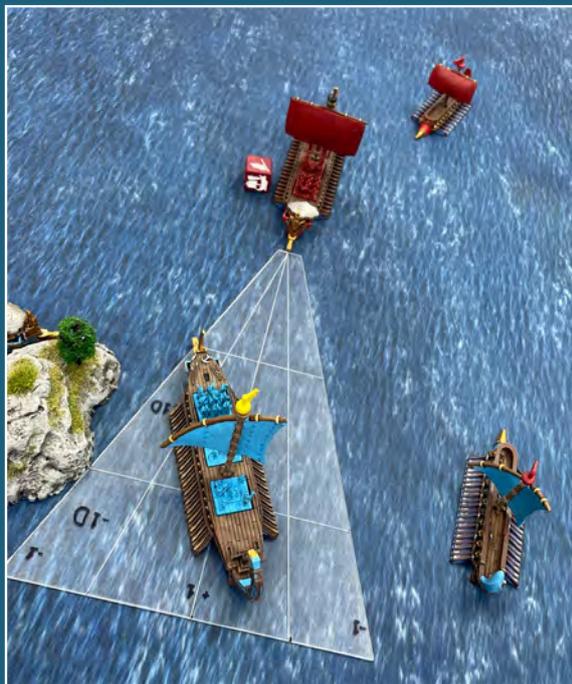
Things seemed to be calming down as Ricard used activations to rally his blazing Trireme (P2), put out the fire, and remove Chaos tokens before reversing away. In *Thalassa*, ships are not 'sailing', they move under the power of oars so can easily go

F - RAMMING SPEED!

Ricard had moved his flagship three times, giving it 3 impact dice to roll from the momentum. By ramming, his ship gained +1 mass too, upping the mass to 7, versus the defender's mass of 6. These are compared on the ram table (below) to determine the extra impact dice that are rolled, and due to the mismatch, Ricard scooped up another 5 dice. The ram was at optimal distance too, in the middle band of the ram template (shown bottom), generating 1 more impact dice for a total of 9.

		Hull Value							
		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+
Mass Value	3	4D	4D	3D	3D	2D	2D	1D	1D
	4	5D	4D	4D	3D	3D	2D	2D	1D
	5	5D	5D	4D	4D	3D	3D	2D	2D
	6	6D	5D	5D	4D	4D	3D	3D	2D
	7	6D	6D	5D	5D	4D	4D	3D	3D
	8	7D	6D	6D	5D	5D	4D	4D	3D
	9	7D	7D	6D	6D	5D	5D	4D	4D
	10+	8D	7D	7D	6D	6D	5D	5D	4D

Because the ram was dead ahead (the centre line of the template crossed the target's side), all impact rolls got a +1 and hit on 5 rather than the usual 6. Ricard rolled and got six successes; Tim would need to make four saves to avoid being sunk. If he had been hit in the front, he would have gained a +1 to his armour rolls, but the ram was aimed at his vulnerable side, so he needed to roll 6s, and his



initial rolls only got two successes. He burned all his Blessings to reroll and squeezed through with two more saves, resulting in his ship taking 2 structure damage and Ricard gaining 2 VP for crippling the target.

The flagship wasn't quite done yet. With the ram completed, it could now choose to reverse away or follow up with a boarding action. Ricard gleefully declared: "Now you'll see what a Spartan does!" and spun his vessel to run alongside its prey. Tim attempted to repel boarders with his Toxotai and got two hits, then the Spartans attacked (see above).

Ricard's Hoplites and two stands of oarsmen gave him 3 dice each - 7 in total because Tim's repel boarders successes negated 2 - and his flagship also carried Ricard's Legendary Warrior who would roll 2 extra dice, and give his attacks +1 to hit.

Tim's Hoplites and oarsmen gave him 3 dice each, but his archers only got 1. His ship also had a Chaos token that caused a -1, leaving him rolling 6 dice.

The players rolled their dice, and Tim had terrible luck with only 2 hits (all his other rolls were 1s!) against Ricard's 6 hits. After saves, Tim lost a stand, opting to remove his archers. With combat over and Ricard victorious, he decided to break, moving his ship 3" away.

G



H



backwards. Tim's lone Penteconter (P1) at the top of the board weighed its options, feeling outnumbered and outmatched, eventually opting to perform a 'sail-by shooting', loosing arrows at the Trireme (T1) nearby to no effect, then rushing along the coast towards the enemy table edge (I).

Ricard made sure the second turn's ending was as dramatic as its start. His remaining Trireme (T3) launched itself at Tim's flagship (T1), and thanks to the extra speed provided by a Manoeuvre fleet command dice, he hammered into the vessel and sent it to the bottom of the sea, grabbing 3 VP in the process.

END PHASE

After all that drama, Ricard had launched himself into the lead; he'd gained 2 VP for a crippling ram and 6 VP for sinking two ships. In addition, he'd completed his scenario bonus by sinking Tim's flagship, and that got him a whopping +5 VP. Tim, on the other hand, had lost the command ability his flagship provided, and his attacking fleet looked rather understaffed all of a sudden!



END OF TURN VICTORY POINTS

RICARD - 14 TIM - 3

TURN THREE - CONSOLIDATION?

COMMAND DICE

Ricard



Tim

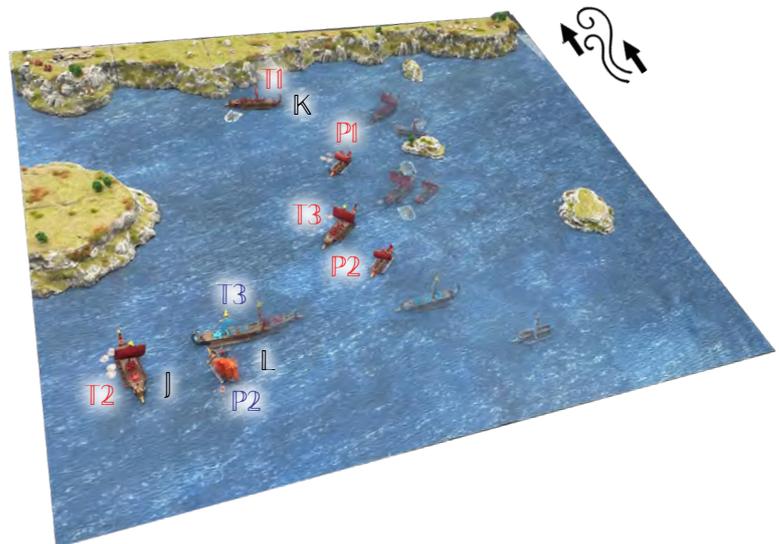
(Now one less dice due to the loss of his Navarch)



It had been a rough time for the Athenians; could they possibly push on and make it to the other side of the board? Tim went all in to try and do just that after his luck turned and his command dice pool ended up loaded with Manoeuvres, giving him the initiative.

With a lone Spartan Trireme (T2) defending the lower part of the board, Tim sent his own vessel charging in, making a maximum momentum ram in the hopes of shattering through his enemy and pushing closer to the board edge. Though the attack was effective, it wasn't quite enough, with Ricard thankful that the impact hit his front; the +1 armour save modifier kept him afloat. The ramming Trireme (T3) gained Tim 2 VP for crippling the enemy, then spun through 180 degrees to line up alongside the enemy (J).

The follow up boarding action wasn't enough to overpower the defending ship, so Tim used coordinated manoeuvres



and hoped his Penteconter (P2) could finish the job and sink the enemy. It hammered in making a long range ram, but despite getting two hits, Ricard's save throws were enough to survive. The ships bounced off each other and Tim cursed his luck as the Spartan general wiped a bead of sweat from his brow.

Ricard pondered how best to use his drifts, considering moving his ships into position with them, but he ultimately used them both to stall the enemy. He sent the



K



Penteconter (P1) at the top of the board into the cliffs and followed up with a ram that sank the unfortunate vessel and gained him 2 VP - smaller ships offer lower rewards (K).

He also drifted the other Penteconter (P2) into the remaining Trireme (T3), but beyond causing some manoeuvring problems for Tim, this had little effect. If at first you don't succeed, try firing an Oxybeles at it, or so the legendary Spartan naval saying goes [Really? - Ed]. Ricard backed up his Trireme (T2) and shot at the Penteconter (P2), setting it ablaze and killing the crew, leaving another ghost ship on the board (L).

END PHASE

Tim had finally gained 2 extra victory points from the crippling ram, but it was looking rather bleak for him. Ricard had also netted 2 VP for sinking a Penteconter, so it didn't look like victory was possible with the 11 point VP gap. If Tim could somehow sneak both of his surviving ships across the table edge, he'd at least bring things much closer, and if there were also Blessings to convert to VPs, then maybe, just maybe, he could snatch an improbable win.

L



END OF TURN VICTORY POINTS
 RICARD - 16 TIM - 5

TURN FOUR - FIN

COMMAND DICE

Ricard



Tim

(Now one less dice due to the loss of his Navarch)



The rolling of the command dice caused much fretting for Tim as he tried to work out what combination of dice could help him the most. Blessings were important - they could be converted to VPs - but if he didn't prioritise Manoeuvre dice, Ricard would seize the initiative and almost certainly wipe out Tim's remaining ships before they had a chance to act.

When Ricard rolled two blessings, Tim did some quick mental maths, tutted, and made his decision: "I think that means I can't win so... lets at least try and finish with something for the history books, can these two ships break through?"

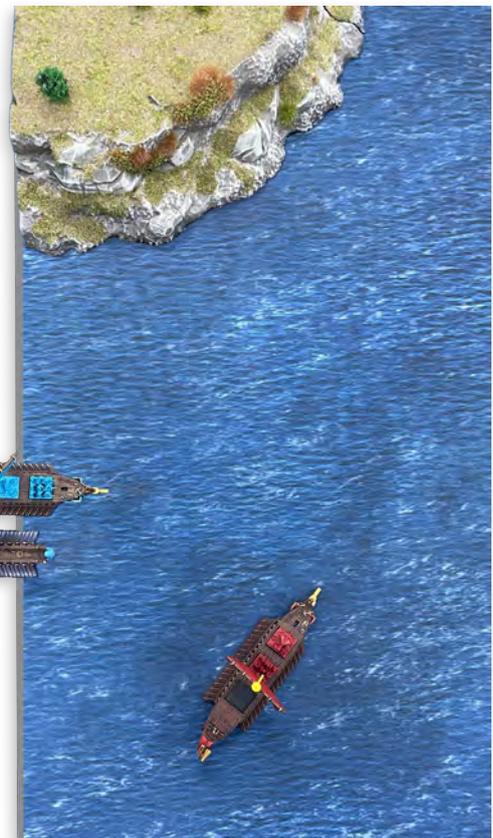
The first thing he needed to do was reroll some dice; with his Navarch treading water somewhere, the Strategist ability was no longer available, so it would be down to fate if he got the Manoeuvres he wanted! Fleet and Blessing were rerolled, and though he got a Blessing again, he also scored a Manoeuvre and gained the initiative.

He sent some of his Trireme (T3) crew onto the abandoned Penteconter (P2) to get the ship in order, then rapidly rowed his larger vessel in reverse across the board edge. A coordinated manoeuvre then allowed his Penteconter, now manned, to activate and speed to the 'finish line' with a Manoeuvre command dice just pushing it far enough (M).

END PHASE

With Tim's last two ships leaving the board the game was done. For rushing his Trireme across the enemy board edge, Tim secured 6 VP, and he got another 4 VP for the Penteconter. It wasn't enough; once Ricard converted his two Blessings, he finished ahead by 3; but after an awful start and some bad luck, Tim was quite satisfied with the result. Ricard had won the day, but the war was still to come. On the horizon, more Athenian ships were starting to appear... lots more!

M



END OF TURN VICTORY POINTS
 RICARD - 18 TIM - 15

THALASSA SCENARIO:



HOLDING BACK THE TIDE

Want to see how you fare in the game Ricard and Tim just played? Here's the scenario - Holding Back the Tide - with all the special rules you need.

War has been declared, and several of the city's fishing vessels have sighted and reported what appears to be the vanguard of an invading fleet. Under the cover of night, defending ships have moved into planned positions and are ready to intercept the enemy, to disrupt their approach, and gain time for the city to prepare for an imminent siege.

ATTACKER AND DEFENDER

Both players must choose or randomly determine who will play the attacking spearhead fleet or the defending home fleet. Both fleets must be of the same value in points, as agreed between the players. Attacker and defender have different objectives and victory conditions.

ATTACKER

The attacking fleet must break the blockade line of defending ships as soon as possible to prevent the city from setting up its defences, thus ensuring a short siege and an easy victory.

The objective of the attacking player is to leave the board through the defender's deployment area edge. For every ship having left the table through the defender's deployment edge, the attacking player receives:

6 VP for every Trireme

4 VP for every Penteconter

If the attacking flagship leaves the table through the defender's deployment edge, the attacking player receives an additional +2 VP.

If an attacking ship model is more than 50% over the defender's deployment area table edge at the end of the game, it counts as having left the table.

DEFENDER

For the defending side, it is all about buying time and holding back the advance of the enemy fleet as much as possible. In this desperate battle, every enemy ship destroyed is worth the lives of hundreds of your fellow citizens. Victory Points are scored as normal. Any enemy ship that doesn't make it to the edge counts as sunk at the end of the 5th round.

If the enemy capital ship is sunk or captured, the defending player receives an additional +5 VP.

GAME LENGTH

Fixed - Five Complete Rounds.

TABLE SET UP

Prepare a coastline along the short edge as shown on the map. You may keep your tokens, dice, and other gaming elements on the coastline to keep the gaming area neat and tidy.

DEPLOYMENT ZONES

The deployment zones for both sides are defined by an area on each opposing table edge up to 12" deep, as marked on the scenario map.

SCENERY

This scenario plays alongside the coast of the defender's city.

We recommend that two or three islets or rock shears be placed on the tabletop to represent the presence of shoreline, but no more than 6 to 8 inches from the side of the table or shoreline (if one exists).

