

irregular

Winter Issue 2020

magazine

Getting Started
in Team Yankee

Starting
Flames of war

World of Tanks
Art of the Duel

Solo Gaming
Alternative History

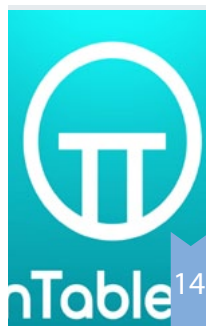
Plus Reviews, and much, much more



22



27



14



31



38

Cover Art; Lothar Dieterich

4 Editorial

A round up of the latest happenings in the gaming world

5 News

A round up of the latest happenings in the gaming world

14 OTT Sale

Wayland Games buys OTT

16 Ed's Challenge

A round up of the Editors quest to paint his grey army

19 Battle School Training

James Goulty looks at British battle training in WW2 & Korea

22 Call of Cthulhu

A look at the new starter set

26 Starting in Flames of War

A look at getting started with FoW

30 Amatuer Armies

Book Review

31 World of Tanks

A look at the new miniatures game from Gale Force 9

34 Ancient Battle Formations

A book review

35 Last DaysZombie Apocalypse

A look at the Zonbie skirmish game from Osprey

37 Bayonet to Barrage

A lbook review

38 The Art of Dueling

A look at using duels in games

41 Leading the Roman Army

Review of the book

42 Is Historical Gaming Dead



[.twitter.com/Irregularmag](https://twitter.com/Irregularmag)



[.facebook.com/irregularmagazine](https://facebook.com/irregularmagazine)



youtube.com/irregularmagazine

The Irregular Team

Editor: Jason Hubbard

Staff Writer: Alex Garbett

Proofing: Irregular Team

Cover Art: Lothar Dieterich

Graphic Design/Layout: Jason Hubbard

Interior Art:

Web Site: Dave Barker

Social Media: Irregular Team

45 Armies of Ancient Greece

Book Review

46 Military History of Late Rome

A book review

47 Delving into Team Yankee

A look at getting started in Team Yankee

50 Leopard 2 Tank

A Book Review

51 LRDG in the Aegean

Book review

52 Tanks Tanks Tanks

Reviews of tanks books

55 Tank Museum at Christmas

A quick look at some of the gifts available from the Tank Museum

57 British Army Starter

A relook at the British for Team Yankee

60 T-34 Tank

A book review

61 Samite War

Abook review

62 Alternative History

A look at the idea of alternative history campaigns

65 The Plymouth Incident

A scenario for A Very British Civil War

67 Waffen SS Starter set

The starter army for Flames of War

70 Painting Romes Northern Enemies

Abook review

71 Painting Tanks Tutorial

A quick and easy way to paint tanks

74 Images of War

Abook review

77 Solo Gaming

A look at solo gaming

82 Powerful Saxon Women

Abook review

61 Zombie World

A Reality's Edge Sceanario

85 Welsh Castles

Winter Issue 2020

Editorial

Jason Hubbard

The pandemic is still with us unfortunately, as I write this the UK is about to go into a second lockdown (As you read this you may or may not be in a lockdown still) and the US is about to go to the polls to vote for a new president. In the world of gaming it's been relatively quiet, though Wayland Games has bought out Beasts of war (On Tabletop) otherwise it's been a rather quiet couple of months.

I've been slowly chugging away at getting as much painted as possible ready for when we're able to attend gaming clubs again and meet up with friends without having to disinfect everything we touch. I must admit all this time we've been stuck indoors has meant I've managed to get a lot of painting done and I've had the time to plough through quite a few books. Two past times I don't normally manage to find a great deal of free time for.

So, Christmas is just around the corner, which for many of us means new shiny in the form of gifts from friends and relatives. I'm expecting this year's festive celebrations to be a little different from normal. One of the items on my list this year is a new storage case/box for all the minis I've managed to paint during 2020. By the end of the year I'm hoping to have two fully finished armies for Flames of War and two finished forces for Team Yankee.

It's been a funny old year, what with shows being cancelled and becoming virtual events, lockdowns and shops being closed. The discovery that as a hobby we can't do without Nuln Oil wash, and we've probably collectively bought more paint and accessories this year than any other year since starting the hobby. Many of us have rediscovered solo gaming, something we weren't expecting to do. Also gaming online via software such as Boardgame Simulator has become a thing, which to be honest is a great way to try a game before buying it.

Let's hope that 2021 is a great improvement on this year, and I'll see you on the other side....

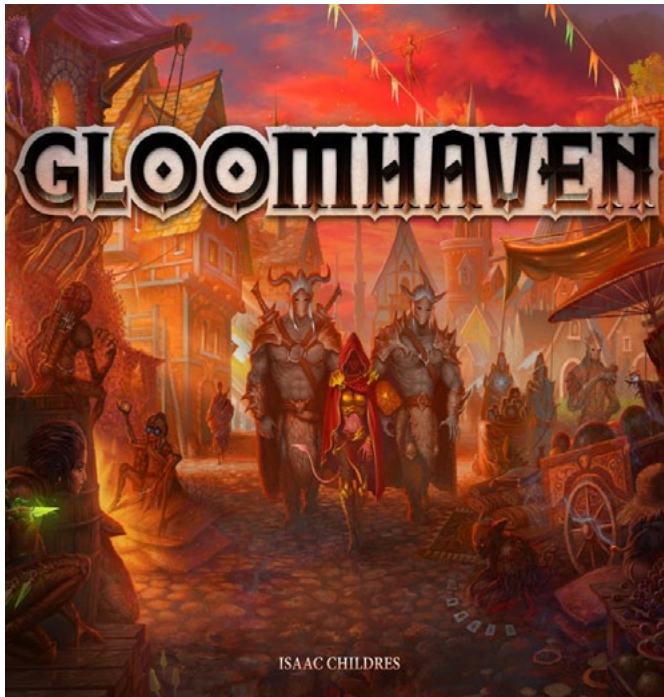
That's all folks have a good Christmas and Great New Year



ACONYTE BOOKS & CEPHALOFAIR COLLABORATE TO PUBLISH "GLOOMHAVEN" NOVELS

Asmodee Entertainment are delighted to announce that Aconyte, the new fiction imprint of global games group Asmodee, has secured a multi-year agreement with Cephalofair Games to create brand new fantasy novels set in the world of their acclaimed GLOOMHAVEN games.

Created by maverick game designer Isaac Childres, Gloomhaven debuted in early 2017 and quickly became recognized as one of the top fantasy games ever – it currently sits at #1 on Boardgamegeek.com's all-time best games chart. Collected together in a massive box stuffed with exquisite plastic miniatures, floorplans, rules, and an intriguing selection of sealed boxes, it offers an unparalleled fantasy gaming experience. Players are a motley selection of mercenaries, drawn into strange events in the town of Gloomhaven,



as dark powers start a move to seize control. Decisions at each stage as the plot unfolds send players down unforeseen paths towards new adventures, as the game builds across many sessions into a deeply involving tabletop campaign.

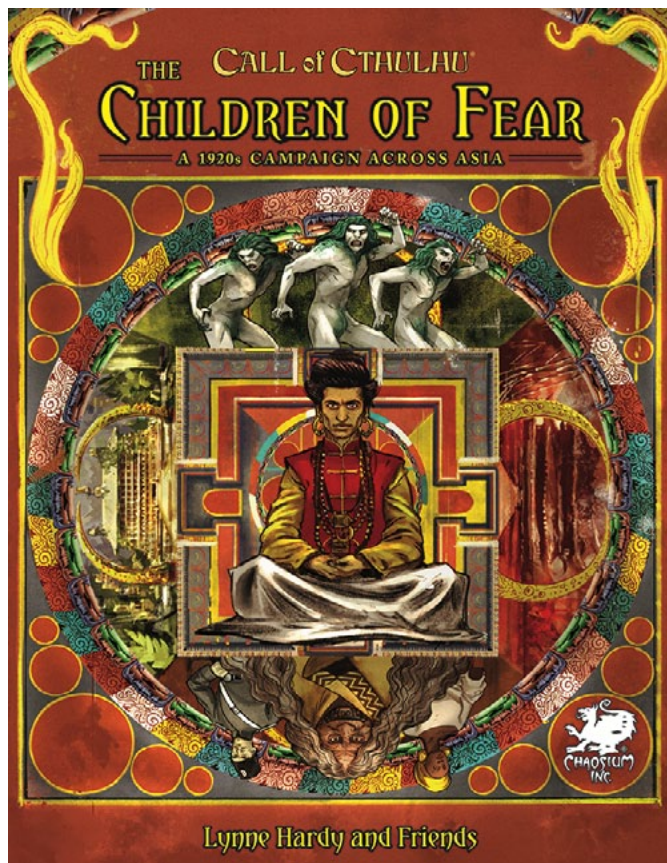
The sequel, Frosthaven, is expected to take players north to a previously unexplored ice-choked outpost in 2021. The game's Kickstarter, run early this year, set a new record, with close to \$13 million pledged by the time it closed. Aconyte plans to publish novels in both the Gloomhaven and Frosthaven settings. The first Gloomhaven novel is expected to hit shops in summer 2021, with further volumes already being planned.

Aconyte publisher Marc Gascoigne commented: "Gloomhaven is one of the most impressive new games, and game worlds, of recent times. The immense success of the Frosthaven launch has pushed interest in this incredible fantasy world to a fever pitch. We can't wait to bring fans new adventures and legends from Gloomhaven and beyond."

Cephalofair's CEO Isaac Childres said: "I am very excited to see experienced writers take on the world of Gloomhaven, and really drill deep into the lore to come up with thematic and engaging stories that are harder to tell in a board game format."