4' x 4' tabletop

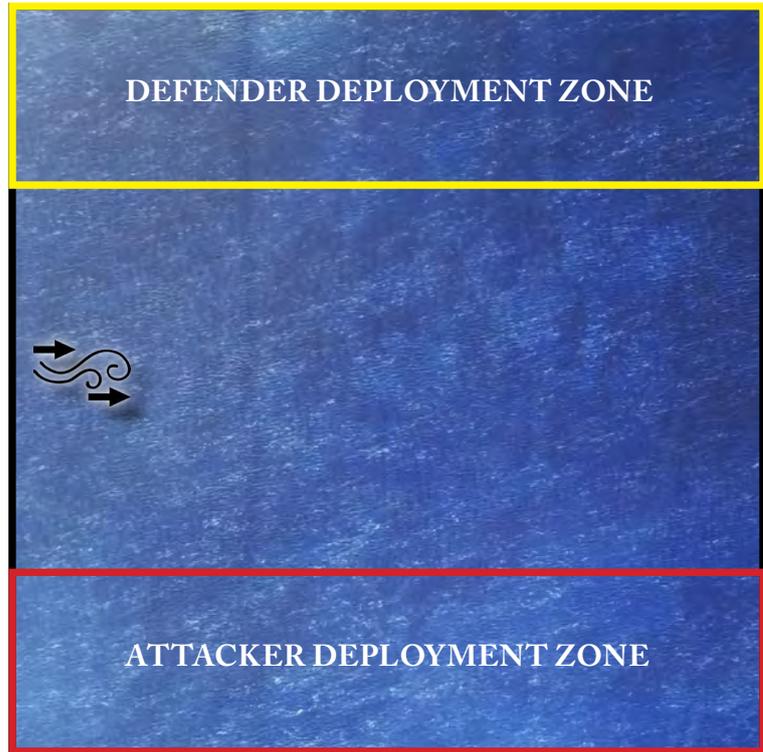
This size of table is recommended for fleets of 300 to 500 recruitment points.

If required, you can omit the coastlines to increase playing area.

6' x 4' and 5' x 4' tabletop

This size of table is recommended for fleets above 500 recruitment points.

If required, you can omit the coastlines to increase playing area.



SWEET KAROLINERS



THE SWEDISH ARMY OF CHARLES XII

We only need the whiff of a great collection of miniatures here at *Wargames Illustrated*, and we're off like a rat up a drainpipe. Charles Singleton made the mistake of telling us about his 28mm Charles XII Swedish Army for the Great Northern War recently, and before he knew it, we had his figures on parade in front of our cameras. Whilst under the lights at WiHQ, we also took the opportunity to quiz Charles about his day job as Creative Director for the Early Modern and Ancients Portfolio at Helion and Company Publishing.

Wargames Illustrated: What's the appeal of the Great Northern War?

Charles Singleton: It's interesting because it was similar to other conflicts of the period, but subtly different in that you got Tricorns and Pikes; you didn't get that anywhere else. There was a great mix of regular and irregular, high and poor quality troops, which makes for some interesting tabletop encounters. Another big appeal for me is that the battles were often quite small, therefore manageable as wargames.

Wi: Why were you particularly attracted to collecting the Swedes?

CS: The great uniforms I think, particularly when you get a few years into the war and the classic Karolingian*

uniform appears. The massed ranks of deep blue look great, and the cut of the coats is very striking, very similar to the coats we have today in fact. Beyond the clothing, I have always been interested in small armies that were ultra-aggressive. I began gaming with Frederick the Great Prussians, and the Swedes of Charles XII were similar in many ways.

Wi: What was the broad make up of a Swedish army of the period?

CS: King Charles liked to field a lot of cavalry. His armies were regularly 1:1 horse and infantry, with a big 'shock' element to the mounted troops. On some occasions, particularly during the Polish campaigns, the Swedes would

field thousands of cavalry accompanied by only hundreds of infantry, marking them out as very different from other contemporary armies. Having said that, I have gone for roughly eight battalions of infantry with 16 squadrons of cavalry in my army.

The infantry would form up as traditional pike and shot formations with one unit of pike for every four of musket. The pike was the centre division with two flanking divisions of musket, although they did sometimes have full musket formations, such as the combined foot guard/grenadier battalion. As the war dragged on, the use of pike declined throughout the army, with the Swedes fielding regular infantry battalions with no pike.

Wi: Away from the history, what figure manufacturers are we looking at in your collection?

CS: Mainly Warfare Miniatures from their Great Northern War range. There are some Ebor in there too along with some North Star and Dixon artillery. Warfare have some great figures for several of the different protagonists: Swedes, Russians, Danes, Saxons (in the late 17th Century range), and Ottomans.

Wi: When you use the figures in anger on the tabletop, what is your preferred set of rules?

CS: So far I've just gamed with *Beneath the Lily Banners* (again from Warfare Miniatures), although I would like to give *Black Powder: Pike and Shotte* a run out and see how that plays in comparison, but *Beneath the Lily Banners* is a great set of rules, and you can't fault author Barry Hilton's knowledge of the period.

**Karoliner - the troops of Charles XII.*



HELION & CO.

Wi: Let's talk a bit about what you do at Helion and what Helion does for Wargaming.

CS: I look after the Century of the Soldier and Retinue to Regiment book series, and Helion Wargames.

Wi: What's Century of the Soldier all about?

CS: That series examines all aspects of military history from 1618, the start of the Thirty Years' War, until the end of the Great Northern War in 1721.

Wi: One of the striking things about the series is that the books are great for wargamers because of the heavy focus on uniforms. Is that information something you ensure you include?

CS: Certainly, we do like to go very heavy on uniforms, or more correctly clothing, because actually the 17th Century was not well served in contemporary uniform regulation guides. We don't know nearly as much about what soldiers were wearing between 1618 and 1721 (particularly before 1650) as we do about the later 18th Century.

Our writers are hand-picked for the passion and commitment they bring to their chosen subject. Many of them are not only great researchers and writers but also military draftsmen. People like Ukrainian Sergey Shamenkov, who wrote and illustrated our four volumes on Charles XII's Karoliner; he has trawled the archives to bring readers as much accurate detail as possible, illustrating his books with not only photos from museum collections around Europe but also artwork showing Swedish soldiers in various uniforms.

Wi: Moving on to Helion Wargames - why have you ventured into that market? Aren't there enough wargames rules out there already?

CS: There are some great wargames out there for sure, but what I want Helion's wargames books to be is a 'one-stop-shop' for the wargamer, and whilst we do some rules-only books, our main push into the hobby is for books that provide 'everything guides', taking the gamer into the period or conflict and providing them with all the information they need - comprehensive coverage concerning history, armies, units, soldiers, characters, and a grounding for scenarios, painting, and rules.

Wi: What have you covered so far, and to ask the question every gamer asks first, what's next?

CS: We already have guides to wargaming the Monmouth Rebellion, the late 17th Century, and the Great Northern War, these are: *One King, Every Bullet has its Billet*, and *Waking the Bear*, and we have also just released some ancient rules, *Three Ages of Rome*. Next year your readers can expect to see wargames guides for The Spanish Civil War, the French Revolutionary Wars, and The American War of Independence, amongst others.

We're always looking for new authors; so if there are any budding writers reading this, they should get in touch.

Wi: Thanks Charles, we look forward to following Helion's prolific output in 2023.



**THE GREAT NORTHERN WAR
IN A NUTSHELL**

If you would like to know what the GNW (as the kids call it) was all about, and how Charles XII transformed Sweden from a massive military power into a European backwater, check out this series of videos on YouTube: 'Great Northern War - When Sweden Ruled the World - Extra History'.



After five entertaining eight-minute episodes, you will be slightly less confused than the average gamer.



Above: Swedish siege gun. Figures are a mix of Crann Tara, Dixon, and Warfare Miniatures; painted by Charles Singleton and based by Phil Ohq Painting.



Above: Swedish High Command. Figures by Ebor; painted and based by Phil Ohq Painting.



Above: A Danish Cavalry Commander. Figures by Foundry; painted by Chris Campion and based by Charles Singleton.



Right: Charles XII himself leading his troops to glory. Infantry by Warfare Miniatures and Charles by Wee Wolf Miniatures. Flag by Pete's Flags. Painted and based by Phil Ohq Painting.



*Above: A Swedish heavy gun being prepped by a frantic crew.
Figures by Warfare Miniatures and gun by North Star.*



*Left: A squadron of the
Uppland Cavalry advance.
Figures by Warfare
Miniatures and painted by
Vlad of Hardline Miniatures.*



*Right: A Swedish Artillery
Kettledrum wagon. Wagon
by Minifigs and horses by
Sergent's Mess.*



Above: A Swedish combined grenadier battalion. A little flight of fancy, and it is highly likely they did not wear mitres on campaign; grenadier battalions were used very rarely. Figures by Ebor and Warfare Miniatures.



Above: A Swedish Cavalry Brigade Commander. Figures by Foundry and Ebor, painted and based by Phil Ohq Painting.



Above: A Saxon Cavalry Commander. Figures by Foundry, painted by Chris Campion, and based by Charles Singleton.



Below: A battalion of the Närke-Värmland regiment charging into action. Figures by Warfare Miniatures.

WiPRIME

WiPrime members can see much more from Charles' GNW collection via the Member Area of the Wi website.



Left: A Swedish 6-pounder being manhandled forward. A mix of conversions of Perry ECW range figures with Ebor heads and Warfare Miniatures figures.

Right: A Turkish tent captured by the Saxons at the Battle of Vienna in 1683. It was then captured by the Swedes whilst battling against the Saxons at the Battle of Fraustadt in 1706. The tent survives to this day and can be seen at the Swedish Army Museum at Stockholm. Figures are by Perry Miniatures, Warfare Miniatures, and Bad Squiddo. The tent was painted by Vlad Seabrook Smith of Hardline Miniatures and the figures by Charles Singleton. Incidentally, the two dogs are Swedish Vallhund.



PAINTING YOUR FIRST TRIREME



The model Callum is working is a 3D printed *Thalassa* ship, but his painting techniques can be used on any 'wooden' models.

Callum France shares how to paint ancient ships quickly and effectively with this entry-level guide. Get a quality finish through simple brushwork and a few cunning tricks that use basic household and hobby materials.

SPONGING THE WOOD



1. After priming the model with a basic grey coloured rattle can spray, basecoat the wood with a 2:1 mix of Citadel Rhinox Hide and Citadel Mournfang Brown.



2. Put your paint brush down now; find a piece of sponge to become your new painting tool! The backing padding found in blister packs is ideal, but household cleaning sponges will work too. Tear off a piece of sponge to form a small ball - you are going to use this to apply the paint.



3. Holding the sponge with tweezers will help you reach hard to access areas, but you can just hold it between your fingers. Dab the sponge in a small dot of Citadel Mourmfang Brown then tap away the excess paint on a piece of paper just like you would if you were drybrushing.



4. When only a select few speckles of paint are being applied to the paper, start randomly stabbing at the model. Go heavy with this first layer as we're trying to add some tone and warmth to the flat brown wood. I find this stage quite therapeutic - don't think, just dab!



5. Repeat the process with Citadel Steel Legion Drab but apply a little more selectively; the speckles should be less concentrated for this stage. Try and catch the edges as this step will also apply a form of highlight.



6. Finally, apply Citadel Baneblade Brown in the same manner but even more gently. Focus on the sharpest points and only lightly touch the sponge to the darker wood areas. This final stage might look stark, but we're going to knock back these texture layers with a wash later.

TOP TIP

Don't forget to paint the crew base squares (and any artillery pieces) and the mast at the same time as you paint your ship's other wood areas.

ACCENTUATING DETAILS AND HARMONISING

1. When you're happy with the sponged wood, it's time for the details. Each of these received just one coat of paint for speed.

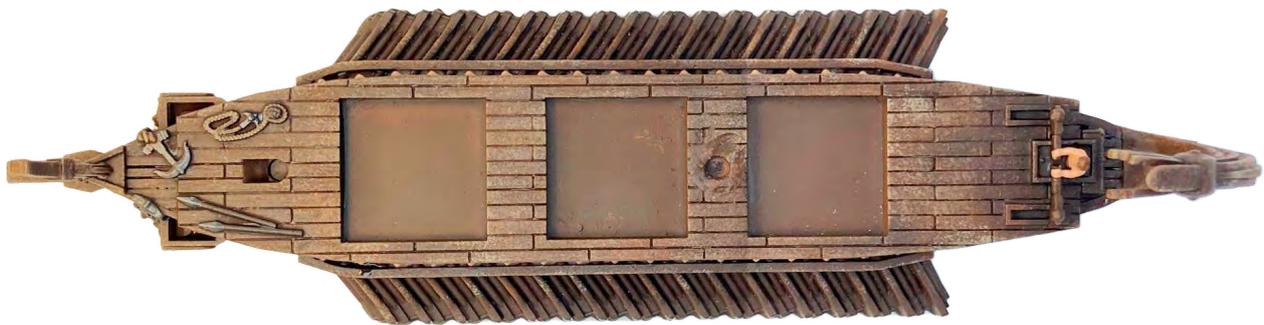
a. I applied Army Painter Dorado Skin on any exposed skin areas (oarsmen's arms and the man at the aft of the boat).

b. I dotted the rope with Citadel Baneblade Brown using a fine tipped brush, being careful to leave some of the brown between the threads.

I painted the spears and hafts with Citadel Rhinox Hide. The weapon tips and anchors were painted with Scale75 Thrash Metal and black mixed in a 2:1 ratio.



2. Everything will look a bit stark at this point: we're going to apply a wash all over the wood and details to blend the disparate colours together and shade the model all at once. Mix Citadel Nuln Oil and Citadel Agrax Earthshade in a 2:1 ratio. Thin this mix with water at a 1:1 ratio, then apply it all over the model, being careful it doesn't pool on the flat areas.



THE CREW

You should have already painted the bases for your crew options; now it's time to finish them off. Use a fairly large brush with a good point to paint the skin with Army Painter Dorado Skin, the fabric with Citadel Baneblade Brown, and the hair and weapons with Citadel Rhinox Hide. Once dry, give the full stands a thinned brown wash, and your crew will be ready. Quick and easy!



Base and trebuchet wood already painted.



Picking out the skin.



Colouring the fabric, hair, and weapons.



Wash application to finish.



The different crew stands on the Trireme.

TOP TIP

The same wash used on your ship (accentuating details and harmonising stage two) can be applied to your crew at the same time as you apply it to the ship. Organise your painting processes so you can wash the ship and crew at once to save even more time.

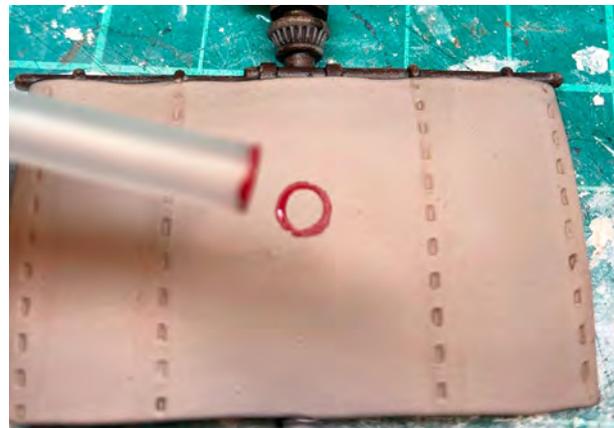




Clean freehand details like this can be easily achieved with some cunningly simple painting hacks.