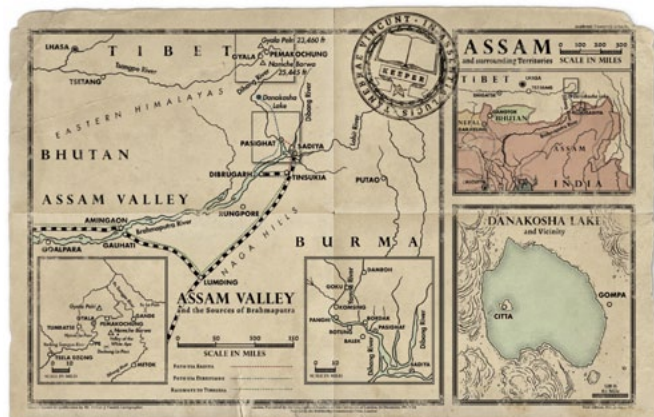
As part of its ambitious mission to set up exciting new content platforms for both wholly owned and top-flight third-party properties, Asmodee Entertainment have recently announced Aconyte's plans to produce novels set in the worlds of some of Asmodee's most popular games and a host of characters from the Marvel comics universe. The imprint's mission is to go beyond tie-in fiction and novelizations, to produce vibrant stories with richly imagined characters in living, deeply realised settings.

Children of Fear



The Children of Fear, Chaosium's epic new multi-part campaign for Call of Cthulhu is now out in PDF! In September 1923, an urgent and mysterious telegram plunges the investigators into an epic journey across China, Central Asia, Northern India, and Tibet.

Often following in the footsteps of the famous Chinese Buddhist monk and explorer Hiuen-Tsiang (immortalized in the fantastical Chinese saga Journey to the West), they must visit looted temples, lost lakes, dusty museums, charnel grounds, venerable monasteries, and hidden secret valleys if they are to succeed in their quest to prevent the King of Fear and his lieutenants from destroying everything they hold dear...



Developed over four years of meticulous research, consultations, and playtesting, Lynne Hardy's The Children of Fear explores myths and legends of Central Asia and Northern India.



A wealth of player hand-outs and maps enhance both the player experience and immersion!

The Children of Fear includes six pre-generated characters so players can jump right into the action. A host of non-player characters, all with their own agendas, accompany new Cthulhu Mythos monsters for use in any Call of Cthulhu scenario.

Critical Role Launches New Publishing Company, Darrington Press

Featuring New Adventures Both In and Outside of the Critical Role-created World of Exandria today, Critical Role embarks on its latest adventure by officially launching its new tabletop game publishing company, Darrington Press, further establishing Critical Role's dedication to the wonder and positivity that comes from storytelling. Darrington Press will feature games in and outside of Exandria, the world created by Darrington Press Creative Advisor, Critical Role's Chief Creative Officer and Game Master, Matthew Mercer.

Leading this new business venture is the the Head of Darrington Press, Ivan Van Norman, who has been producing tabletop games and media content for over 10 years as a co-owner of Hunters Entertainment (Alice is Missing, Altered Carbon, Outbreak: Undead), as well as consultant to many other companies, including Wizards of the Coast and Hersch Games (Taboo). Van Norman has danced the line between media and design, working as a producer of board and RPG content for several digital media projects as well as a game producer on Will Wheaton's "TableTop." In addition, he served as executive producer of International Tabletop Day.

Darrington Press currently has four games set to be released in 2021, with their very first game, Uk'otoa, set for a Q1 2021 release date. This tactical game of semi-cooperative card play will be available in the Critical Role online shops in the US, UK, and AU, as well as hobby stores in the US with an MSRP starting at \$29.99. More on Uk'otoa and the full slate of 2021 titles can be found below.

DARRINGTON PRESS 2021 RELEASES

Uk'otoa - Q1 2021

A battle for life and death on the high Lucidian seas! This flagship title from Darrington Press is a tactical game of semi-cooperative card play as factions of sailors vie to be the last claimed by the raging sea leviathan Uk'otoa. As the ship slowly falls into the ocean, you'll have to run, push, and sacrifice others to win! Fans of Critical Role know Uk'otoa as the expatron of warlock Fjord (played by Travis Willingham). Who could say whether these tales hold any truth? Fjord isn't telling. Uk'otoa is suitable for ages 12+, is meant for 3-5 players and consists of 30-45 minutes of gameplay. Uk'otoa is created by Jeb Havens (Burrrows, Mother Sheep, You Don't Know My Life!), with additional game design by Gabriel Hicks (Roll20, Paizo, Mythic Grove), art by Critter Hannah Friederichs,



N NOT FINAL

Uk'otoa Sculpt by Niklas Norman (Runewars, Imperial Assault, Fallout: The Board Game) and layout by Vee Hendro (Good Society: A Jane Austen RPG, Visigoths vs Mall Goths, and Lost Roads).

Critical Role Adventures - Q2 2021

Embark on your own journey through Exandria with Critical Role Adventures! Play as the upstart adventurers Vox Machina and overcome treacherous challenges. This cooperative legacy-lite campaign game uses a unique, narrative mechanic for social and combat encounters, luring you back session after session. Within this enormous box, you'll find a host of hidden treasures and a rich storybook to guide you through thrilling combat, dynamic character growth, and tales worthy of the name Vox Machina.

Syndicult - Q3 2021

Syndicult is an original modern magic roleplaying game designed by Matthew Mercer in which mob families jealously guard secrets and battle it out for power on the city streets. Featuring a simple storytelling dice mechanic, Syndicult is a low magic world where all bets are off.

Guardians of Matrimonia - Q4 2021

Fight the monsters, save the party! Guardians of Matrimonia is a cooperative card game where players have pre-built decks that are pitted against a deck of monsters (party crashers). If your deck runs out, everyone loses. But if you battle your way through the entire party crusher deck, everyone wins!

Moon Design Publications transfers ownership of the HeroQuest trademark to Hasbro



Moon Design Publications has announced the formal transfer of ownership of the HeroQuest trademark to Hasbro. Moon Design's HeroQuest tabletop roleplaying game line, published by Chaosium, will be re-branded as "Questworlds".

"We know that the old Milton Bradley HeroQuest board game has many devoted fans who would love to see it back in print once again. The transfer of the HeroQuest trademark to Hasbro is a significant step towards that becoming a reality," said Chaosium head of licensing, Michael O'Brien.

The HeroQuest trademark: some background... HeroQuest the boardgame was published by Milton Bradley (a subsidiary of Hasbro) and Games Workshop from 1989 - 1994. The trademark having lapsed, Greg Stafford registered the HeroQuest trademark in 2002 for his HeroQuest tabletop roleplaying game.

Note: in the 1970s, Greg Stafford used the term "heroquest" to describe a transformative journey in which a quester enters the realm of the gods to reenact a myth, returning with gifts or special knowledge, and began designing a roleplaying game exploring those themes. Greg Stafford's HeroQuest tabletop RPG is completely unrelated to the Milton Bradley HeroQuest boardgame.

Moon Design Publications became the licensed publisher of Greg Stafford's HeroQuest RPG in 2006. In 2012 Moon Design Publications purchased the HeroQuest trademark and other related IP from Greg Stafford.

In 2015 Moon Design Publications became part of the ownership of Chaosium Inc. Via Chaosium, Moon Design Publications has continued to publish the

HeroQuest RPG, largely for tabletop roleplaying in Greg Stafford's fantasy world of Glorantha.

In April 2020, Moon Design Publications published the Questworlds System Reference Document (SRD) so independent publishers could use the HeroQuest RPG core rules system for other game worlds and settings.

The sale and transfer of the HeroQuest trademark from Moon Design Publications to Hasbro was completed in July 2020.



What's Next for HeroQuest the Tabletop Roleplaying Game?

The HeroQuest tabletop roleplaying game is being rebranded as Questworlds. The rules themselves will remain unchanged.

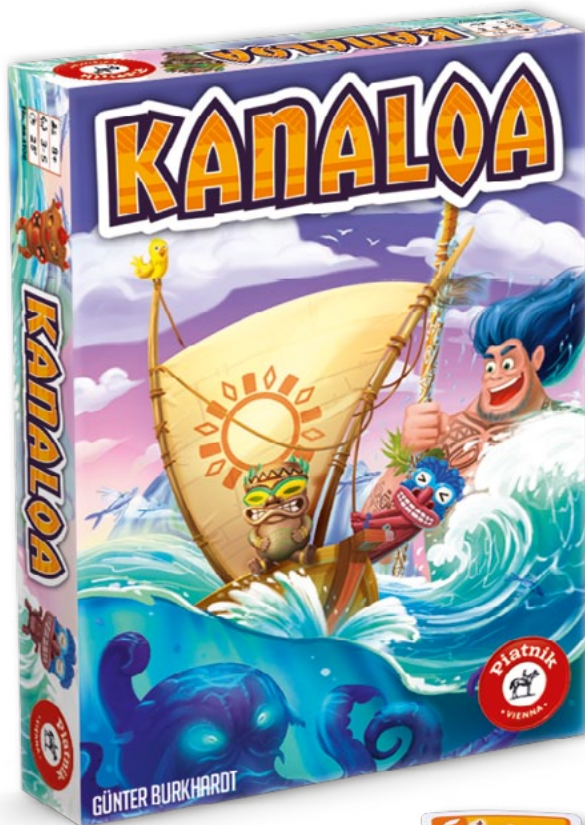
For more about Questworlds, the rules and prep-lite RPG system that facilitates beginning play easily, and resolving conflicts in play quickly, see:

<https://questworlds.chaosium.com>

Over coming months, Chaosium will be rebadging all HeroQuest products.

"We are currently selling off existing printed stocks bearing the HeroQuest mark at a discount. Purchase these print releases while you can! Once these books are taken down from sale they will be out-of-print permanently," said Michael O'Brien.

Piatnik releases Kanaloa



Adventurous card trick game by Piatnik(dup) Aloha! Where is the perfect wave to sail into the sunset? In Hawaii, of course! Three to five adventurers hope for the favor of the four elements in the new, captivating card game from Piatnik. In addition to these tikis, the sailors also need the help of Kanaloa, the god of water, to get to the front with their own sailboat.

Inspired by Polynesian and especially Hawaiian mythology, "Kanaloa" takes the players into a fast-paced competition on the sea, in which the skillful play of the differently colored Tiki cards is in the foreground.

The rules for this are quickly explained and it is already called "Sail set and cast off!" In each round eight tricks are played, which are won by the player with the highest card value or the highest card in the respective trump suit. Since this color changes constantly during the game, none of the sailors should feel on the safe side.

Whoever wins the trick moves his boat forward on the sea cards laid out. Just as a fresh breeze is helpful on every sailing trip, the players at "Kanaloa" also hope for the support of a dolphin,

However, there are also two octopuses hiding in the depths of the sea, and they can appear suddenly. They are the weakest cards in the game and cannot win a trick, but they "swallow" a sea card and are particularly helpful for those who sail behind.

A sea card is also removed at the end of each round - and the sailing route becomes shorter and shorter



Fast-paced combat adds extra fun and thrills. If you take a trick and ultimately make it across the sea with your boat, you are of course somewhat dependent on luck with your cards. In an equally exciting variant of "Kanaloa", a player can therefore announce that he will not win a trick in a round: If he is right, he can even move three spaces forward as a reward. So always full speed ahead!

If you want to play in beforehand, just try it out on the Tabletopia online platform at <https://tabletopia.com/games/kanaloa> !



THE LAST OF US IS COMING TO TABLETOP



CMON fans might already know about our past partnerships with Sony Interactive Entertainment that brought the worlds of Bloodborne and God of War to the tabletop.

We loved working on those games, and it's always a privilege to be given permission to dip our toes into such deeply developed and beloved titles.

We are beyond excited to announce this partnership will continue with another iconic title: The Last of Us: The Board Game.

The Last of Us: The Board Game will be the first-ever board game set in the world of Naughty Dog's critically acclaimed and best-selling video game series, The Last of Us. As long-time fans of the series, we recognize the special place these games hold in the hearts and minds of its many fans.

The heart-stopping suspense of suddenly hearing an unseen clicker behind you; the intensity of a firefight as you desperately try to tell friend from foe; the heart-break of being double crossed and seeing all your plans fall apart; the exhilaration of finding a safe place to rest and surviving just one more day even though all the odds were against you.

The Last of Us is a series that provides a deep, emotional experience combined with endless thrills and excitement

Remembering the impact The Last of Us had on me when I first experienced it years ago, and then being completely stunned by The Last of Us Part II, I knew this was a narrative experience we wanted to bring to the board gaming table," says Geoff Skinner, VP of Entertainment and Head of Licensing at CMON.

"We are honored to have the chance to translate a modern classic of the video game industry into a unique and compelling board game experience. The Last of Us is a series that many of us at CMON have followed from its inception and we are eager to adapt the stirring character-driven player experience to tabletop, letting fans explore the world and story in a entirely new way."

A NIGHT LIKE NO OTHER: ZOMBICIDE; NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD

Ashes to ashes. Dust to dust. Unfortunately, those recently laid to rest are not staying within the Earth's crust. The dead are rising from their graves and there's only one thing on their rotting minds: to consume the flesh of the living. These ghoulish monsters are what the harrowed Survivors must face off against in George A. Romero's horror classic, *Night of the Living Dead*.



Soon, fans of another popular undead franchise, *Zombicide*, will be able to place themselves in the shoes of the classic characters from the film in *Night of the Living Dead: A Zombicide Game*. This stand-alone expansion to the board game franchise hits store shelves on October 30th, just in time for any Halloween gaming sessions you might have planned.

Night of the Living Dead: A Zombicide Game has several new mechanics that set it apart from other entries in the franchise. First, there's the dual nature of the Survivors. These characters, taken directly from the classic film, have double-sided character ID cards. One side is Romero Mode, representing the characters as they huddle together in fear, unsure of what's happening around them.

The other side is Zombicide Mode, where the characters realize that only by acting against the ghouls will they be able to survive the night. Survivors may start to think they're big and badass after cutting a swath through the undead in Zombicide mode but, encountering a former loved one now shambling among the hordes of walking dead can quickly remind them how

bleak their outlook truly is and revert them to the grim survival of Romero mode. Characters will continue to flip back and forth between these two modes as they progress through the scenarios that make up *Night of the Living Dead: A Zombicide Game*.

The game's scenarios also recreate scenes from the film, letting players work their way through the film's plot. For example, the game begins with the Survivors unsure of what is going on as the ghouls descend upon the house, forcing those still alive to barricade themselves in. Then, they must look to find a way to run the fuel pump and procure a means of escape. What will they find if and when they finally escape into the city?



The farmhouse from the movie, as well as the surrounding countryside have been lovingly recreated on the modular game tiles. Much painstaking detail went into making the tiles as accurate to the film as possible while still making for a playable space. The figures, too, were sculpted to accurately recreate both the Survivors and ghouls from the movie, bringing them right to your tabletop.

Night of the Living Dead: A Zombicide Game is the perfect game for a dark Halloween night. Fans of the film will appreciate the level of detail that went into recreating the movie on gamer's tables. Fans of the *Zombicide* series will find all-new challenges as they learn to deal with the alternating Modes and the limited resources in the farmhouse.

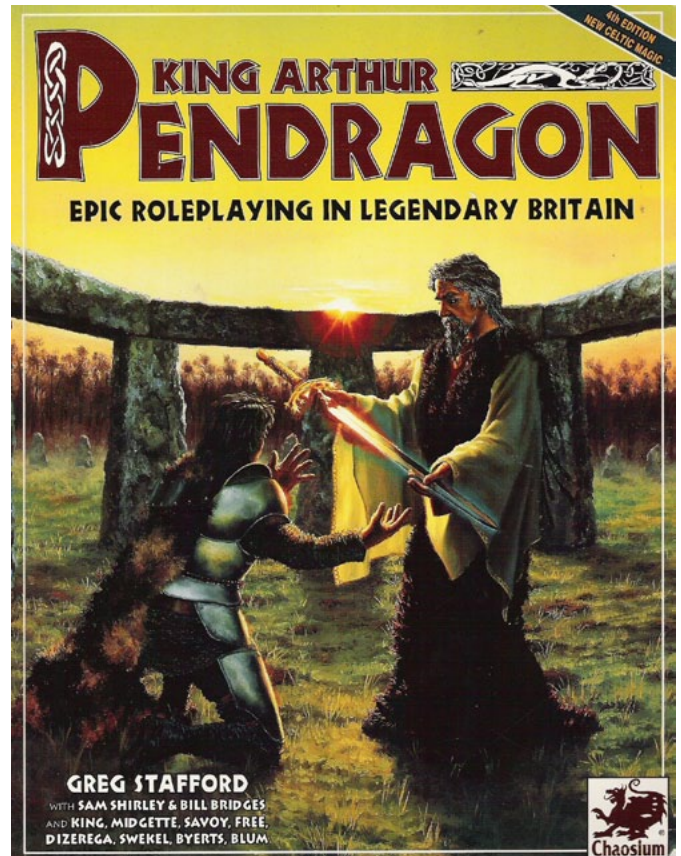
Adventure of the Great Hunt



The Adventure of the Great Hunt

Chaosium marks the second anniversary of the passing of Greg Stafford, the company founder and its original creative visionary. With the hashtag #WeAreAllUs, we commemorate Greg as one of the greatest game designers of all time; winner of too many awards to count; and a friend, mentor, guide, and inspiration to generations of gamers.

While Greg Stafford's influence on the universe of tabletop gaming is beyond measure, he considered the King Arthur Pendragon RPG his masterpiece. And this year for #WeAreAllUs, we salute Greg's magnum opus with a free sneak peak of the 6th Edition core rules and an accompanying scenario, The Adventure of the Great Hunt, originally outlined by Greg way back in 1991 and presented here in print for the first time.

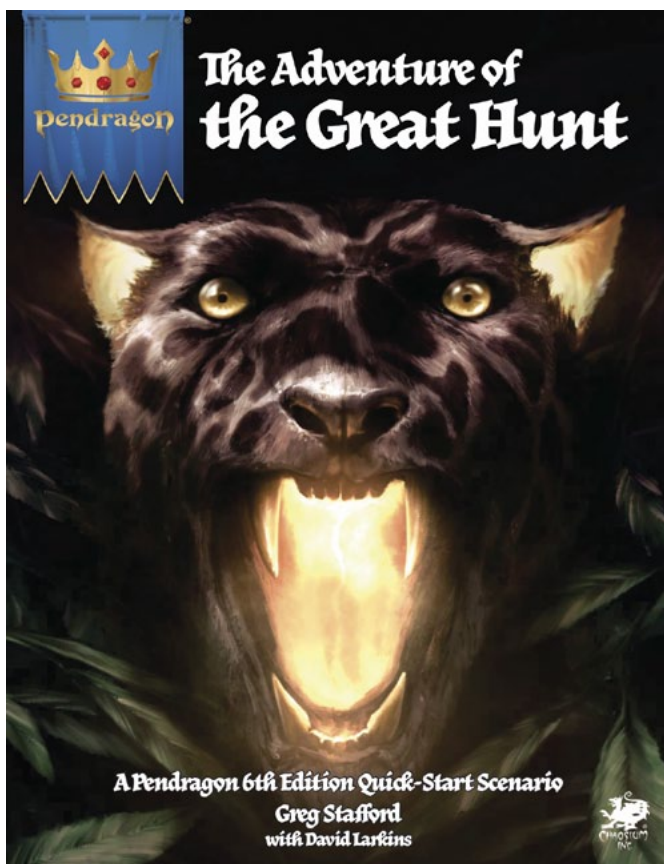


Greg started work on the new edition ten years ago. Since that time, it has gone through multiple development phases and is at last nearly ready for its public debut. He called this, and always intended it to be, his "ultimate edition" and we are proud to see it finally coming to fruition.