1. With the mast painted in the same manner as the deck, basecoat the sail with Citadel Rakarth Flesh. I left a little darkness to the rear of the sail to add the illusion of depth and shadow.



2. Don't let the large, blank area intimidate you; we're going to use several shortcuts that will help even the most nervous of painters achieve a striking pattern with minimal effort.

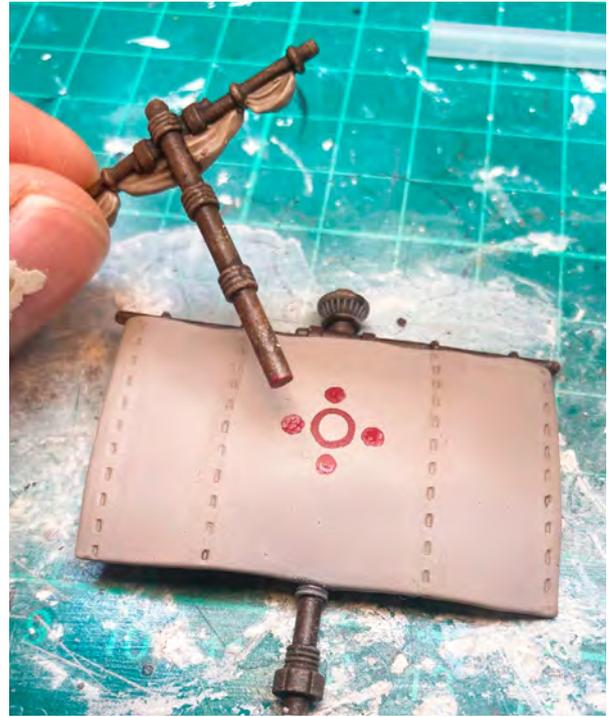
First, grab one of the plastic tubes that protect the bristles on your paint brush. Gently dip one end of it into your chosen freehand colour so the entire ring has a thin and even layer of paint. You don't want it dripping with paint; this will deposit far too much onto the area. If this does happen, immediately wipe it off with a tissue, reapply your basecoat, and try again.

TOP TIP

It's worth practicing the application on a piece of paper before you put it onto the sail.



3. Once you're confident the plastic tube is correctly loaded, firmly press the paint-end down on the centre of the sail, then remove it. You should have a near-perfect circle. Neaten any slips or splashes with your basecoat colour.



4. The four cardinal points begin with a full circle. Use the base side of the jib sail mast in much the same fashion as before. Don't worry about ruining your jib with paint, this part is hidden when the ship is fully built. Evenly load the mast base with paint, then firmly press it against the sail at the North point to the edge of your first circle. Repeat at East, South, and West after reloading with paint each time.

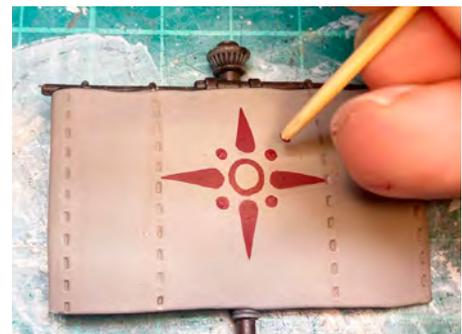


5. Tamiya masking tape is a god-send when you want to create sharp, crisp lines with confidence. Here it will help to make the points of the simple Spartan symbol. Apply two pieces to each circle as shown, creating a point at the tip. Make sure the tape is stuck down firmly, otherwise the new colour may bleed through. Once done, apply a coat of paint and allow it to dry, then gently peel off the tape, and voila, perfect edges.

TOP TIP

Don't 'brush' paint on when you have used masking as it increases the risk of paint flowing under the mask. Stipple it directly down. Don't over thin your paint when adding it over masks because of the same 'flowing under' potential.

6. Finally the shapes pointing North-East, South-East, South-West, and North-West need to be added. For these smaller circles, the humble cocktail stick is your friend. With your hobby knife, slice around half a centimetre off the end and use it to create smaller circles (as in step four) then repeat the masking process (in step five) to finish your design.



ADDING INTEREST TO THE HULL

1. I sponged Citadel Mephiston Red onto the carved sections at the front and back of the ship; this is to make it look suitably Spartan even though basic wood would be more historically accurate.

2. The metal points all got a highlight with Scale75 Heavy Metal to make them sparkle.

TOP TIP

You can change the colour choice depending on your chosen fleet, but I think subtlety is the best approach here. Don't use heavily saturated bright tones of your chosen colour; opt for a muted palette to give a hint of the nation's colours without making your ship look like a vibrant toy!



To take your painting to the next level, as Callum has done on his Cretan vessel, look out for the advanced guide in a future issue. *WiPrime* Members can see it already on the *Wargames Illustrated* website!



**NEVER MIND
THE BILLHOOKS
HERE'S THE**

easy way in

When we asked *Billhooks* author Andy Callan if he could provide us with a collection of example army lists for *Never Mind the Billhooks Deluxe*, he said, “but one of the thrills of *Billhooks Deluxe* is putting together your own army list and selecting which troops to have in your force”. We said, “... yeah, but can you do it anyway”... he said, “go on then”. So, over the following few pages we present Andy’s non-thinkers’, quick start, no messing guide to putting together a *Never Mind the Billhooks Deluxe* army for each of the Theatres covered in the rules.

There are no fixed army lists in *Billhooks* for the simple reason that I don’t really believe in them!

Especially for the smaller battles, for which this game was originally designed, it seems to me that army commanders would be happy to take whatever troops were available to them on the day, so we shouldn’t be too prescriptive about what types of troops you might or might not be permitted to put on the table.

But there have to be some limits if we want our armies to have a suitably historical ‘feel’ to them (and to thwart the kind of ‘gamey’ players who might otherwise be tempted to field entire armies of Archers or the like!). So, each chapter of *Billhooks Deluxe* gives some basic guidance on the make-up of armies in the eight Theatres and Conflicts covered in the book.

Set out below, you will find a series of example army lists of roughly 120 Troop points and 10 (or more) points of Leaders. This is the size of army that has been successfully used in the ‘Billhooks BASH’ series of Games Days organised by Pete Harris in Derby. This has proved to be an ideal size for a challenging but relatively quick two-player game.

ALBION: THE WARS OF THE ROSES

We start with ‘Vanilla’ *Billhooks*, the game’s Core Rules period. The only restrictions set are that Companies of Archers or Billmen (roughly equal numbers of each or as close as you can get) should make up at least half the troop points in an English army, with Skirmishers and Artillery together totalling no more than one-fifth. So, a typical army (either Yorkist or Lancastrian) might be resemble the example on the right.



Note that the Billmen and Archers here total 60 points (so meeting the requirement to be at least half of the 120 troop points), and Skirmishers and Artillery total 24 points (one fifth, exactly).

To make effective use of the Light Horse, they will need a Leader permanently attached. This is a good use for a Dolt should you happen to roll a 1 when dicing for your Leader Command ratings!

Yorkist or Lancastrian

Two Companies of Billmen (12 figures each)	24 points
Three Companies of Archers (12 figures each)	36 points
One Company of Men-at-Arms (12 figures)	24 points
One Squadron of Light Horse (8 figures)	12 points
One Gun and three crew	9 points
One Band of Skirmisher Kern (6 figures)	6 points
One Band of Skirmisher Handgunners with Pavises (6 figures)	9 points (6+3)
One Army Commander (on foot or mounted)	0 points
Two Leaders (on foot or mounted)	10 points
Total	130 points

The Skirmishers could be any mixture of Archers, Crossbowmen, Handgunners, or Irish Kern instead (although only one army can field any of the latter type - do a dice-off if both you and your opponent want to use them).

Opting for a gun (9 points) will usually leave you with an odd 3 points to make up the 120 point total, so you can do this either by giving one of your Handgunner or Crossbowmen Bands some pavises (as here) or by upgrading one of your Companies of Billmen or Archers to ‘Veteran’ status. This costs 25% extra (3 points) per Company, but remember this means that upgrading a Company of Men-at-Arms would cost you 6 extra points, which would take you over the limit.

Billhooks is not supposed to be a hyper-competitive game, so you really shouldn’t get too fussed if one side exceeds the notional total by a few points. If both players insist on exact parity, you can always take a figure or two off the initial strength of the odd Company just to even up the numbers.

Another way of assembling opposing armies is to use the optional ‘Mustering the Forces’ rule on page 38 of *Billhooks Deluxe*; this produces a rather more unpredictable mix and balance of forces and prevents players putting together a ‘super-army’ ideally suited to their personal style of play!

GALLIA: THE HUNDRED YEARS WAR

Billhooks Deluxe includes two scenarios for the Hundred Years' War, which already gives you four different army lists. Here are two more, which might be taken as representative of typical English and French armies from the latter stages of the conflict.

English

The only restrictions are that Longbowmen (English or Welsh Archers in Companies) should make up at least one quarter of the troops points and Men-at-Arms and Knights no more than one quarter. At least one of the army's Wards must be English (this is taken to include Welsh and Gascons!).

The Skirmishers can be either Archers or Light infantry (Cornish/Welsh Knifemen or Irish Kern).

Four Companies of Longbowmen (12 figures each)	48 points
Two Companies of Spearmen (12 figures each)	24 points
One Company of Men-at-Arms (12 figures)	24 points
Two bands of Skirmishers or Light Infantry (6 figures each)	12 points
Stakes for the Longbowmen (3 points - 4 rows)	12 points
One Army Commander (on foot or mounted)	0 points
Two Leaders	10 points
Total	130 points

Note that this is a rather immobile army, so the Longbowmen are going to need their stakes and hope that the French will oblige by attacking them! Alternatively, you could upgrade them to Veterans (@ 3 points per Company) so they fight better and have more resilient Morale - but you would be wise to find them a defensible position protected by suitable terrain.

French

A French army must include at least one ward of Frenchmen and should make up at least half of its troop points with Knights and Men-at-Arms.

Three Squadrons of Knights (8 figures each)	72 points
One Company of Scottish Men-at-Arms (12 figures)	24 points
One Company of Scottish Spearmen (12 figures)	12 points
Two Companies of Crossbowmen (12 figures each)	24 points
Two Bands of Light Infantry or Skirmishers (6 figures each)	12 points
One Army Commander (Mounted)	0 points
Two Leaders (on foot - 5 figures each)	10 points
Two additional Leaders (mounted - 7 figures each)	14 points
Total	168 points

Note that this gives the French army a total of 168 points compared to 130 for the English. This is deliberate. The French were recruiting locally so usually had the advantage in numbers, and their Cavalry-heavy armies always need to spend more points on Leaders anyway (since each squadron should have its own Leader to operate effectively). This is catered for in the Gallia chapter through the suggestion that French armies should out-point any English opponents by around 25% (see Note on Scenario design on page 49 of *Billhooks Deluxe*).



BOHEMIA: THE HUSSITE WARS

The opposing armies in this theatre are very different in character. Hussite armies must spend at least two thirds of their troop points on War Wagons and Infantry Companies. They can field no more than one Squadron of Knights (representing sympathetic local gentry) or Veteran Men-at-Arms (well-armed and experienced Infantry). The Crusaders, by contrast, must spend at least two-thirds of their troop points on Cavalry since their infantry played only a secondary and subordinate role.

As is the case in the battle Scenario in the rulebook, the Crusaders are allowed to out-point the Hussites, to allow for their need for extra Cavalry Leaders.

Hussites

Six War Wagons (6 crew and a team of horses each)	72 points
Three Tarasnice (towable Light Artillery - one Gun and two crew each)	18 points
One Company of Crossbowmen (12 figures - with pavises, free here)	12 points
One Company of Billmen (12 figures)	12 points
One Company of Handgunners (12 figures)	12 points
One Band of Skirmisher Handgunners (6 figures)	6 points
One Army Commander (on foot or mounted)	0 points
Two Leaders (on foot or mounted)	10 points
Total	142 points

Crusaders

Four Squadrons of Knights (8 figures each)	96 points
One Band of Mounted Crossbowmen (6 figures)	9 points
One Company of Crossbowmen (12 figures - with pavises, free here)	12 points
One Company of Handgunners (12 figures - with pavises, free here)	12 points
One Company of Billmen (12 figures)	12 points
One Army Commander (mounted)	0 points
Three Cavalry Leaders (mounted)	15 points
One Infantry Leader	5 points
Total	161 points

One Band of Skirmisher Handgunners: 6 pts.

Three Tarasnice (Light Artillery): 18 pts.

Two Leaders: 10 pts.

One Company of Billmen: 12 pts.

One Company of Handgunners: 12 pts.



OTHER ARMIES AND CONFLICTS

With *Billhooks Deluxe*, I set out to expand the scope of my original Wars of the Roses rules across the rest of Western European Christendom from c1350 to 1525. Lack of space meant it was never going to be possible to cover absolutely everything within that wide historical and geographical remit (Germania and Cambria were early editorial victims, for example), but I believe that within its pages you will be able to find a wide enough range of troop stats and special rules to cater for pretty much any contemporary conflict you care to name. Feel free to 'mix and match' from the different chapters and come up with your own period-specific 'Special Events'.

If you want to share your ideas, you will always find a receptive audience on the *Never Mind the Billhooks* Facebook page.



Owain Glyndwr and his men, impatiently waiting for their chance to shine in Billhooks.

Below: The Hussite army (listed on the previous page) arrayed for battle. All the figures seen here are by 1st Corps.

A practical note on War Wagons: In Billhooks War Wagons are assigned six crew. 1st Corps' Hussite War Wagons come in several different shapes and sizes, the 'Large War Wagon' can just about squeeze six figures inside. If you have smaller wagons and are struggling to accommodate six figures in (or around) the vehicle - don't worry about it - just tell your opponent a couple of the crew have just nipped off to the garderobe.

One Army Commander: 0 pts.

Six War Wagons: 72 pts.

One Company of Crossbowmen
(with pavises): 12 pts.



HELVETIA: THE SWISS-BURGUNDIAN WARS

This is another clash of opposing tactical systems - the brute force masses of the Swiss vs the multi-national, combined-arms sophistication of the Burgundians.

At least three fifths of the points in a Swiss army must be made up of Infantry Companies (Pikemen or Halberdiers) with Skirmishers and Artillery together contributing no more than one fifth.