"Pendragon veterans will find that the fundamentals of the game remain the same, with subtle modifications reflecting the culmination of nearly three decades' refinement of Greg's vision of Arthurian fantasy", said Pendragon line editor David Larkins.

For newcomers to Pendragon, everything you need to experience the Pendragon system is here in The Adventure of the Great Hunt: the core rules, a scenario playable in a single session, and six pre-generated characters.

Download The Adventure of the Great Hunt [free here](#).



Gladiators expansion announced for Rome & Roll



PSC Games has announced the Gladiators expansion for this year's unique heavy euro-styled roll and write game Rome & Roll. Coming to Kickstarter in early 2021, the expansion is designed by the original design team of Dávid Turczi and Nick Shaw.

As in the core game, players find themselves rebuilding the city of Rome following the great fire of 64 AD, but now they must also meet the public demands for entertainment! Emperor Nero tasks players with sponsoring games in the Colosseum, where gladiators will engage in thrilling battles for the enjoyment of the crowds.

Players will now be able to build Ludi, where gladiators can be trained in one of the two competing schools, and Arenas where they can practice. They will then assign the gladiators to the Colosseum to fight!

"Our aim with the Gladiators expansion was to enhance the combos that made the core game kick, and push them to eleven!" says designer Dávid Turczi.

Gladiators adds a wealth of content to the strategic roll and write game. The expansion adds a new Colosseum sideboard, gladiator dice, new shared advisors, a neutral foreman, and new Blueprints, God's Favour, and Nero's Bonus cards.

The expansion also introduces a fifth asymmetric character class - the Rudiarius - a retired gladiator who has earned freedom. A veteran of the Colosseum, the Rudiarius can call in favours with his old masters to get ahead.

"One of the exciting things about the Rudiarius is his advisors," says designer Nick Shaw. "They allow the player to manipulate and take advantage of some of the new elements from the expansion, including the iron resource, shared advisors, and the gladiatorial buildings."

The expansion is also compatible with the well-received solo mode for Rome & Roll, which received The Dice Tower Seal of Approval™.

"We have an exciting slate of projects planned for 2021," says Will Townshend, managing director of PSC Games. "We're really excited to kick things off with more content for Dávid and Nick's unique take on the roll and write genre."

Rome & Roll is now available through retail channels and from the publisher, having been delivered to backers this spring. It has received praise from players due to its positive player interaction and ease of set-up and teardown due to its minimal components.



Wayland Games buys On Table Top, lock stock and barrel

Jason Hubbard

In mid-October Warren unexpectedly announced that OTT (Beasts of War) had been purchased by Wayland Games. That both himself and Lloyd had made the decision to sell one of the internet largest content sites for tabletop gaming to Wayland.

In the initial statement Warren stated that as part of the sale agreement with Wayland that they would stay in charge of OTT, and that there would be no staff changes.

This obviously has caused a little stir in the community, with some like myself ok with the sale, as I can see and understand why they sold up. Yet other members of the hobby community have a less enthused opinion of the sale. Many of those who are unhappy with the new change of hands are not happy that Wayland are the new owners. Most of this concern is because they have had issues when dealing with Wayland's retail arm.



Now, myself I've only purchased the odd item from Wayland in the past and have never experienced any of the problems that others have. So, I asked a couple of people I know that have purchased items from the site on a regular basis if they've had any issues. Both told me that there had been some problems but they were the typical types of issues that crop up when

buying on-line. Both also stated that those issues were dealt with promptly and that they were not put off buying from them. Yet I also know of others who've encountered what could only be described as poor customer service. So many of those who had reservations about Wayland taking over OTT it was because of this poor reputation the company has in some circles of the hobby.

Some of the reasons for selling OTT had been prompted by the events of this year. It had highlighted to the OTT management that they could encounter risks that they may not be able to deal with. Also, that selling would bring opportunities that would not be available to them. The sale would allow the site to grow and develop by having the organization and finance behind them from Wayland.



It would mean that some of the ideas the OTT team had for the site could be put into production. We can see the advantages that this deal will bring to On Table Top, such as commercial management structure, new additional financial backing and this provides some additional security for the team. Yet, what do Wayland get out of the deal, well for starters they get one of the biggest table top gaming content sites on the net, they also get an experienced team, a built on community and an in-house design and content team rather than having to build one from scratch.

Wayland also owns Warcradle a game design company, so they now have a content team to develop promotional and marketing material to help promote Warcradles products. OTT also comes with a ready-made community to market those products to as well. Long term this is a massive saving for Wayland, as it would be highly expensive to build and develop a team to produce content. Then they would have the issues around trying to grow a community to consume that content, with purchasing OTT they have it all in one hit.



So, the next question is, will there be any changes to OTT? Well the simple answer is no not immediately.

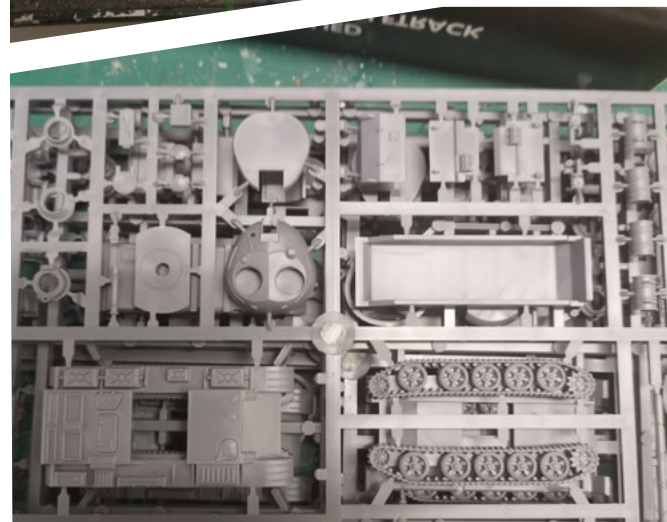
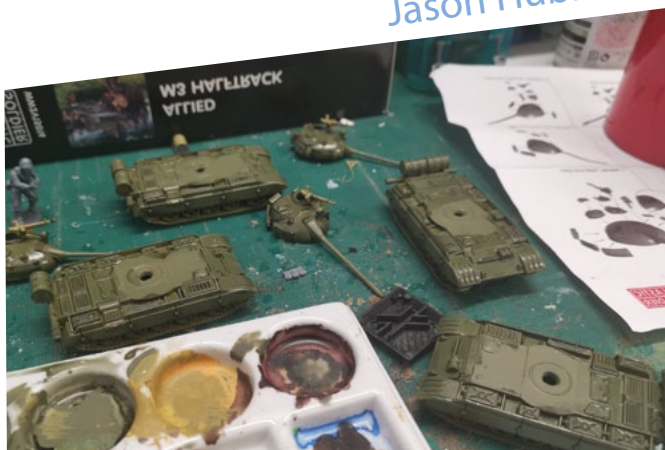
It would not be in Waylands interest to come in and make radical changes as this would automatically alienate a large proportion of the community. There will most likely to be changes at some point in the future because as new owners Wayland will want to have an input into the site, and make their mark on it but I suspect these changes will be done slowly and incrementally so that it's hardly noticed by the community and they accept those changes.

Other changes will most likely be new content, and new features on the site that Warren and the team have been planning for some time. These changes are now probably going to arrive on the site in a quicker time period than they were planned prior to the sale. The reason for this will be because the financial side to implement those changes are more likely to be in place, and having a management team to run the business side will free up the OTT team to implement those changes quicker, as they're not bogged down with day to day running of the business. They're now free to produce content at a quicker pace.



Ed's Challenge

Jason Hubbard



Since the last issue I've slowed my painting down a touch. This is because I've had to occupy my time since lockdown ended to finding a new job, as the company I was working for made a mass of redundancies and I was unfortunately one of them. This means I'm spending more time on job hunting and less on painting as a result. I did enjoy the opportunity to have the free time during lockdown and being furloughed to paint some miniatures and boy did I managed to get a fair few finished.



So, during the last few months I've managed to finally finish all the Walking Dead miniatures I currently have. All I need to start now are all the Walking Dead Sanctuary board game miniatures I have. Though the only difference between them is the fact that Mantic's Walking Dead minis are based on the comics whilst the Sanctuary are based on the TV series.

I got busy painting up vehicles for both Team Yankee and Flames of War. For Team Yankee I built and painted five T-55 tanks from Plastic Soldier Company. For these I opted for a simple paint scheme as this would be fast and easy to do.

So, I used Vallejo's Russian Uniform Green and a Military Shader wash by Army Painter.

For Flames of War I managed to pick up some US Half-tacks by PSC, as I plan to add an infantry company to the US army. Again, I used the same paint scheme as I did with the T-55's.



I also managed to get a few miniatures painted for Bolt Action, and when I say a few I really mean a few. I painted a few for the US army that included a Stoessi Heroes miniature which is a private, but I plan to use him as a colonel and commander of the army.



Alongside this I also got around to paint some Brits for my desert war army, which included an anti-tank unit and a small mortar team and a bren gunner.



On top of all that I finally got around to painting the Skaven Blood Bowl team which has been sat on the shelf for the last two years. I decided to base the colour scheme on an old XFL American football team.



This was a simple paint scheme which made getting this team painted and finished quite quickly. I always recommend making your palette very simple especially when painting units as this will speed things up and make life a lot easier.



This was a simple paint scheme which made getting this team painted and finished quite quickly. I always recommend making your palette very simple especially when painting units as this will speed things up and make life a lot easier.



One thing I managed to do which I haven't done for a while is paint a large-scale miniature. I painted a 70mm modern dwarf.