Burgundian armies must include at least one unit each of Knights, Light Horse, Pikemen, Archers, Skirmishers, and Artillery to reflect their typically complicated orders of battle.

Swiss

Seven Infantry Companies (12 figures each)	84 points
Organised as:	
Vorhut: One Block of one Company of Pikemen and one of Halberdiers.	
Gewalthut: One Square to two Companies of Pikemen and one of Halberdiers.	
Nachhut: One Square (same as the Vorhut).	
Three Bands of Skirmishers (12 figures each - Handguns or Crossbows)	18 points
One Section of Light Artillery (one Gun and three crew)	9 points
One Band of Mounted Crossbowmen (6 figures)	9 points
Total	120 points

Note: The three Swiss Wards have their own built-in Command structure, so they spend nothing on Leader points.

Burgundians

Two Squadrons of Knights (8 figures each)	48 points
One Squadron of Coustilliers (8 figures - Light Horse)	12 points
One Company of Pikemen (12 figures)	12 points
One Company of Archers (12 figures)	12 points
One Company of Crossbowmen	12 points
Two Bands of Skirmisher Handgunners (6 figures each)	12 points
One Gun and three crew	9 points
One Army Commander (mounted)	0 points
Two Cavalry Leaders	10 points
One Infantry Leader	5 points
Total	132 points

Note that, although there is no recommendation in the book that Burgundian armies should be allowed to out-point the Swiss (since they regularly found themselves heavily outnumbered on the battlefield), giving them a few extra points (as here) will help make more of a game of it.

In addition, the optional Swiss deployment rule (on page 80 of *Billhooks Deluxe*) introduces some uncertainty into Swiss battle plans since there is always a chance that one of their characteristic outflanking forces might turn up late (or even not at all!).



ITALIA: THE ITALIAN WARS

The battle scenario in the book already gives you army lists for the French and the Spanish, so here are two more - for the Imperialists and for a generic Italian city-state army. Armies in this theatre were notably heterogeneous in their make-up, so the only restriction is that Skirmishers (both mounted and on foot) and Artillery should not exceed one third of the total troop points.

Imperialists

Two Blocks of Veteran Landsknechts (18 pikes and 6 Zweihanders each)	60 points
Two Bands of Arquebusiers (6 figures each)	12 points
Two Squadrons of Demi-Lances (8 figures each)	32 points
One Band of Mounted Crossbowmen (6 figures)	9 points
One Section of Artillery (one Gun and three crew)	9 points
One Army Commander (mounted)	0 points
Two Cavalry Leaders	10 points
One Infantry Leader	5 points
Total	137 points

Italians

Two Squadrons of Condottiere Gendarmes (8 figures each)	48 points
One Squadron of Stradiots (8 figures)	12 points
Two Blocks of Militia Spearmen (12 figures each)	36 points
Three Bands of Skirmisher Arquebusiers (6 figures each)	18 points
One Section of Artillery (one Gun and three crew)	9 points
One Army Commander (mounted)	0 points
Two Cavalry Leaders	10 points
One Infantry Leader	5 points
Total	138 points



LUSITANIA: LATE MEDIEVAL PORTUGAL

The Scenario in the rulebook describes an internecine battle in a mid-15th Century Portuguese dynastic civil war. As an alternative, here are two armies from an earlier period when English mercenaries and Spanish armies involved themselves in Portuguese affairs, importing their own national tactics in the process.

Portuguese/Castilian 'Legitimists'

Two Squadrons of Knights (8 figures each)	48 points
One Band of Ginetes (6 figures - mounted Skirmishers)	9 points
Two Companies of Crossbowmen (12 figures each - one with pavises)	27 points
Two Companies of Spearmen (12 figures each)	24 points
Two Bands of Skirmishers (6 figures each - Crossbows and Javelins)	12 points
One Army Commander (mounted)	0 points
One Cavalry Leader	5 points
One Infantry Leader	5 points
Total	130 points

Portuguese 'Rebels'

Two Companies of Levy Crossbowmen (12 figures each - one with pavises)	21 points
Two Companies of Levy Spearmen (12 figures each)	18 points
One Company of Veteran English Longbowmen (12 figures)	15 points
Two Companies of Veteran Men-at-Arms (12 figures each)	48 points
Two Bands of Ginetes (6 figures each - mounted Skirmishers)	18 points
One Army Commander	0 points
Two Infantry Leaders	10 points
Total	130 points

NORTHUMBRIA: THE ANGLO-SCOTTISH BORDER REIVERS

This is something rather different; not so much a battle, more of a raid, with the objective being to make off with the loot or prevent the rascally raiders getting away with it.

At least half of the Raiders (or their Pursuers) must be mounted, and at least half of any Defenders must be Infantry.

The 'Hot Trod' (English Pursuers)

One Squadron of Veteran Reivers (8 figures)	15 points
Two Squadrons of Reivers (8 figures each)	24 points
Two Bands of Skirmishers (6 figures each)	12 points
The March Warden ('Army' Commander)	0 points
Two Mounted Leaders	10 points
In Ambuscade (across the raider's line of retreat):	
Two Companies of Archers (12 figures each)	24 points
Two Companies of Town Levy (12 figures each - mixed-arms Infantry)	18 points
Two Band of Skirmishers (6 figures each)	12 points
The Deputy March Warden (Infantry Leader)	5 points
Total	120 points

The Raiders (Scots in this case)

One Squadron of Veteran Reivers (8 figures - Light Horse)	15 points
Four Squadrons of Reivers (8 figures each)	48 points
Two Companies of Louns (12 figures each - mixed-arms Infantry)	24 points
Two Bands of Skirmishers (6 figures each)	12 points
One Heidman ('Army' Commander)	0 points
Three Mounted Leaders	15 points
One Infantry Leader	5 points
Total	119 points



HIBERNIA: WARFARE IN IRELAND

The art of war in this theatre had its own distinctive character, with an emphasis on small scale raiding that is ideally suited to the size of game *Billhooks* was originally designed for. However, since the scenario in the book describes the forces for just such a typical raid, here are two armies suitable for one of the rare but deadly pitched battles that were also a feature of Irish warfare. It pits native Irish troops (with Scots and Hebridean Allies) against an Anglo-Irish force, which blends English and Irish weapons and tactics.

In a native Irish army, each Company of Gallowglass must have at least two bands of Skirmisher Kern representing the warriors' attendants.

At least a third of the troop points in an Anglo-Irish force must be made up of native Irish types and no more than a quarter of Archers. It can never have more than one Company of Men-at-arms OR one Squadron of Spears (Cavalry).

Note that native Irish troops cannot operate in two-company blocks, so they need rather more Infantry commanders than is usual in other theatres.

Royalists (or rather, those claiming allegiance to the king of England)

One Squadron of Spears (8 figures)	12 points
Two Companies of Veteran Archers (12 figures each)	30 points
One Company of Billmen (12 figures)	12 points
Two Companies of Levy Billmen (12 figures each)	18 points
One Company of Gallowglass (12 figures)	18 points
One Company of Formed Kern (12 figures)	12 points
Two Bands of Skirmisher Kern (6 figures each)	12 points
One Army Commander (on foot or mounted)	0 points
One Cavalry Leader	5 points
Two Infantry Leaders	10 points
Total	129 points

Rebels (those owing no allegiance to a foreign king)

One Squadron of Irish Horse (8 figures)	12 points
Two Companies of Gallowglass (12 figures each)	36 points
One Company of Formed Kern (12 figures)	12 points
One Company of Hebridean Mercenaries (12 figures)	18 points
One Company of Clansmen (12 figures)	15 points
Four Bands of Skirmisher Kern (6 figures each)	24 points
One Army Commander	0 points
One Cavalry Leader	5 points
Two Infantry Leaders	10 points
Total	132 points



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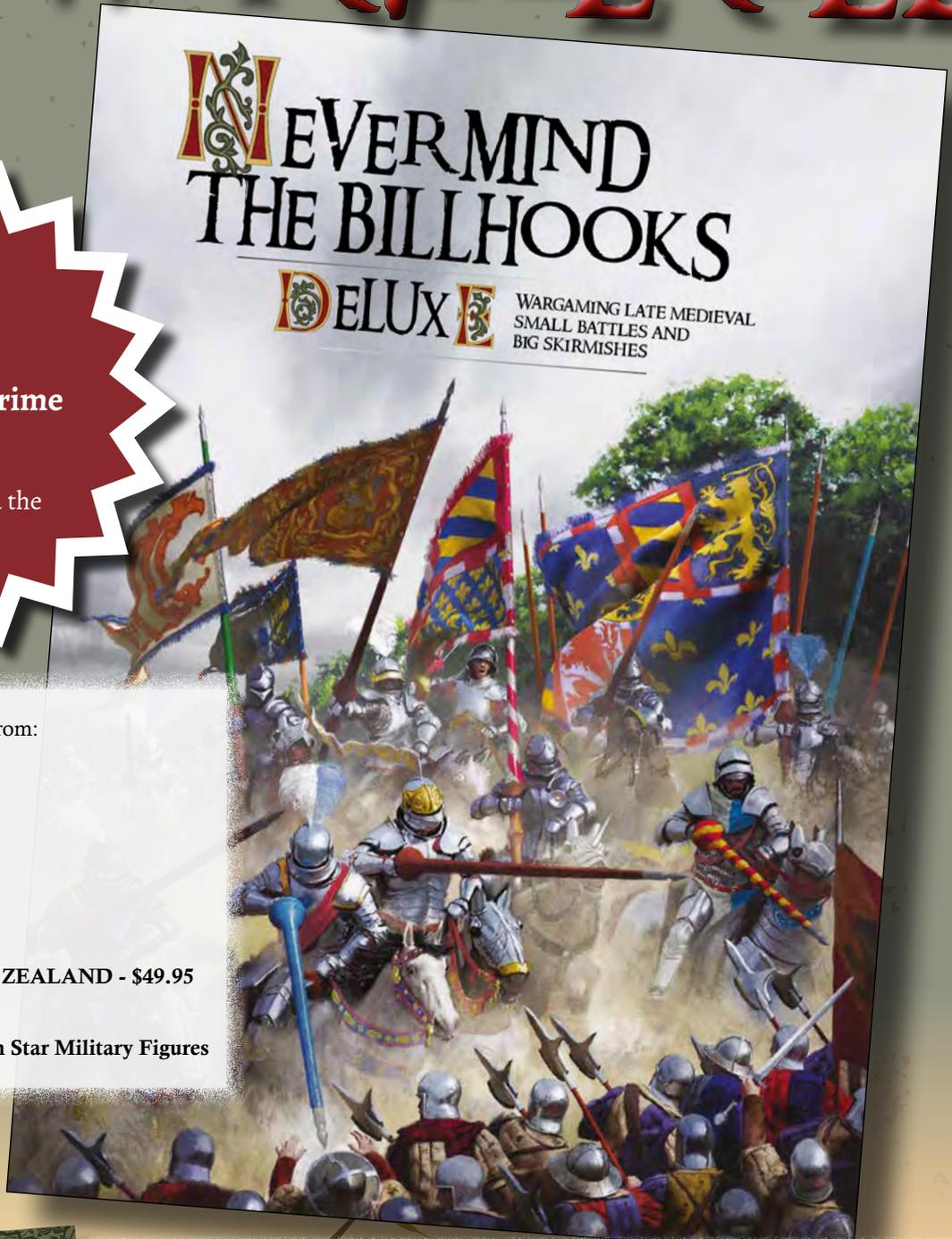
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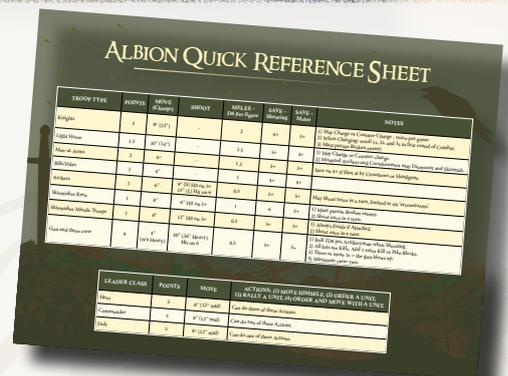
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TROOP TYPE	POINTS	MOVE (ft/sq ft)	SHOOT	WRESTLE (in/ft/sq ft)	SAVE (hitless)	SAVE (hitless)	NOTES
Light	1	10"	10"	10"	10"	10"	
Medium	14	10"	10"	10"	10"	10"	
Heavy	2	10"	10"	10"	10"	10"	
Light	1	10"	10"	10"	10"	10"	
Medium	14	10"	10"	10"	10"	10"	
Heavy	2	10"	10"	10"	10"	10"	
Light	1	10"	10"	10"	10"	10"	
Medium	14	10"	10"	10"	10"	10"	
Heavy	2	10"	10"	10"	10"	10"	
Light	1	10"	10"	10"	10"	10"	
Medium	14	10"	10"	10"	10"	10"	
Heavy	2	10"	10"	10"	10"	10"	

LEADER CLASS	POINTS	MOVE	ACTIONS (10 MOVE MINIMUM) OR ORDER A UNIT OR BATTLE BY ORDER AND MOVE WITH A LINE
Leader	1	10"	Can do all of these actions
Commander	2	10"	Can do all of these actions
Elite	3	10"	Can do all of these actions

BUILDING YOUR THALASSA FLEET



Are you eager to play this month's free *Thalassa* rules? You'll need to put a fleet together first! This article details how to purchase or download *Thalassa*'s awesome ships and presents eleven new upgrades that you can use to add variety to your fleet in games.

One way to gauge the quality of a new ruleset is by the number of army-building ideas and hobby projects that fill your head after reading it. This month's free *Thalassa* rules sparked plenty of excitement at *WiTower* when we first came across it in late 2021; we wanted to dive into the warm Mediterranean waters of the game straight away but found that inspiring 6mm scale ancient naval vessels weren't easily available to purchase from existing ranges...

Thankfully, *Thalassa*'s main man at Room 17 Games, Ricard Fortun, had already started to develop a selection of ships. The vessels, designed by digital sculptor Daniel Molina, were 3D printed as impressive prototypes for our first games. Playing with these custom vessels was a pleasure; they looked great, were satisfyingly big, and their custom crew and upgrade slots made them very practical to use.

Those early games showed us that when *Thalassa* was eventually offered to *Wi* readers as a freebie, it would be vital that the same impressive ships were available for our readers to use. We've worked with Room 17 Games and resin production company NG Castings to ensure fleet options are available in two different ways: resin figures to buy, and digital STL files to download and produce if you own a 3D printer.

3D PRINTING YOUR FLEET

The *Thalassa* STL files are accessible online throughout January; you'll need to be a *WiPrime* Member to download them. These digital files can be printed on your own 3D printer or uploaded to one of the numerous companies that offer 3D printing services as a commission print job for your personal use.

HOW TO ACCESS THE FILES

Use your *WiPrime* Membership to log in and access the full collection of *Thalassa* STL files in the same way you would usually access other *WiPrime* content. Head to your Member Area and click the *WiDigital* tab; there you'll find a directory of the different STL files and instructions on how to download them:

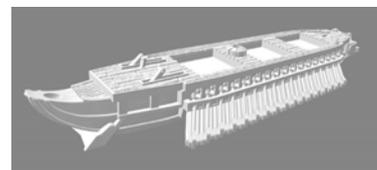
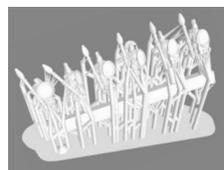
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Included in this month's *Thalassa* STL selection are:

- Spartan and Athenian Trireme ship hulls with assorted Horn and Tail options.
- A Penteconter ship.
- Various masts and sails for the ships.
- 6mm crew and war machine options along with bases to fit them into the Triremes.
- Several upgrade options to further enhance your ships.
- 3D dice and tokens to make for a more customised gaming experience.



That's everything you need to build a fleet, adorn it with detail, and play your first (and tenth, and hundredth!) game of *Thalassa*.



WHAT IS WIDIGITAL?

*Wi*Digital is our newest bonus for our *Wi*Prime Members, offering an assortment of digital STL files every month. The different *Thalassa* goodies from Room 17 Games are a spectacular start for January, but we have plans for a lot more. Various digital miniatures have been sculpted specifically for *Wargames Illustrated*: new Giants in Miniature characters, special units and objectives to support in-magazine scenarios and campaigns, terrain pieces, and more. We will also feature assorted figures from other manufacturers - samples of their broader ranges - at certain times too.

Each set of STL files we publish will be accessible to *Wi*Prime Members from the first day of each month until the last; every new month will bring a new selection of files. If you're not yet a *Wi*Prime Member, you can join for the monthly subscription price of £5.99, and you'll get instant access to that month's files.



Above: Nestor Makhno (left) and Fedir Shchus (right) for an upcoming *Insurgency* theme.

Above: Dick Winters for a future issue's *From the Small Screen* theme.



Left: Work in progress objectives: weapon cache, stollen art, and type 111 MKII Radio.

RESIN DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR

Resin faction boxes and starter bundles are available now from NG Castings!

If you don't have a 3D printer, then fear not; you can purchase *Thalassa*'s ships in the more traditional way from NG Castings' webstore: ngcastings.com

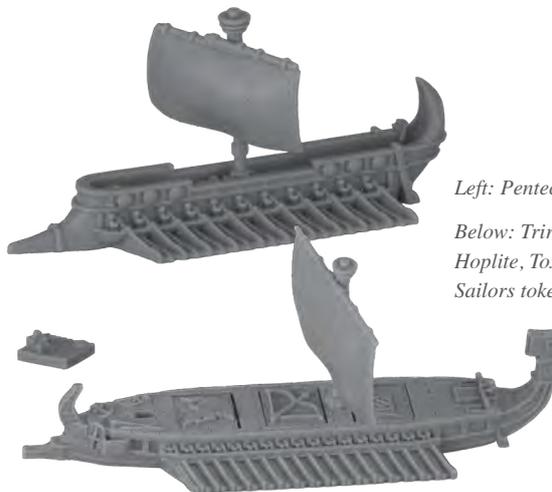
- 13 x 3D Crew tokens for the Triremes:
 - 3 x Hoplites
 - 6 x Sailors
 - 1 x Toxotai
 - 1 x Incendiary Toxotai
 - 1 x War Machine
 - 1 x Incendiary War Machine.

A starter bundle is also available at an RRP of £80, and it contains two faction boxes.

FACTION BOXES AND STARTER BUNDLES

Available for a very reasonable RRP of £45 from NG Castings, the faction box has been designed to include a complete fleet suitable for games of around 300 to 400 points (depending on options and upgrades). The contents are very similar to the fleets in this issue's battle report. A faction box is the ideal way to get started with games of *Thalassa* and it includes:

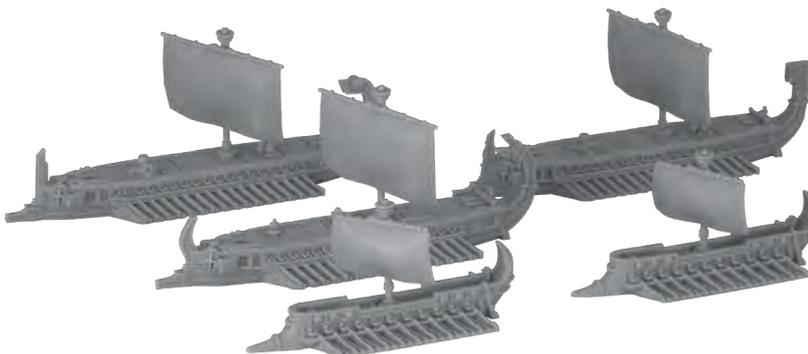
- 2 x standard Trireme hulls
- 1 x variant Trireme hull (ideal to represent your flagship)
- 4 x Horn and Tail combinations for your Triremes (leaving you with a spare set)
- 2 x Penteconters
- Unfurled square masts for all ships along with mastery flags



Left: Penteconter.
Below: Trireme with Hoplite, Toxotai, and Sailors tokens.

NG CASTINGS

Tim Baker started out, like so many in the business, playing Games Workshop games. He's a big fan of the *Lord of the Rings Strategy Battle Game*, and his passion for wargaming eventually led to a stint working as a Forge World master mould maker. From there, he helped set up Warcradle Studios' in-house resin department (to produce *Wild West Exodus* and *Dystopian Wars*) before starting his own company, NG Castings, in the heart of the Lead Belt in 2020. He now spends his time doing high-quality casting for various miniature companies.



A full fleet, made from items in the faction box.

SHIP UPGRADES

You can have a great game of *Thalassa* with a standard fleet (as demonstrated in this month's battle report on page 30) but once you've gotten to grips with the basic rules, you might want to add some more variety. Have no fear, we've snagged rules for some fleet upgrades from *Thalassa's* designer Ricard! You will need to work out how to represent some of these options on your ship models, but others (such as the Jib and Towers) are included in the downloadable STL files available to all WPrime Members this month.

Over time, if there is the demand, these upgrades will all get physical products to represent them too, produced by Room 17 Games and NG Castings.

PRIZED TARGET

Some upgrades will make your vessel more dangerous in the eyes of the enemy by presenting an ostentatious display of power; they count as Prized Targets. If they are destroyed, they will grant the enemy player 1 Victory Point.

JIB SAIL (TRIEME ONLY)

Cost: +6 pts

Number: 0-1 per ship

Location slot: Foredeck slot

This small sail on the port of most war galleys contributed little to the speed of the ship but conferred stability and additional manoeuvrability when negotiating the currents.

When a player uses a Drift (🌀) dice on one of their own ships fitted with a jib sail, the ship can choose the side of the ship on which to position the Drift template, instead of being restricted by the direction of the predominant current.



ACHINOS ASSAULT BALLISTA (TRIEME ONLY)

Cost: +4 pts

Number: 0-1 per ship

Location slot: Foredeck slot

The Achinos (hedgehog) was a small war machine placed on the foredeck of a war galley. Triggered by the impact of the embolon (ram) against an enemy ship, the Achinos fired a volley of projectiles at the rammed ship. It wasn't particularly lethal or accurate, but the projectiles would momentarily distract the enemy ship's crew and give an advantage to the initial boarders.

A ship equipped with an Achinos can use it once per battle when declaring a boarding action after a successful ram. The ship receives the special rule Repel Boarders (3) during that boarding action.

REINFORCED EMBOLON (TRIEME ONLY)

Cost: +7 pts

Number: 0-1 per ship

Location slot: Ship superstructure

The biggest and most expensive ships mounted a large and ornately decorated embolon made of the highest quality bronze. To hold these very heavy features in place, the bow superstructure required specific mounting points, and the ship was fitted with counterweights on the stern and along the keel that affected the seaworthiness of the vessel.

A war galley can substitute their regular ram (or embolon) for a heavily reinforced one that allows the player to reroll one failed impact dice when ramming. A ship without a Ram cannot be equipped with this upgrade.

BLESSED ICON (TRIEME ONLY)

Cost: +5 pts - Prized Target

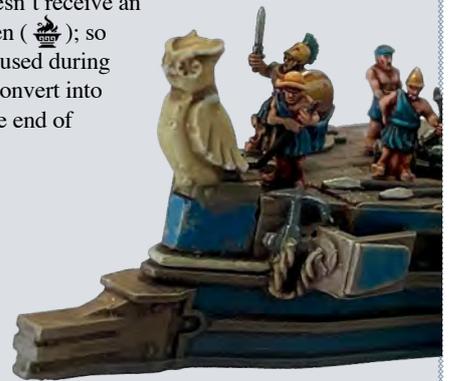
Number: 0-1 per ship

Location slot: Ship superstructure

Ships commonly displayed the statues or icons of their patron gods in the form of dedicated shrines or carved into their figurehead.

A ship fitted with a Blessed Icon counts as having 1 Blessing token (🙏) per round that can only be used on itself.

Note: the player doesn't receive an actual Blessing token (🙏); so if this benefit is not used during a round, it doesn't convert into a victory point at the end of the turn.



COMMAND DECK (TRIEME ONLY)

Cost: +5 pts - Prized Target

Number: 0-1 per ship*

Location slot: Ship superstructure

Ships involved in long or complex campaigns often had a commander's tent on board where plans and strategies were discussed. These positions were seen mainly on the stern of the ship but could also be established below deck or on highly decorated command towers.

Every time a ship with a Command Deck removes 1 Chaos token (👹) the player can remove 1 additional Chaos token (👹).

*A ship can have one Command Deck or one Command Tower but not both.

DEFENSIVE DECK

Cost: Trireme +6 pts / Other +3 pts

Number: 0-1 per ship

Location slot: Ship superstructure

The deck of a war galley was often fitted with canvases, gazebos, or rows of shields that conferred a certain status and level of cover to the crew on deck.

A ship fitted with a defensive deck denies the Repel Boarders ability of an enemy ship during a boarding action.

MASTER CARPENTER

Cost: Trireme +5 pts / Other +3 pts

Number: 0-1 per ship

Location slot: Ship superstructure

It was important that ships were kept in good condition, and specialist craftsmen were an essential part of any fleet.

During the fleet upkeep step of the end phase, a ship with a Master Carpenter will repair 1 structure point on a roll of 10+ on a D10. Before rolling the dice, the player can use Blessing tokens (👑) to increase the dice result by +1 for every token used.

HARASSING LOOKOUT

Cost: Trireme +5 pts / Other +6 pts

Number: 0-1 per ship

Location slot: Ship mast

From these lookout positions on the mainmast, a skilful Toxotai could target key crew members of an enemy ship with ranged attacks.

Every time a ship fitted with Harassing Lookouts issues an Away Boarders or an Unleash Fire order, a nominated enemy ship within 3" from the mainmast receives 1 Chaos token (👹).

Note: The target ship does not need to be the same as the one that was targeted with the Away Boarders or Unleash Fire orders.

BUILT-IN TOWERS (TRIREME ONLY)

Cost: Variable - Prized Target

Number: 0-2 per ship

Location slot: Crew slots

In the relatively calm and clear waters of the Mediterranean and Aegean seas, visibility and reach was key during operations. Ships were often fitted with an array of improvised or purposely designed towers and plinths from which commanders, artillery, and infantry could dominate the enemy from longer distances. These towers were normally built with cedar or fir and covered in animal pelts or bronze to prevent them from catching fire.

A war galley can be fitted with one or two towers chosen from the types listed below. All towers are considered engines of war and follow the general rules as explained in the main *Thalassa* rules.

Right: A Spartan Trireme with Tower and Jib upgrades along with 3D printed crew options. All these printed parts (available as STL files to WiPrime Members) have been painted a simple flat red to fit the fleet's colours.



Accurate

A player may reroll one Shooting Dice (SD) during a shooting action for every stand on board with this special rule.

ARTILLERY TOWER

Cost: +7

An artillery tower can hold a Monagon or an Oxybeles that has been included as an upgrade to the crew. The engine of war increases its range by 5" and gains the Accurate special rule.

Note: An artillery tower is considered an engine of war but does not increase the structure of the ship. This has been included through the increase from the Oxybeles or the Monagon when acquired for the ship.

ARCHERY TOWER

Cost: +7

Toxotai, peltasts, and other infantry equipped with missile weapons were often deployed in towers to benefit from the advantage of height when shooting and to protect them from enemy infantry if the ship was boarded.

DESCRIPTION	TYPE	RES	AS	AP/MOD	SD/MOD	RANGE	SPECIAL
Archery Tower	engine of war	Structure (1)	7+	1/-	3/-	15cm	Repel Boarders (2) Incendiary (+6 pts)

If the ship already has archers with incendiary projectiles, the Archery Tower counts as having them too without the additional points cost listed above.

COMMAND TOWER *

Cost: +7

Like the Command Deck, the Command Tower hosted the ship's captain and their assistant commanders. The Navarch usually directed the battle from this privileged and often lavish high position.

Once per round, a ship with a Command Tower can roll 2 dice during a Mastery Test and pick the most convenient result.

If the Command Tower is present on the flagship, the High Command and Inspiring Leader range increases to 10".

DESCRIPTION	TYPE	RES	AS	AP/MOD	SD/MOD	RANGE	SPECIAL
Command Tower	engine of war	Structure (1)	7+	2/-	-/-	-	-

*A ship can have one Command Deck or one Command Tower but not both.

SAGA

AGE OF ALEXANDER

Dom Sore's here with his semi-regular breakdown of the latest *SAGA* releases. He examines the new goodies and shares how factions fared on the tabletop when he commanded them in the recent *SAGA* Iron Man event at Fiasco.

Age of Alexander is the latest expansion of the *SAGA* Universe, focusing on the era around the Great Macedonian General but covering some five centuries in all, from the 6th Century BCE to the middle of the 1st Century BCE. It is a companion book to the previously released *Age of Hannibal* and both books have warbands that can be used against each other, making for some interesting if not completely historically accurate match ups. These will be joined by a third book, *Age of Caesar*, at some point in the future for even more varied options.