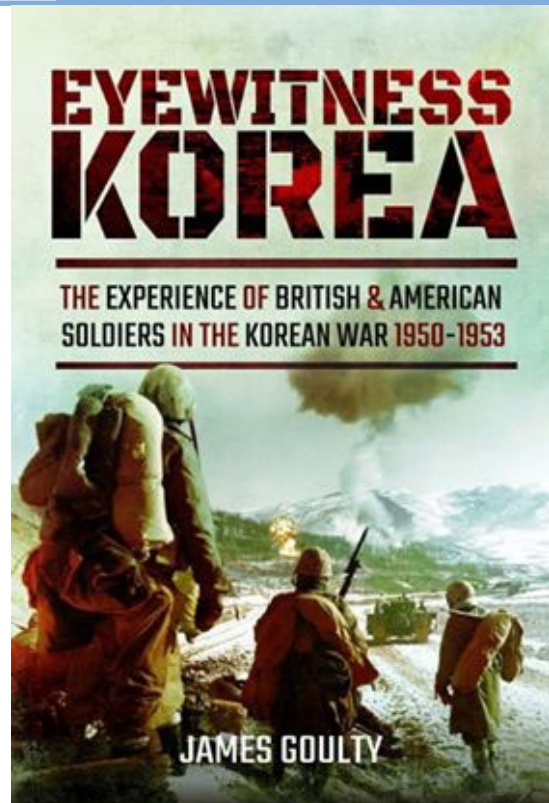
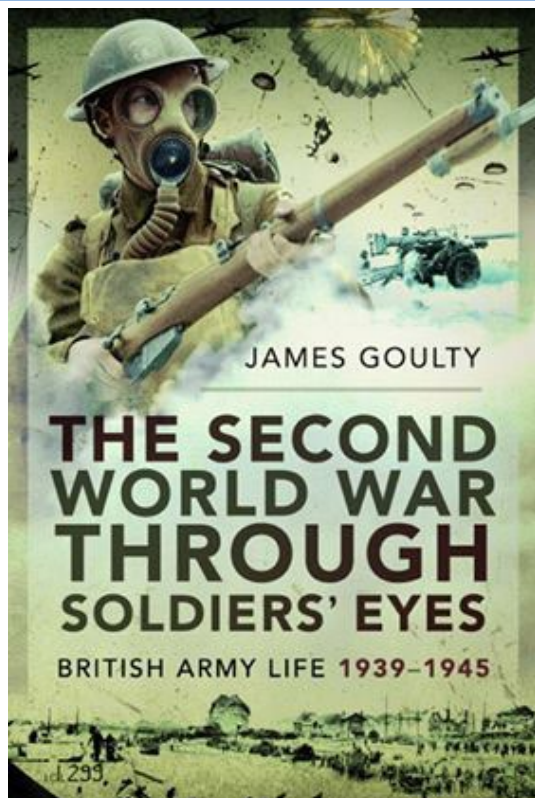


I found this quite a challenge as it's been awhile since I painted anything above 28mm, though I enjoyed the process it was a challenge jumping from 28 up to 70mm. Once I finished the miniature, I decided to make a start on another, though this time I decided to paint a 54mm US Infantry soldier in Vietnam.



On top of all this I painted some miniatures for a few other projects that included a couple for Test of Honour, a couple of 40k minis along with two for SPQR.





Battle School Training & the British Army c. 1940-1953

James Goulty

*As a military historian/author, the experiences of ordinary servicemen and women during the world wars and Korean War are of special interest. My books *The Second World War Through Soldiers' Eyes* and *Eyewitness Korea* (published by Pen and Sword) discuss what it was like for troops during these conflicts. Both comprise thematically based chapters dealing with crucial issues, such as: mobilisation and training; combat experience; how soldiers coped with active service; POW life; casualties and medical provision; discipline and morale; plus, conditions on demobilisation.*

One challenge facing the British Army during the both the Second World War and Korean War was instituting effective, realistic combat training.

This had resonance given that during both wars increasing reliance was placed on conscripts, who did



not automatically have the necessary martial skills or aptitude to tackle the enemy.

Battle drill was introduced during the Second World War to teach minor tactics, and initially used on the parade ground. It trained soldiers to react quickly and correctly when under fire. Swiftly every action that

could be was packaged as a drill and taught as such. There were drills for how to advance; reacting to enemy fire; mounting an assault; breaching obstacles; co-operating with tanks; patrolling, and even on how to issue orders. These aimed to simplify procedures, speed up troop's reactions, and ensured all personnel were taught a common procedure. For infantry fire and movement was essential, so that if one section from a platoon was advancing, the other two would provide covering fire.

Battle schools were established at divisional level and helped teach battle drill. Typically, these employed realistic conditions that replicated the physical and mental demands of war. Live fire (battle inoculation) helped counter the fears of inexperienced troops by using machine-guns to fire live rounds on a fixed line over their heads, thus providing the sensation of



coming under fire. Trainees were made to jump into deep water or run through burning houses. Similarly, they soon learnt that hedges were best tackled by charging through them, rather than being cautious, as this resulted in fewer injuries. Crossing barbed wire obstacles were done using a 'human bridge,' whereby one man flung himself over the wire for others to cross. Additionally, there were challenging assault courses, and cross-country runs, often carrying much equipment.

Such training clearly had inherent risks, and it was accepted that casualties might occur. Efforts were also made by instructors to foster hatred of the enemy by bawling at trainees, although some found this childish. Initially animal blood was even liberally thrown around on exercises, to replicate the horrors of the battlefield, but the practice was rapidly deemed ineffective and discontinued.

Critics of battle drill claimed it risked producing stereotyped tactics. Notably, one platoon commander maintained that had he slavishly adhered to the drills he'd been taught in training, his platoon wouldn't have survived. Yet, there was a need for the sensible application of battle drills, rather than employing



them unthinkingly. Other soldiers welcomed battle school training, only too aware that they might soon be pitted against the battle hardened Germans or Japanese.

During the post-war period, battle drill was re-branded as battle craft, which entailed routine movements carried out on a command or signal, and employed tactically by sub-units in close contact with the enemy. Likewise, battle schools were to form part of reinforcement and holding units normally authorized only in wartime. On 25 June 1950 North Korea invaded South Korea, and rapidly the UN asked its member states to assist in restoring international peace and security in the region. By late 1950 ground troops from several nations, including Britain, were deployed. Initially much of the fighting was confused, which coupled with the hilly terrain and inadequate infrastructure proved awkward for Western troops. Experienced British soldiers, who'd previously encountered the Japanese during 1942-45, felt that the North Koreans were similar, because in attack they favoured suicidal close range charges under a shower of hand grenades, and could be equally fanatical in defence.

Subsequently, British troops confronted the Chinese, who proved adept at handling heavy weapons, good at fieldcraft, and were prepared to employ mass infantry attacks, seemingly regardless of casualties. By mid-1951 mobile warfare had given way to positional warfare broadly along the 38th Parallel, and ultimately conditions bogged down in static warfare that resembled the Western Front during the First World War.

Simultaneously, peace negotiations made faltering progress until the eventual July 1953 ceasefire. Early in the war, Number 1 Battle Training Team was shipped to Korea, tasked with training personnel from the two British infantry brigades then in theatre. It was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel (later Brigadier) M. R. Lonsdale DSO, OBE, a determined soldier with a rather unorthodox outlook. He became well-known for his ribald addresses to trainees, carried a large stick that acted like a badge of rank, and would be used to hit

anyone who made a mistake. In May 1951 the team moved to Hara Mura, Japan, to form an operational battle school. The scope of training expanded to incorporate instruction on machine-guns, mortars, plus courses for assault pioneers, signallers, and Royal Armoured Corps and Royal Engineer personnel. Infantry were introduced to unfamiliar weapons, notably the American 3.5-inch Rocket Launcher, and would go on to fight with 1st Commonwealth Division in Korea.

Training became integrated with that of Australians and Canadians, leading to competitive rivalry between the troops from the different nations. The primary aim was to provide drafts of infantry reinforcements with intensive training in weapon handling and firing, fieldcraft and patrolling, battle inoculation and night warfare, all skills directly relevant to the frontline in Korea. As the war progressed, soldiers were posted as instructors to the school who had direct frontline experience. Training was deliberately physically demanding, frenetic and realistic, which aimed to save lives once troops were committed to battle.

Many courses entailed a gruelling 20-mile route march covering the territory between Hara Mura and the reinforcement holding unit in Kure. There was less of the bull common to many postings, something British trainees welcomed, and attributed to the presence of Commonwealth troops, with their more relaxed discipline.



Despite this, snap inspections occurred, so troops learnt the value of caring for their weapons, equipment and ammunition, even using short breaks on route marches to swiftly clean their rifles.

Practicing a fighting patrol often consisted of a dash over open ground, littered with obstacles, in order to destroy an enemy bunker. Troops would then race back to the start line and were timed to see who was quickest. Trainees tended to receive short, punchy lectures in the field followed by demonstrations such as 'the platoon in the attack.' Deliberate errors were fed into these, so that trainees had to identify what was wrong, and explain why this was so.

The 'pepper pot' attack provides a good example of the sort of battle craft taught at the school that had relevance in the hills of Korea. It relied on fire and movement but required skill and practice to perfect. While some men dashed forward, others gave them covering fire, before they advanced under the covering fire from those in front. To the enemy this could appear confusing, as he was presented with no good targets and couldn't easily estimate the number of soldiers opposing him.

The use of live ammunition and explosives clearly risked casualties, and one of the graves at the military cemetery at Pusan belongs to a young soldier who was tragically accidentally killed at Hara Mura.

However, as with any competent military organisation, such incidents were kept to a minimum. Under Lonsdale's successor, Lieutenant-Colonel Pat Douglas MC (Black Watch), safety precautions were tightened-up. By June 1953, around 23,500 soldiers of all ranks had passed through the battle school. It's difficult to assess its overall impact, given it dealt exclusively with reinforcements rather than entire units, but like the battle schools of the Second World War, it certainly, ensured that many troops went into action better prepared than they might otherwise have been without such training.