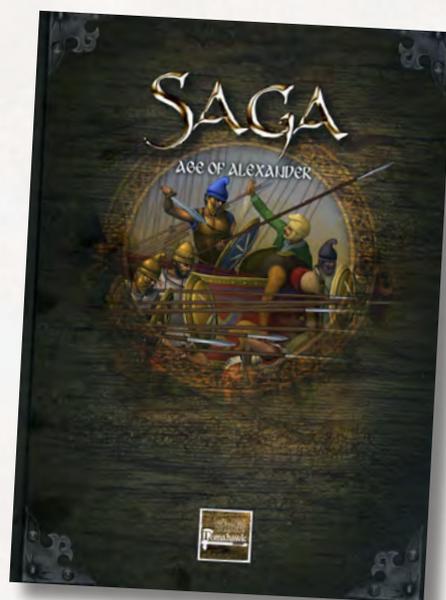
The Majority of this article looks at the six new factions, but suffice to say, there are new rules and equipment options, new ruses, and new mercenaries included in *Age of Alexander*. I will touch on these as I examine the Greek Cities, Persians, Thracians, Macedonians, Indians, and The Successors factions. The campaign system, called *Diádokhos*, will be the exciting finale of my investigations.



THE GREEK CITIES

This faction is based around the classic Greek city state forces that successfully fought the Persians but were overrun in short order by Alexander.

Before you even deploy a Greek City warband, you need to decide which City they are from. These are chosen from four options - Athenian and Minor Cities, Lacedaemonians, Thebans, and Thessalians - and each limits your troop choices and brings differing abilities. For instance, the Spartan rule for the Lacedaemonians means any troops with this rule will not retreat from melee while also inflicting extra fatigue on the enemy. Thebans get larger units but no Hearthguard. Thessalians get lots of cavalry without a detriment to using the board; they count as Phalanxes. Thessalians and Thebans seem to be the hardest to handle of the Greek City options, but we all like a challenge, right?



DETAILS

- SCALE: 28mm
- PERIOD: Ancients
- PRICE: £32
- FORMAT: 92-page hardback full colour book
- AVAILABLE FROM: grippingbeast.co.uk

The book format is welcome in its familiarity, and six Battle Boards are included for the factions. It also has a new addition, a map that is used in a campaign system, but more on that later.

One thing to note is that you do not need new dice if you already have the dice released previously; you will be covered by the Phoenician Dice, Barbarian Dice, or Hellenic Dice.

Heroes and Legendary Units

Philopoemen is an Athenian and Minor Cities hero who you will be tempted to throw into combat, but he may be better placed behind the main battle line to help them shed fatigue and simultaneously increase the fatigue they inflict on their enemies. Leonidas, king of Sparta, is one of the rare free heroes; he limits your troop choices but improves your Line of Battle and can help your combat effectiveness. The Theban Sacred Band are twelve warriors who form their own Line of Battle and count as three units; they are powerful but expensive, and they will need careful handling.

What's that Line of Battle? The Greek Cities faction is somewhat driven and defined by this special formation that provides access to eight of 15 Battle Board abilities. It forces you to keep your army in a line of sorts to increase the abilities for your army; but the 'Form Line!' ability happily allows you to move a whole Line of Battle, making for synergistic attacking options.



PERSIANS

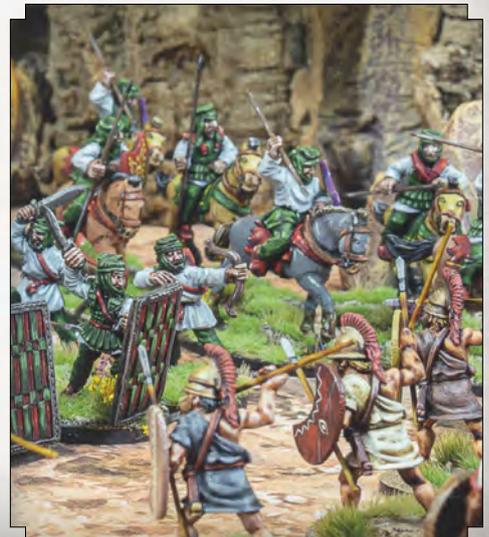
After the Greeks come their long-time opponents, the Persians: Median or Achaemenid. They equate to the Persians of Cyrus and Xerxes I for the Medians or Darius III for the Achaemenids.

Both flavours have the Combined Formation special rule for some of their troops that mixes melee and shooting abilities in one unit at the cost of speed. When you combine this ability with some of the board abilities, you get some very powerful combinations indeed. It is the Achaemenids that have the most choices and can probably make best use of the Battle Board, and this includes Elephants and Scythed Chariots, which will create a visually impressive army on the tabletop.

One Volley After Another is an ability your opponents are going to come to fear, and Shield Bearers will surprise an unwary opponent. Be prepared to lose friends if you aren't careful, but who needs friends when you have the might of the Persian Empire behind you? These are one of the easiest factions to use and understand if you are just starting out. And they have camels!

Heroes and Legendary Units

Xerxes is an ancient 'tank' who will be hard to shift, and he messes with his opponents' abilities; units will not move, dice will disappear. Darius III is less useful at first appearance (although he can leave the game without counting as being destroyed, which will help some); however, he does increase the effectiveness of Scythed Chariots, and your Hearthguard cavalry will be tougher to beat with him in your army.



THRACIANS

Notorious horsemen and owners of the fearsome bladed rhomphaia, the Thracians are skewed to melee and encouraged to have horse units, although these must be balanced against non-mounted troops. They also have a Pillage mechanism that activates or changes some of their Battle Board abilities. This Pillage marker is gained either from winning melee or using the Warlord's ability to give one in place of We Obey.

I used this faction in the recent Iron Man event at Fiasco, but I didn't really get along with them. I found they got bogged down and their combinations didn't flow well for me, which suggests they require some practice. Pillage markers are hard to acquire, especially when the dice are against you, and I wasn't finding effective gains when I did get them. I will practice some more, and hopefully in time, the effectiveness of the Thracians will go up and my opinion will change, but be aware they seem to be a challenge to use if you are thinking of investing in a new Thracian army for SAGA, I'm not sure I will be recruiting my warriors from Thracia in the future.

Heroes and Legendary Units

Seuthes III costs a point but helps with Pillage markers; if he stays in the battle line, he helps manage fatigue and provides a combat boost, so he might be the key to getting to grips with the Thracians. Not so much a Legendary Unit but a whole warband, Thracians can be Scordisci. These are masters of terrain and will surprise many an unwary unit, especially as their mounted units do not suffer fatigue when they end a move in terrain. They also get extra dice in attack and ignore the first casualty they receive. I may have to re-evaluate my initial thoughts on the difficulty in using them after a game or two with these tribal warriors.

MACEDONIANS

Briefly the greatest military force in the world, they are allowed a new weapon type - the lengthy spear-like Sarissas - but they are restricted to just one unit of Hearthguard on foot and one unit of mounted warriors. This is a warband pushed towards a small number of elite cavalry with large numbers of Sarissa armed phalanxes. Thankfully, that restriction in troop variation is countered by many useful abilities on their Battle Board. The Intensive Training ability will allow you to pepper your opponent before combat, and Pride of the Companions will allow you to keep your Hearthguard going without fatigue.



Another warband I used at Iron Man, I found the Macedonians very effective. They hit hard and they can survive. Macedonian Tactics is a great ability that will give your opponent an extra thing to worry about as they will have no idea if your attack is going to be followed up by a charge from another of your units. Intensive Training seemed to be a must use order in almost every turn so I could use the Sarissa armed troops' free shoot ability. I sense this is a warband that will finish high up the rankings in competitive events.

Heroes and Legendary Units

Phillip II is well known as a father, but he was also responsible for the reforms that allowed Alexander to prosper. He has abilities that help an army move, improve its chances of winning in combat, and remove enemy units. His far more famous son can move large numbers of units for free, which means he will need to be kept nearer the front to maximise this ability, so you might need to carefully shepherd him around the battlefield.

I am a little disappointed in Alexander's abilities; they feel limited compared to those of Philip II even if being able to remove Warriors will make him more durable. As the titan that he was, perhaps Alexander deserves more...

INDIANS

I think the Indians are the most anticipated warband in this book; they are certainly the one I have seen more questions about on social media and been asked about directly on my travels. They have several quirks that will take some getting used to, primarily the introduction of a new keyword - Orders/Tactics. These replace most of the standard options you would find, like the Combat Bonus and Activation Pool, and you don't need to remove the dice when triggered, they remain.

Indian warbands also have very few Foot options; this is a warband geared towards mounted troops, and if you go fully mounted, then you will only lose access to the The Earth Trembles ability (which takes a Common plus an Uncommon dice to trigger and does not feel particularly useful). Counter to that is the spectacle of lots of elephants and chariots along with the abilities to support those choices. They will need careful handling, and you will need to be careful your elephants don't cause havoc in your own ranks.

Heroes and Legendary Units

Porus, the king defeated by Alexander at Hydaspes, has a very handy ability that means you need to kill him twice. As he is on an elephant, that could be problematic! Add in his excellent armour and he might just be worth two points. Chandragupta Maurya, First Emperor, is the other legendary figure, and he is a combat boss, dishes out fatigue, and gets a bonus when using three of the Battle Board abilities. Of all the Legendary units in the book, he will vie with Philip for most seen, I suspect.



THE SUCCESSORS

These are the generals that scrambled to carve a territory out of the Macedonian conquests of Alexander. There are three flavours of Successors - Greece, Asia, or Egypt - and they have common troops choices that are fleshed out with specifics for the chosen Kingdom: Phalanx Hearthguards for Greece, Elephants and Chariots for Asia, and Elephants and Levy Sarissa for Egypt (amongst others).

Their Battle Board contains the Ambition choice for a Warlord. You choose from Divitiae, Legatum, and Hubris at the start of the game, and each provides a different bonus to Battle Board abilities.

The Successors were the third faction I used at Iron Man, and overall, they felt very similar to Macedonians in their play; that's not exactly a bad thing. The clear big bonus with them is your Greek Cities warband can double up as a Successor one very easily, which means you get a lot of gaming versatility with fewer figures required.

Heroes and Legendary Units

The Successors get a full four Legendary units, and you do not get to choose the Ambition for these units specifically. Philip V is the last great Macedonian king, and his abilities lead towards recruitment and moving around with ease to generate SAGA Dice. Antiochus III is an Asian General who prevents an opponent using fatigue to reduce movement, and he also allows three units to move with We Obey. Ptolemy II Philadelphus is an Egyptian general who can use Levy to survive and manipulates the SAGA Dice to guarantee you get two Rare dice every turn. Finally, Mithridates VI Eupator, an Asian General, will be hard to kill given his Resilience plus removal of Fatigue abilities, and you can get extra Scythed Chariots through him.



AGE OF CHARIOTS

This isn't the first appearance of Chariots in *SAGA*, but we now have three types: Scythed, Indian Light, and Indian Heavy. The Scythed Chariots are very dangerous, one-shot weapons; they will be great at clearing large blocks of infantry and will cause your opponents some headaches, I suspect. The Indian Chariots are either archery platforms (light chariot) or melee weapons (heavy chariot) with more survivability on the table than Scythed Chariots.

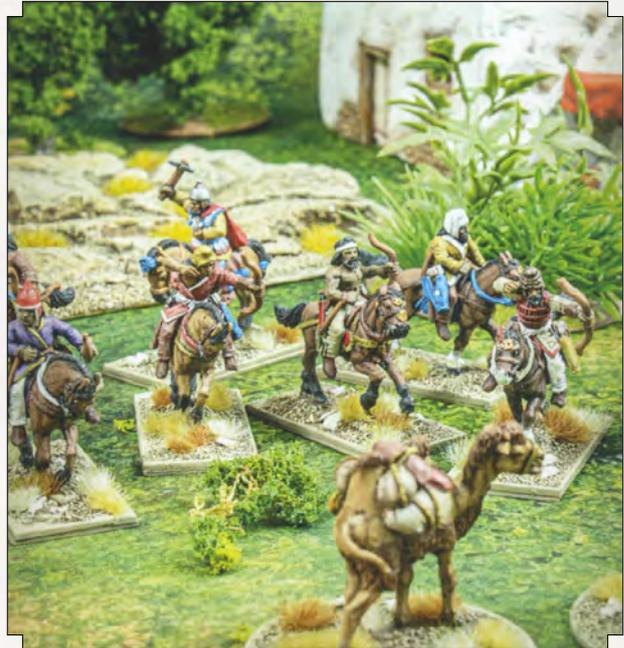


MERCENARIES APLENTY

Cappadocians, Scythian and Bactrian Horsemen, Thessalian Cavalry, Camel Riders, Rhodian Slingers, Galatians, Illyrians, Agrianian Javelinmen, Thracian Mercenaries, and Thorakitai join *SAGA* as new mercenary options. These are great for filling gaps in your warband's abilities, like using the Thessalian or Tarentine Cavalry for the foot focused Greek Cities. There are some interesting combinations that can be made utilising mercenary units and the buffs they provide to other units on their side, but a bit like elephants from *Age of Hannibal*, they will need careful handling by both parties to be effective or effectively neutralised.

Talking of *Age of Hannibal*, some of the same options from that book feature in *Age of Alexander*: Cretan Archers, Tarentine Cavalry, Psiloi, and Therophoroi. There are some subtle differences amongst these mercenary types though, so make sure you carefully read the rules in the *Alexander* book before using them. I am not sure at this time if one book supersedes the other, but I am sure Studio Tomahawk will make that clear for everyone soon.

Note: Mercenary Hoplites appear to be the same as Greek Hoplites, but the book you are using, *Hannibal* or *Alexander*, determines who can recruit them.





WRITE A SAGA WITH SAGA

Diádokhos is a new campaign system, designed for four players who each take on the role of one of Alexander's prospective replacements. Each player takes one of four starting points and uses the Successors Battle Board in their games. The map provided shows which province each player starts at - Makedonia, Friyia, Aigyptos, or Babylon - and how you determine who starts where is up to the players, although it is suggested you assign positions randomly. Each warband gets a core of Mounted Hearthguard (one unit only) and Sarissa armed Warriors; it is the territories you control that allow you to get other troop types.

The campaign itself allows you play as many turns as you want but suggests four turns as a minimum and no more than six turns for your first campaign. These turns determine who is fighting who and how. Attacker and defender are determined in the first turn by your Prestige - two of the four players will attack - then these roles are reversed each following turn. This makes for a slightly prescribed feel to the games, but it keeps things nice and simple; each turn there will two match-ups of battles between the players, whether they are playing as their own Diadachos is another matter.

There are options for playing as a neutral Province when such battles arise, which throws up the interesting prospect of a warband with more than half of its units made up of mercenaries. That can bring some funky combinations and get units on the board you might never use otherwise.