Call of Cthulhu

Beginners Box Set

Jason Hubbard


This Starter Box contains everything you need to start playing Call of Cthulhu the tabletop roleplaying game of mystery and horror. This game is probably the definitive horror RPG of any generation since the 80's and has won several awards over the years.

I have played this game as a teen and an adult. It is one of those RPG's you'll want to keep returning to, and I like the fact that your character levels up through skills rather than experience. Though the most fun aspect of this game is trying to keep your character from going insane from the crazy weird supernatural stuff they will encounter.



Players take on the role of investigators of mysteries, uncovering dark secrets, encountering strange monsters, and thwarting sinister cults. Together, you and your friends create and develop a story in which each



1920S ERA INVESTIGATOR		CHARACTERISTICS													
Name	Jessie Williams	STR	70	35	14	DEX	40	20	8	INT	60	30	12		
Player		CCN	80	40	16	APP	50	25	10	POW	50	25	10		
Occupation	History Student	SIZ	50	25	10	EDU	60	30	12	Move	8				
Age	20	Sex	Female												
Residence	Arkham														
Birthplace	Boston														
Major Wound	13	Temp. Insane	50												
HP	100	Sanity	10												
LUCK	08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99	Out of Luck	01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99												
INVESTIGATOR SKILLS															
<input type="checkbox"/> Accounting (+5%) <input type="checkbox"/> Fast Talk (+5%) <input type="checkbox"/> Law (+5%) <input type="checkbox"/> Science (+10%)															

of your characters plays a leading role, which could be foiling some dastardly plot or stopping horrors from beyond space and time! Roleplaying gaming is a social pastime. Everyone works together in a team, each playing an investigator character.

One player runs the game the Keeper of Arcane Lore who referees the game and presents the story and adventure plots to the other players. Think of it a bit like acting in a drama, but where there isn't a script. Dice and the rules of the game determine the success or failure for your character's actions all while you are propelled into dramatic and nerve-tingling situations!

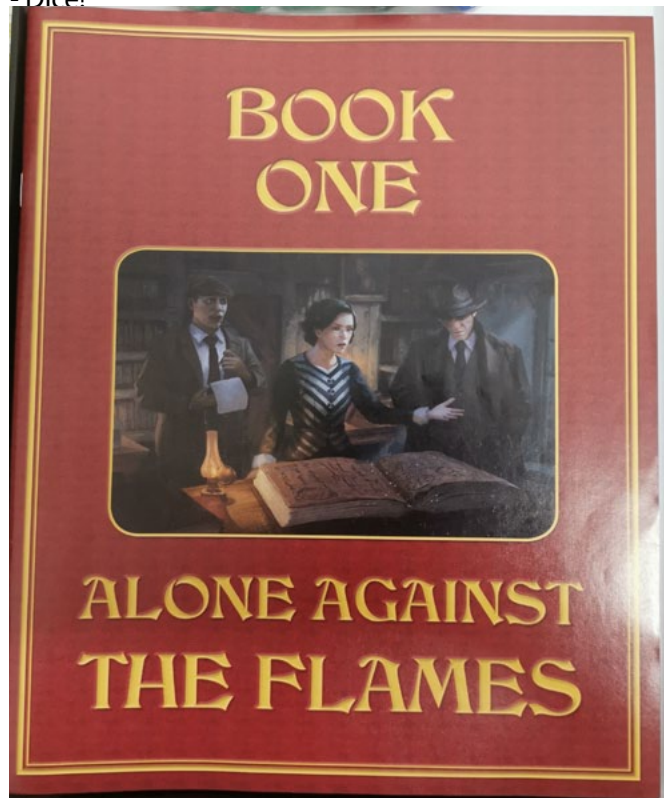
The emphasis is on having fun.

Included in the box

- Modified Call of Cthulhu (CoC) 7th Edition Quick

Start Rules

- Alone Against The Flames - A solo adventure
- Three additional scenarios to play with one or more other players
- Blank Character Sheets
- Pre-generated Character Sheets, in colour
- A handout booklet for the three scenarios
- Dice!



Book One - Alone Against the Flames

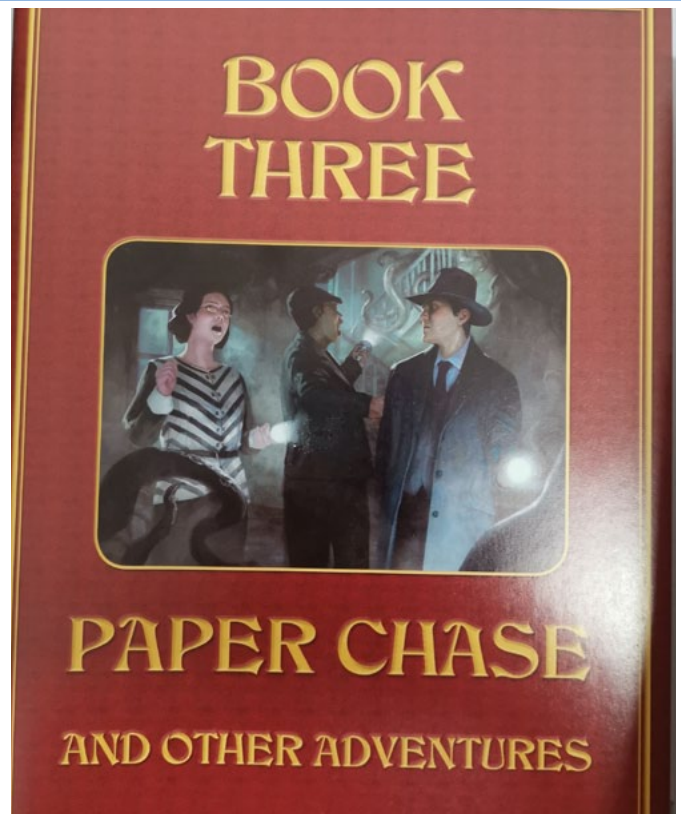
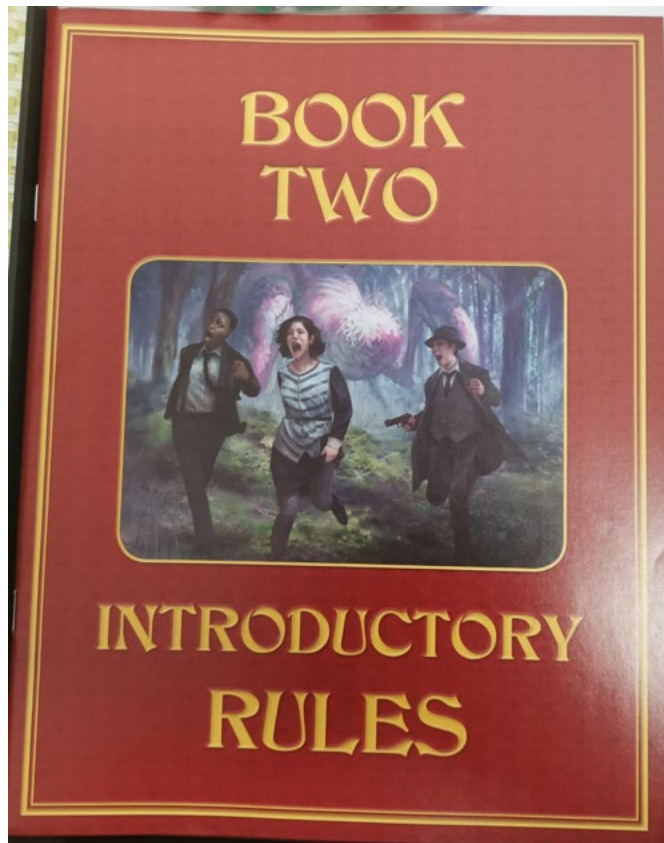
This is a solo game book where you play the main character and proceed through a trip to Arkham. Decisions you make during play will affect your story ending for better or worse. Players will also need Book Two - The Rules, to reference during play.

This plays really quickly, and if you've played games books such as Fighting Fantasy then you'll be familiar with this format. You make decisions that progresses your character along in the story, until you reach a conclusion such as survive and escape the strange village as I did, or you could end up dead as a possibility.



Book Two - Introductory Rules

This rulebook is a modified version of the CoC 7th Edition Quick start Rules. Here you will learn about the making a character, the rule system, and where to go after reading this book. This is easy to read and understand, the rules are explained in such a way as it makes them easy to grasp.



Yet, if you've never GMed a game before but fancy giving it a go then this will be a great starting point regardless if you're experienced or not. I've played CoC before in the past but hadn't GMed a game so for me it was a great starting point with some players who'd never experienced role playing before. I found it an excellent set to guide my newbies along on their first adventures in this RPG, the handouts worked really well, and the players enjoyed using them.

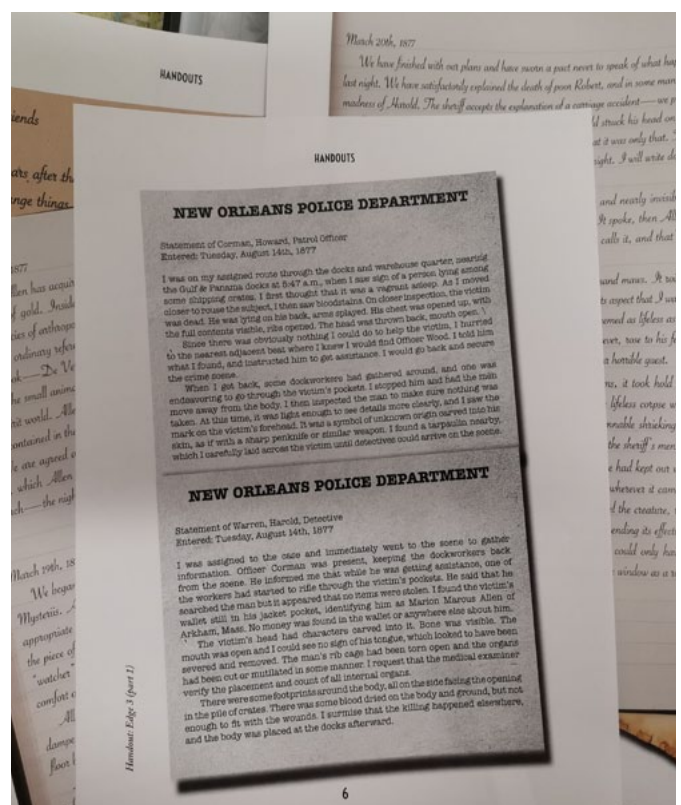
Book Three - Paper Chase and Other Adventures
We now come to meat of this starter box the three scenarios, which are as follows:

Paper Chase - A One on One scenario meant to be played between two people.