After the pre-determined turns have elapsed, you work out the winner; victory will be made harder if your own General dies, and there are many ways that can happen, so care is advised; this is not a campaign where fortune favours the bold every time!

There is a new scenario used for the campaign, Clash of the Diadochi, and I think you could utilise some of the other scenarios once you're used to the campaign system. Victory results determine how well or badly you have fared in the province being fought over; you need to be careful not to get routed.

I can see this being a very interesting way to play SAGA and an excellent way to try the various Successor builds and options while getting a lot of fun out of random mercenary choices. I might even go so far as to make the Provinces table into separate cards to make them easier to refer to than the book.

ALEXANDER IS GREAT!

This new universe is a fantastic addition to SAGA. It expands the Ancient world to incorporate many more armies, and the campaign system has a wonderful elegance to it that makes it instantly appealing. Everything is boosted by Studio Tomahawk's always excellent layout and production design; their books can't help but inspire the desire to build new warbands.

I happily already have a ready-made Theban army; although they can't take elephants, so I may need to consider the vibrancy of an Indian warband. I will wait and see what the Gripping Beast Indians look like before I make any final decisions, and in the meantime, the chariots I want are ready to make my wallet cry!

TRIREME

A CLASSIC SHIP FOR A CLASSICAL WORLD



Neil Smith introduces us to the star of this month's theme - the Greek Trireme.

Oared boats have been around since a man first decided to cross a river without getting his feet wet or eaten by lurking predators. The principle is simple: a watertight hull to sit in and something to make it go where you want it to, the oar. Every culture with access to water designed boats, and for the more ambitious, a simple sail to catch the wind was erected, usually in the middle of the boat. That basic design, modified in thousands of ways and used for thousands of purposes, lasted from somewhere in the mists of unrecorded time up until the industrial era of the late 19th Century.

Of course, every time men invent machines, they will want to fight other men with it. For that, you need speed and manoeuvrability, which means you make the boat bigger, put in more oars, and add a bigger sail. A second bank of oars makes sense, and in the eastern Mediterranean around the first millennium BCE, that led to the bireme. And if you want to beat a bireme, why

not put an even bigger sail on your boat and a third bank of rowers? Do that, and you have a trireme, which the Ancient Greeks honed into the most dominant naval weapon of its era or any era relatively speaking. It is the Greek trireme that is the subject of this brief survey.

Think about the bedrock of western civilisation when almost every development we take for granted, yet still seem to fight about, was slotted into place. Without going into detail on the developments that underpin almost all our modern institutions, that was Ancient Greece over the best part of the 5th Century BCE, between 480 and 404. Yet, none of it might have happened at all without triremes and the men who fought in them. The great victory for the Greek trireme at Salamis in 480 effectively ended any Persian thoughts of conquering Greece. It was the Athenians that did most of that damage, and it was they who forged a maritime empire in the Aegean out of the driftwood of Persian

hopes. But it was the Spartans who ended Athenian hegemony in the Peloponnesian War in 404, and it was a naval based strategy that brought victory. We should note that most maritime states opted for triremes as their frontline naval warships, from Carthage to Corinth to Persia, but it was Athens that became synonymous with this vessel.

TRIREME CONSTRUCTION

Imagine being in Ancient Greece, moseying along near the port of Piraeus, minding your own business, then gradually you hear the incessant banging of hammers and sawing of wood. As you draw nearer, you see a veritable hive of workers swarming all over a ship being built. It is a trireme receiving its final touches before setting out to sea. The ship is made of pine, bent and shaped to build a hull with a deck about 40 metres long and 6 metres wide. You wouldn't want to spend too much time on this deck though because there were no guardrails. Below decks there are three banked rows of wooden seats on both sides for oarsmen.

They would need to sit on sheepskin cushions, and the smell might be a bit ripe at times, but the breeze blowing in from the oar openings will provide fresh air for them. Nearby, a man inspects the oars, which have to be in perfect condition for the work they have to do. Other men stand around, waiting to apply pitch to help make the ship watertight, and still more are working on the ropes that will hold the hull together and keep the massive sail in place when it is raised up the single centre mast, sometimes along with a smaller one just to its front. It is at the prow of the ship where you find what all this hard work is for: a magnificent bronze-plated ram with its three chisel-like prongs jutting out to sit just above the water line ready to hit an unfortunate enemy vessel. When you see the ram, and the angry eye painted on the prow just above it, that's when you realise that the whole ship is designed to propel that ram at high velocity into the enemy ship: a seaborne, wooden missile.

TRIREME MANPOWER

There was a time when it was thought that only slaves manned the oars on triremes, but that is false. Athenian oarsmen, for example, were drawn from society's poorest but trained to the

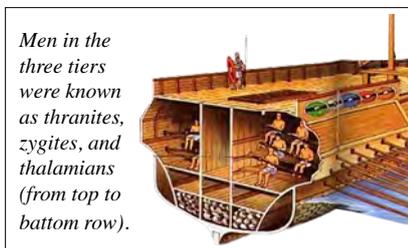
highest standard. The lower and middle banks of oars each held 27 seats port and starboard with 31 men on each side of the upper bank. Oarsmen constituted the largest part of the crew, but they were unarmed and required protection. An Athenian fighting trireme would therefore carry ten hoplites and four archers on normal active service, though the numbers could vary for other fleets. That left ten deckhands to maintain the ship, a captain, a helmsman, shipwright, bosun, and a piper to mark time for the oarsmen. The crew was small to keep the trireme light and balanced for its main purpose of ramming the enemy.

TRIREME TACTICS

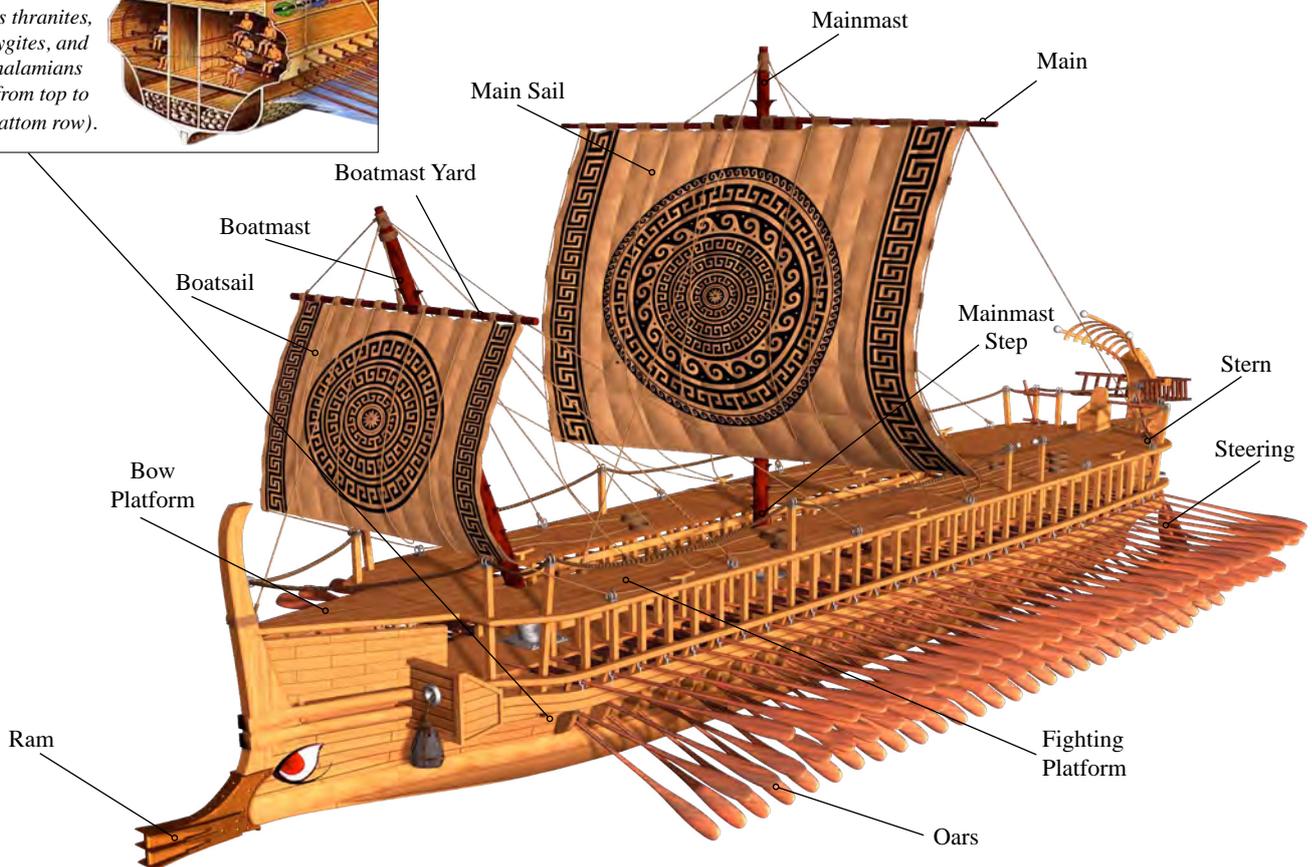
Ramming was not the only option for triremes, though it was the most important. The idea was not to sink the enemy ship, but punch a hole in it, rendering it uncontrollable, and either withdraw to find new prey or 'bite' into the wreckage with those three chisel-like prongs, allowing for boarding to take place. The Syracusans and Corinthians in the Peloponnesian War were accomplished at boarding. Because they could not cope with the superior manoeuvrability of the Athenians, they built stronger ships to carry more troops.

Their aim was to immobilise the enemy by targeting their rowers, then swarm aboard and overpower the crew. Many engagements became de-facto boarding operations anyway when ships slammed into each other and became entangled; though for rammed and sinking ships, fighting would be the last thing on the crews' minds over the basic demands of survival. We should also note that Thucydides at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War viewed the boarding tactic as 'old fashioned', but then as an Athenian, he would. They preferred to ram, and that required considerable skill - consider when attempting to ram an enemy trireme that is trying to ram you, your odds are about evens to win or even minimise your damage to fight on.

The two main ramming tactics were the *Diekplous* and the *Periplous*. The idea for the *Diekplous* was to steer for a gap between enemy ships, then ram left or right or go straight through, swing round, and ram the enemy from the rear. This latter manoeuvre took barely a minute. The *Periplous* was similar but involved sailing onto the enemy's flank, sometimes using another ship as a decoy, before hitting them in the rear. Counter-tactics evolved quickly. Obviously, if you could close the gap between your ships



Men in the three tiers were known as *thranites*, *zygites*, and *thalamians* (from top to bottom row).





that prevented the enemy from using the *Diekplous*. Failing that, a second defensive line of ships could deter the *Diekplous* through the threat of being rammed themselves, which while flanked by enemy ships would probably only end one way. Holding off the *Periplous* could prove a bit trickier. The defending ships could form a 'hedgehog' with their prows facing outwards, though some ships opted for a semi-circle formation to achieve the same purpose while giving them a little more manoeuvrability.

Despite these tactical options and countermeasures, the trireme's greatest vulnerability was insurmountable; they could not remain at sea for any length of time. You might have noticed on our visit to the shipyards that triremes did not have galleys, and they were not the sturdiest vessels, especially if sea conditions were 'harry roughers'. All too often, triremes had to come ashore by beaching, or find a friendly port to replenish supplies. That raises the seemingly paradoxical statement that the best way to defeat a trireme was on land! It took the Spartans a while to implement that strategically in the Peloponnesian War, but once they did, Athens' days were numbered. The inability to stay at sea created a related problem: with rudimentary naval intelligence, you could not tell when the enemy might set out to sea - there you are on the beach enjoying your barbecued goat and a wee glass of Ouzo, and half the Syracusan navy sails past; it's not a good look.

FIGHTING TRIREMES

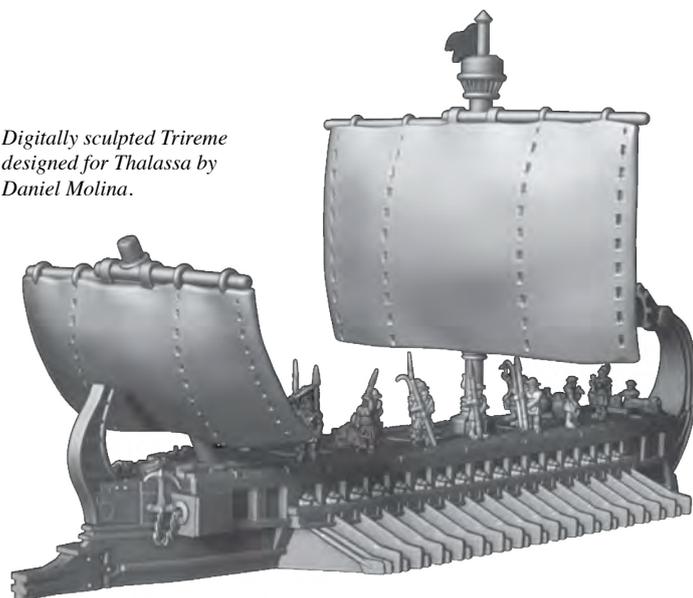
But this is wargaming! We want to see triremes in action so that we can replicate their exploits on the table. With that in mind, let's rummage around in the 5th Century with the two great Greek historians, Herodotus and Thucydides.

THE BATTLE OF LADE, 494 BCE

We begin with the Ionian revolt in the 490s and the massive Persian fleet bearing down on the island of Miletus. We immediately notice the different forces involved; the Phoenicians, Cyprians, Cilicians, and Egyptians constituted 600 ships fighting for Persia, while the Ionian line of battle

consisted of Mylesians (80 ships), the men of Priene (12), Myus (3), Teos (17), the Chians (100), Erythraeans (8), Phocaeans (3), Lesbians (70), and Samians (60) - note, always be wary of Herodotus's numbers, but you get the idea. The massive Persian fleet led to some desertions amongst the Ionians who couldn't hack the training or the numbers ranged against them, though some fought on using the *Diekplous* and boarding tactics. They lost - history isn't usually as romantic as we sometimes like to believe - but that doesn't stop us from trying for a different result with full fleets. An interesting footnote to this battle is that the Ionian commander, Dionysus, fled

Digitally sculpted Trireme designed for Thalassa by Daniel Molina.



with three triremes to Sicily where he became a pirate, preying on Carthaginian, Etruscan, and Pheonician vessels, which raises interesting possibilities for skirmish scenarios.