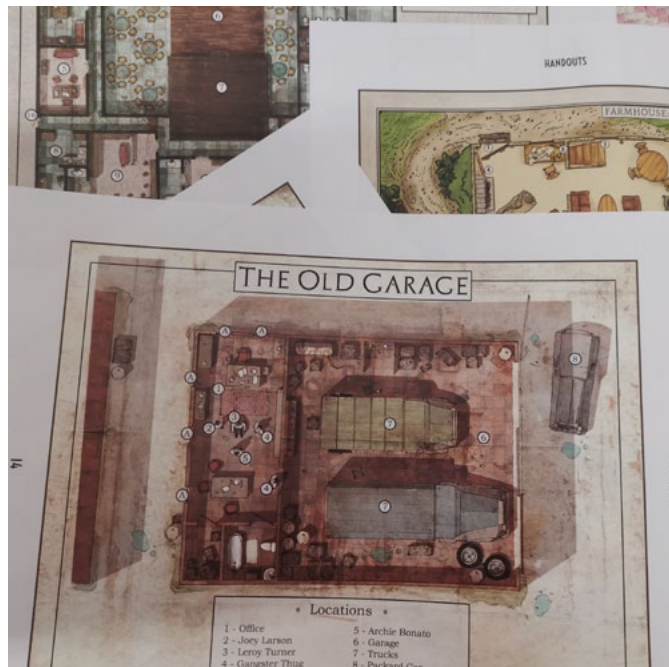
Edge of Darkness - A scenario for a party of 2-5 investigators, includes several handouts and detailed info on the Mythos which will be a great way to introduce the setting to new players.

Dead Man Stomp - This is a more advanced scenario for a group of 2-5 investigators which will drop them into the Cthulhu period of the 1920's and the location of Harlem, New York.

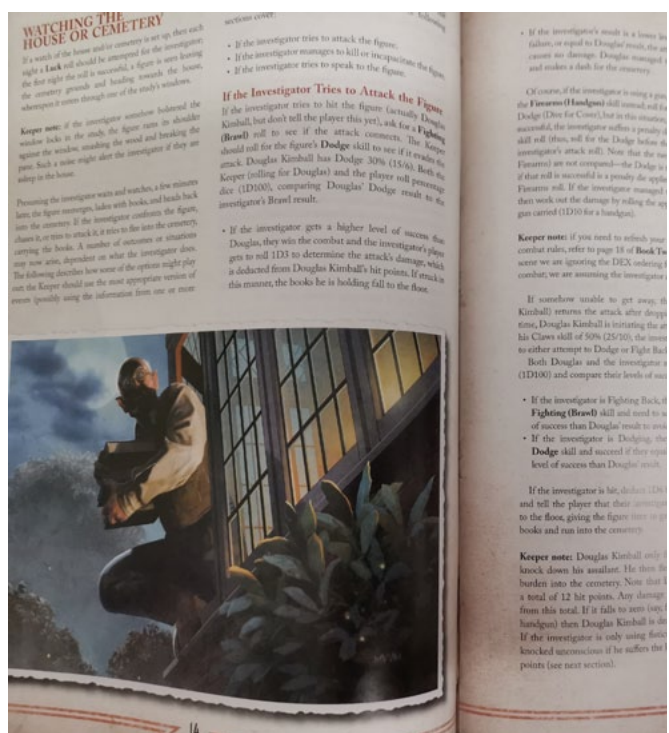
The adventures contained in this set are great, but if you're an experienced CoC player then you'll be disappointed, and so you should be as these are designed for new players to guide them along with getting to grips with the game before plunging into a far meatier campaign.



I also found the solo adventure as a great way to re-fresh myself of the rules and is an easy introduction for anyone who has never played this system before. I was able to get to grips with the basics of the game in one evening, and a couple of days later after familiarising myself with the first adventure introduced the players to the game.



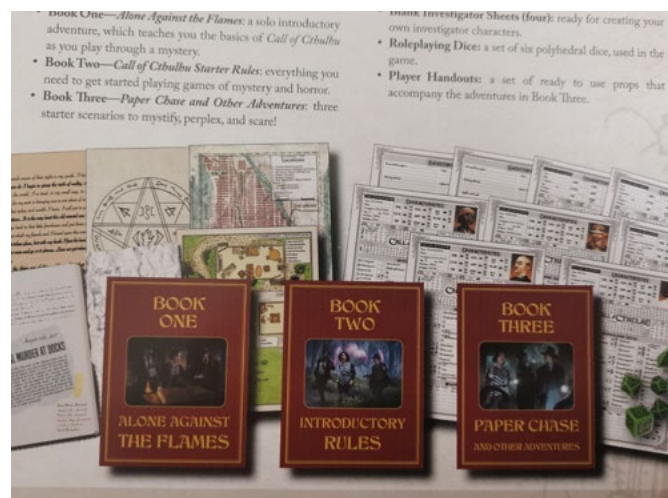
The players I GM'd had never experienced role playing before, and I think this setting was perfect for them rather than a fantasy style game. They ranged from 14-40 and so were better suited to a more adult theme such as CoC, also this game is set in a historical period which they could relate to more easily than an invented fantasy setting. Plus, a couple of the players were Horror film/TV fans, so they were drawn to this game.



I think going forward with this group as the majority are of Chinese nationality, I plan to develop a campaign set in China, using some of the Chinese monsters from folklore. Recently there have been several TV dramas in China based around tomb raiders, some of which have been set in modern China whilst others have been set in the 20/30's. I'm considering an adventure that starts in Shanghai and ends up in a tomb in Mongolia or somewhere similar, full of mythic creatures.

The one aspect I was a little disappointed with were the dice. I would have preferred something a little more decorative, or Cthulhu inspired in design rather than some plain ones. Otherwise this really is a great set to start you out on your journey into the setting. The set is nicely presented, with some lovely artwork through out that really pulls you into the setting. It's easy to read which allows you to quickly grasp the rules. They've made sure that the basics of the game are easy to digest, and you aren't bogged down in dry complicated rules that slow the game down.

I really can't say this enough, this is a great resource for anyone starting out in this game, it's great value for money and there's plenty in the set to get you and a gaming group off to a great start.



This is one of those classic RPG's that every gamer should try at least once. I have had over the years a lot of fun playing this game, I remember in one game Alex (Our Staff writer) went mad and we forgot that he was carrying all the dynamite. In his insanity he decided there were Cthulhu mythos everywhere and started randomly throwing sticks of dynamite at anything and everything. He dam well near killed my character at one point lol. It's a definite game most people should have on their shelf.



Jumping into Flames of War with Hit the Beach

A tale of two armies

Jason Hubbard

So, you have decided to jump into playing WW2 in 15mm, yeah, well a copy of Hit the Beach by Battlefront Games landed on my desk, so let us look at getting started with this game. Playing and painting this scale will be a new challenge for me as I have never gone below 20mm before, yet this year I have been tempted by Team Yankee and now Flames of War. I've always been tempted in the past but the combination of resin and metal parts had always put me off getting into the game, but with the push towards more plastic I decided to bite the bullet and grab a copy of the starter set.

This is the 4th edition starter set for Flames of War and it's jam packed full of goodies to get you started in the games. It features two starting armies, one for the US and the other is late war Germans.

What is in the box

- A German Grenadier Kompanie Supported by Panzer IV Tanks and PaK40 Anti-tank Guns
- 1x American Sherman Tank Company of 75mm & 76mm Sherman Tanks Supported by US Paratroopers
- 1x 120-page Full-colour Rulebook
- Dice
- 1x V1 Flying Bomb Terrain Feature
- Unit Cards



Actual miniature wise you get the following in the box

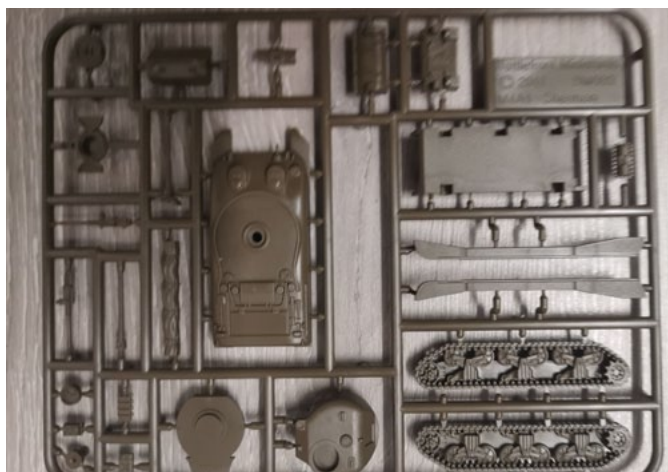
- 3 x Panzer IVs
- 2 x Pak40s
- 2 x Grenadier platoons
- 8 M4A1 Sherman's
- 1 x US Parachute Rifle Platoon



The Germans come in at 45 points, which is a good starting point. You could add another additional Hit the Beach set and easily build a 70-80-point army, which would only need to add something like a Nebelwerfers and a unit of three StuGs and will take you up to 100 points give or take a couple. I'd personally prefer to add Panthers rather than StuGs, to beef up the armour, though a lot of folks will most likely veer towards the Tigers.