THE BATTLE OF ARTEMISIUM, 480 BCE

Herodotus adds another couple of wrinkles we can use in our trireme battles. A huge Persian fleet had been having difficulties with summer storms but detached 200 ships down the coast to deal with an advancing but outnumbered Greek fleet. They expected the Greeks to fight them in the morning as was customary because this was usually when the seas and wind were calm. But the Greeks came out to fight late in the day, limiting the length of engagement. The Persians also wanted to use the *Diekplous* tactic, but the Greeks went into an improvised 'hedgehog' formation that probably looked like a convex arc with their sterns close together. The Persians had to ram the Greeks head on but lost 30 ships in the process. Another storm that night almost wrecked the Persian fleet, then Athenian triremes arrived to reinforce the Greeks. On the third day, the Persians decided to hit the Greeks on the beach at Artemisium, but the Greeks came out swinging. A protracted fight followed with the Persians attempting

boarding tactics using heavily armed Egyptian marines who took five Greek triremes, but neither side could break the other's line. That night, the Greeks withdrew under cover of darkness. For this battle, then, we have weather, boarding tactics, time limits, and the understanding that the fight will continue the next day, reducing the wargaming tendency to conduct almost suicidal manoeuvres to 'finish the game'.

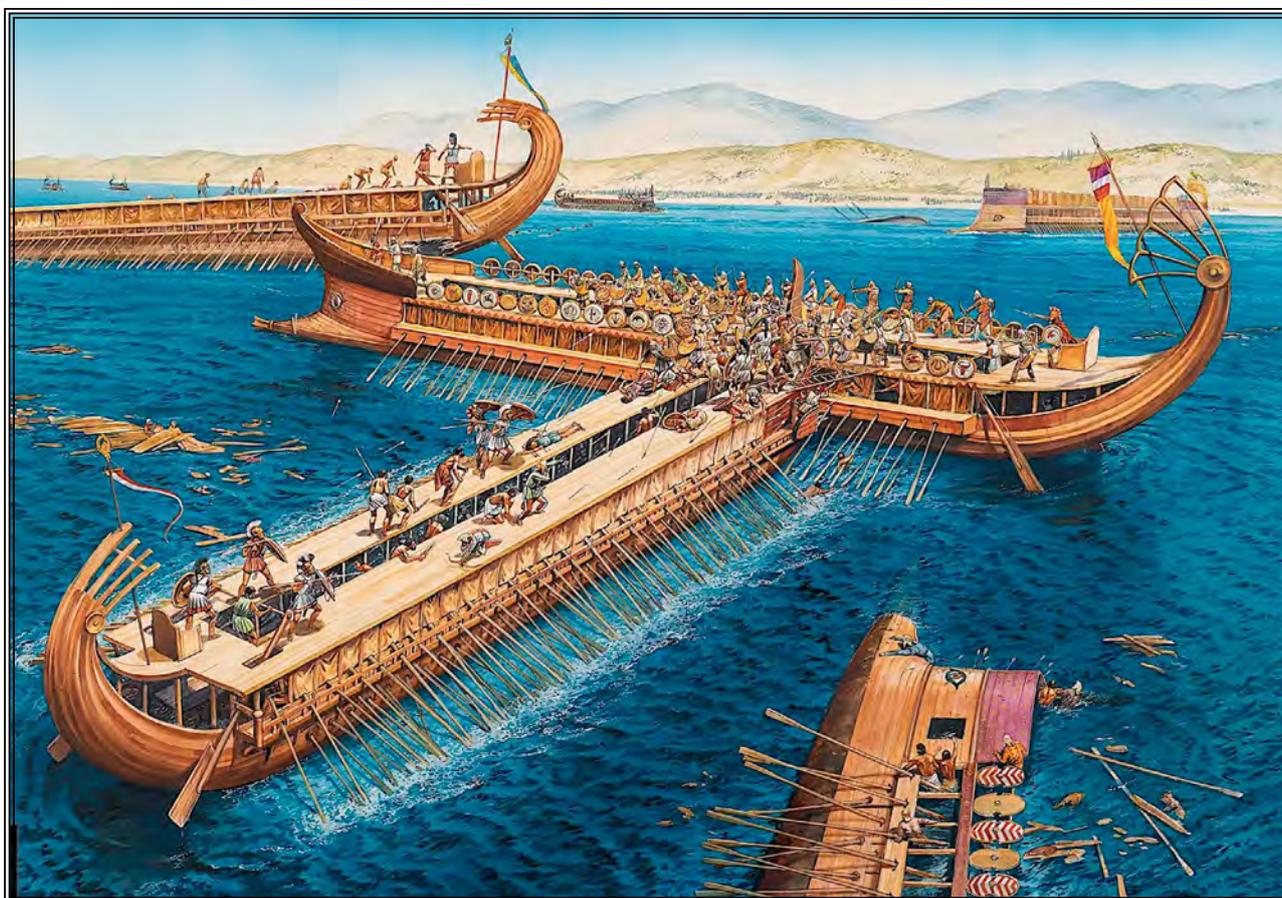
THE BATTLE OF SYBOTA, 433 BCE

Thucydides knew a thing or two about trireme warfare because he commanded a squadron of Athenian triremes in the Peloponnesian War. The caution with him is that he 'roots for the home team', particularly when it comes to downplaying the Corinthian navy. They were one of the combatants with 150 ships at the Battle of Sybota. The other fleet belonged to Corcyra (110 ships) who, along with ten allied Athenian triremes, defended the Sybota islands. The Corinthians turned up in line of battle, prompting the Corcyrans to do the same. The dominant tactic in this battle was boarding, so both fleets were loaded with hoplites, archers, and javelin throwers. The battle swung to the Corinthians on the right wing who chased the Corcyran ships onto the beach then burned them. The Athenians on the other



Above: Figure by Xyston 1:600. Also seen on the previous and next pages.

flank had held back for political reasons but joined the fray when it looked bad for the Corcyrans. That helped enough on the day to just about save the islands, but it was the imminent arrival of 20 more Athenian ships the next day that drove off the Corinthians. The role of politics is a wild card for Peloponnesian War games and would certainly make things interesting if you are fighting hard while wondering why your allied partner is sitting back with his tea and biscuits. The pursuit onto the beach is another wrinkle you could add, particularly if it is a choice between taking a prize or returning to the battle.



From Salamis 480 BC: The naval campaign that saved Greece: No. 222. Artwork by Peter Dennis. © Osprey Publishing Ltd. www.ospreypublishing.com

THE BATTLE OF NAUPACTUS, 429 BCE

Most Greeks acknowledged Athenian naval supremacy at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War, but the Spartans and their allies would still have to deal with them. In 429, in the straits outside the Athenian naval base at Naupactus, the Spartans thought they had seized a golden opportunity. They turned up with 77 ships, hoping to force a fleet of 20 Athenian triremes to defend their base; the idea being that if they could fight the Athenians in the straits that would neutralise their superior manoeuvrability. It nearly worked too. The Athenians crept along the northern coastline accompanied by hoplites on the adjacent beaches. Seeing this, the Spartans arrayed across the strait, attacked cutting off nine of the Athenian ships while 20 elite Spartan ships chased those trying to escape. But those Athenians reached the safety of their port where ten of them formed up in a hedgehog facing the Spartans. The other one, however, swung round an anchored ship and smashed into the side of the leading Spartan, causing panic among the other Spartan ships, some of which had halted to wait for assistance while others simply ran aground. The ten Athenian ships now piled in to the fight and routed the Spartans, capturing six of their ships while retrieving their own. The Spartans fled under cover of darkness. This was a battle where superior morale and coastal knowledge played significant roles in the outcome, and one in which timing was everything.

IN CONCLUSION

This article has surveyed trireme warfare in the pivotal 5th Century to illustrate the many factors to consider when fighting with seemingly quite straightforward point'n'shoot warships. Trireme warfare would continue for centuries, bringing the Hellenistic powers into the mix in the 4th Century, then the Romans and Carthaginians in the 3rd Century. The Romans in particular were slow starters when it came to naval warfare but quickly figured it out as they did with most obstacles to their growing military power. What is clear, however, is that for around 600 years, the trireme ruled the Mediterranean waves, and there is a lot to get your teeth into once you embark on your miniature trireme voyages.



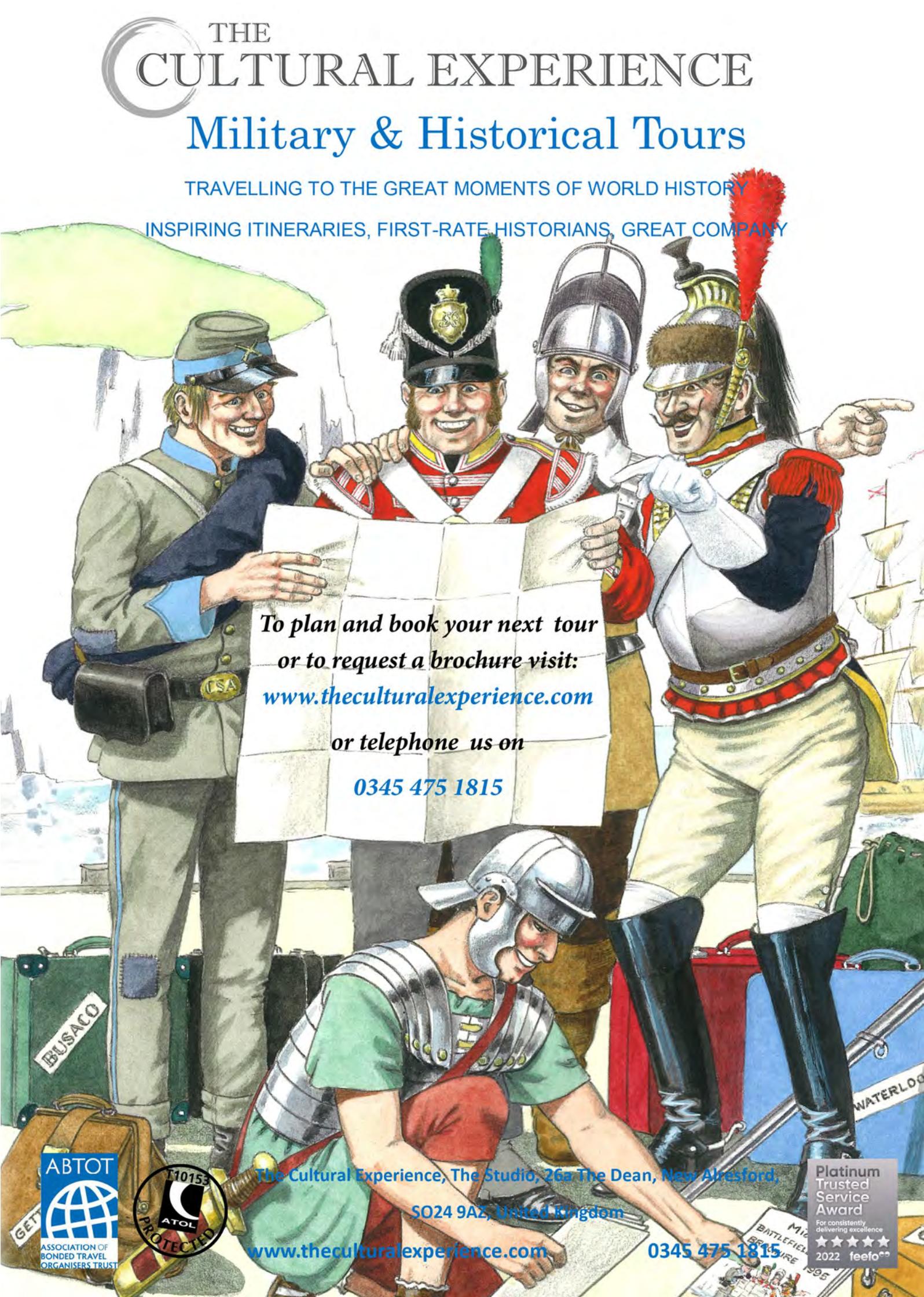
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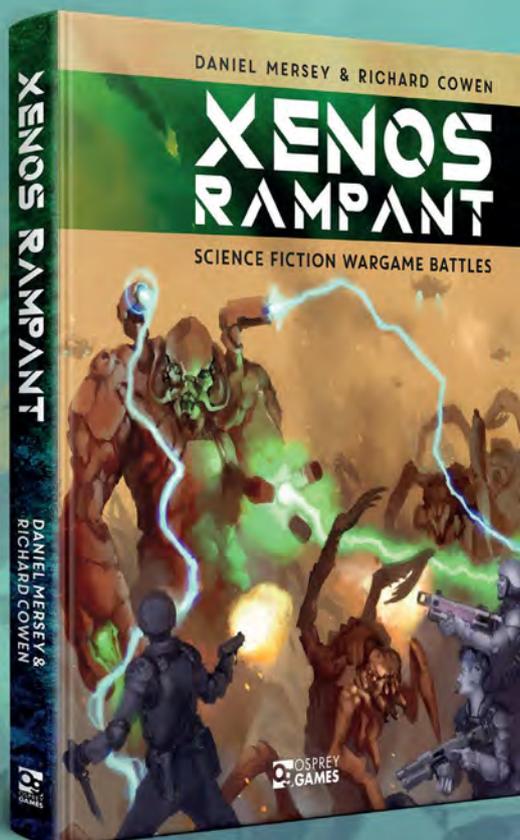
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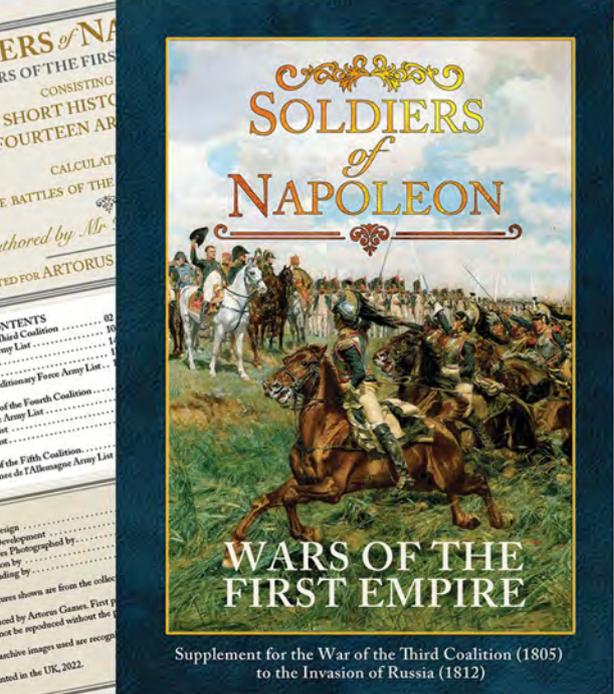
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