The US force is just under 50 points like the Germans, it comes with a parachute platoon and a handful of Sherman tanks...and obviously this draws a lot of new folk towards the US forces initially, then they discover how nails the German armour is and switch lol.



So, what tanks do the US forces get in the box.
5 Sherman 75mm Tanks
3 Sherman 76mm Tanks

So, who gets which army?

Coco is a newbie to wargaming, she has played a couple of wargames in the past but has mainly stuck with board games as her choice of tabletop entertainment, but Flames of War intrigued her when it landed



on my desk. So being a typical kid (well teen, I get told off referring to her as a kid) she decided she wanted the good guys. So, this left me with the Germans, and I know from friends who play the game, that the Germans are good choice, especially with their heavy armour such as Tigers and Panthers.



My plan going forward is to pick up another set of Hit the Beach which we have done, it is great value for money with some excellent contents. Once I have bought that I will start to look at options to expand both armies. I'm going to be playing the German army and Coco snagged the US, though I'm expecting to build a Chinese army at some point for her, but that will be a topic for a future article in the new year.



So if you have decided to pick up two set this will give you a massive 16 tanks, this would take you up to around 65 points, and you could add artillery to this and a couple of M10's to push this towards 100 points.



I would probably also add some M5 halftracks to make the infantry more mobile, and probably switch from airborne infantry to mechanised infantry.

So far, Coco has added a mortar platoon, and five half-tracks, and a machine-gun platoon is on its way. These options should allow her to deal with my infantry and soft target options. We have also decided to invest in another set of Hit the Beach as it is a great way to expand the US with more tanks. So, Coco's US force will have 10 Sherman 75mm and 6 Sherman 76mm tanks, that should give her a large enough armour punch, and hopefully be enough to deal with my German armour.



So, I decided to add some heavy armour, which will be a combination of Tiger and Panther tanks, plus I intend to add a couple of 88's to act as anti-tank. This is an area that Coco will need to add too at some point but as, yet she's not decided which options to go for.



One of her first requests to expand her Army was aircraft, so I am going to get some P-40's and I may just have to get myself some Stuka's or some anti-aircraft, though the 88's could do that job as well.

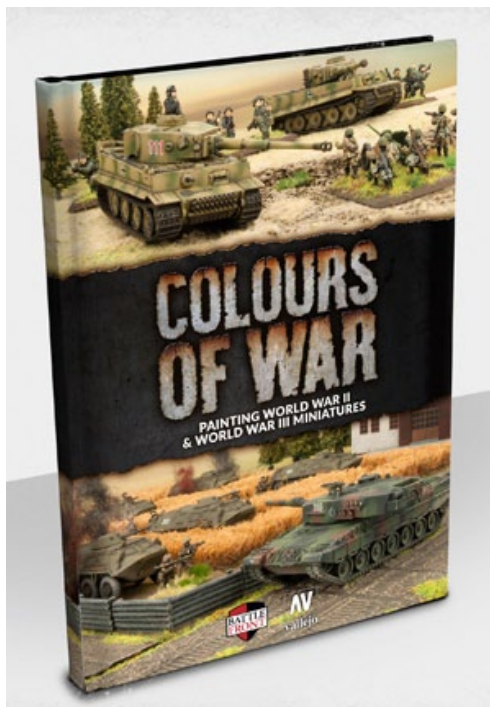
I have been really impressed with this box set, especially the value, in the UK you can pay anywhere between £30-40 depending where you purchase it from. Both armies are great starting points, at this scale the vehicles are a breeze to paint, as yet I haven't started painting the infantry, and depending on how much detail you add to your paint work, really depends on how easy they are to paint.



I decided to go with a reasonable tabletop standard, and I found it quite easy to paint a large batch of men quite quickly.

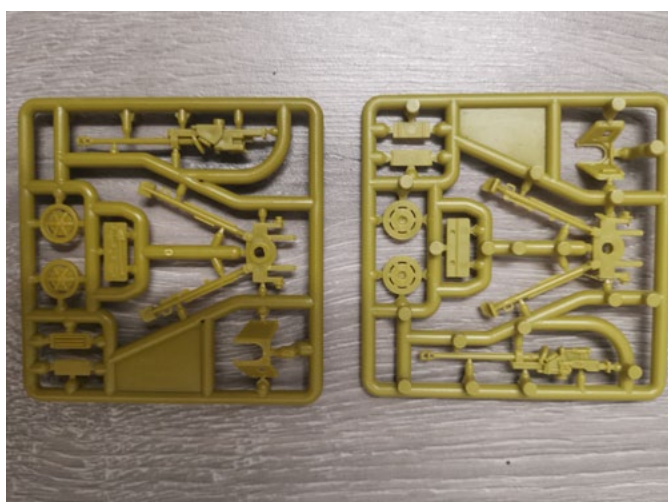
If you are interested in WW2 as a gaming period then Flames of War is definitely worth jumping in on, and this is a great starter set to get your teeth into. I will chart my progress in building and painting both armies in future issue, yes, I am painting Coco's army.

So what's the next step once you've built your Hit the Beach set, well we would recommend getting a copy of your chosen army book, as this will provide you with ample information on how to expand your army.



I would also recommend purchasing a copy of the painting guide *Colours of War* and it's probably a good idea to purchase this at the same time as your pick up Hit the Beach, as it will prove to be invaluable when it come to painting your army.

Once you have decided on which colour scheme to go for then I would suggest picking up the recommended paints and some brushes.

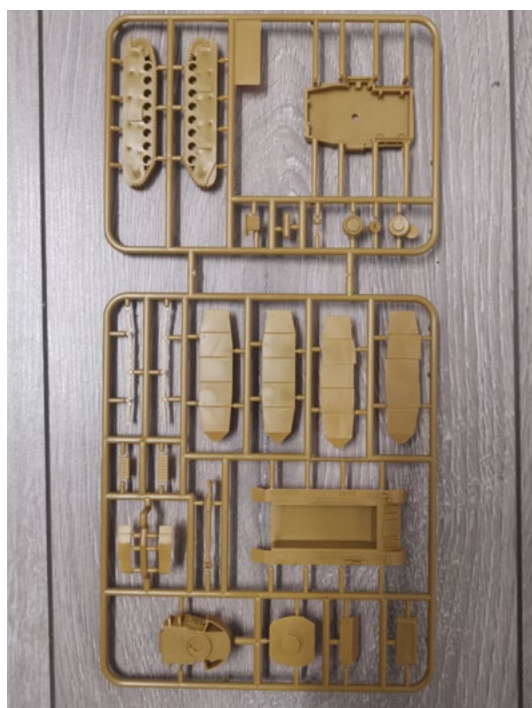


Another area you may want to delve into is researching the period and your chosen army, the internet has a wealth of web sites that will prove useful and YouTube has literally hundreds of short videos and long form documentaries on the subject that should keep you going for a while.



If you wander into any good book store you'll also find plenty of books on the subject, though we recommend that you probably should start with the Men at Arms series from Osprey and the Tank Craft series from Pen & Sword, as these are great starting points.

In the next issue we will take a closer look at how we've both progressed with our armies, and how we have expanded on the starter set.



AMATEUR ARMIES

(MILITIAS AND VOLUNTEERS IN WAR AND PEACE 1797-1961)

Author: Stephen M Cullen

Publisher: Pen and Sword

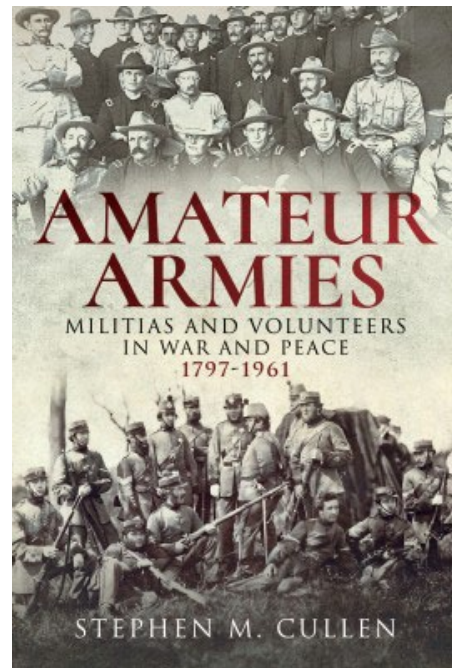
REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

Amateur Armies examines the military and social history of volunteer armies around the western world from the failed French invasion of South Wales in 1797 to the disastrous anti-Communist invasion of the Bay of Pigs in Cuba in 1961. It brings together some fascinating military actions across more than a century and a half of history and explores the social and political context in the countries involved. Stephen Cullen's absorbing and original book is the first general survey of the role of amateur armies during the period. Included are chapters on a series of wars in which militias played critical parts. In each case, their actions and effectiveness are described as is the background from which they came, and the social and political circumstances in which they operated. This pioneering study offers a valuable insight into each of the amateur armies covered and opens up an important and hitherto neglected aspect of military history.

This is a subject I've always found interesting especially as I've served in the regular army and the Territorial army, but also as a wargamer I'm always looking for unusual units or units that aren't regular army regiments. So, when this landed on my desk, I was quite excited to get delving into it.

In chapter 1 the author, Stephen gives us an overview of the subject and whilst this is interesting, I'll skip over it for this review. Chapter 2 throws us straight in to the Napoleonic period and the failed invasion by the French at Fishguard. This is one of those incidents during the war with France that went incredibly wrong for the French. Basically, a French invasion force was beaten back by a regiment of volunteer militia, a volunteer yeomanry Cavalry troop, some press-ganged sailors and locals.

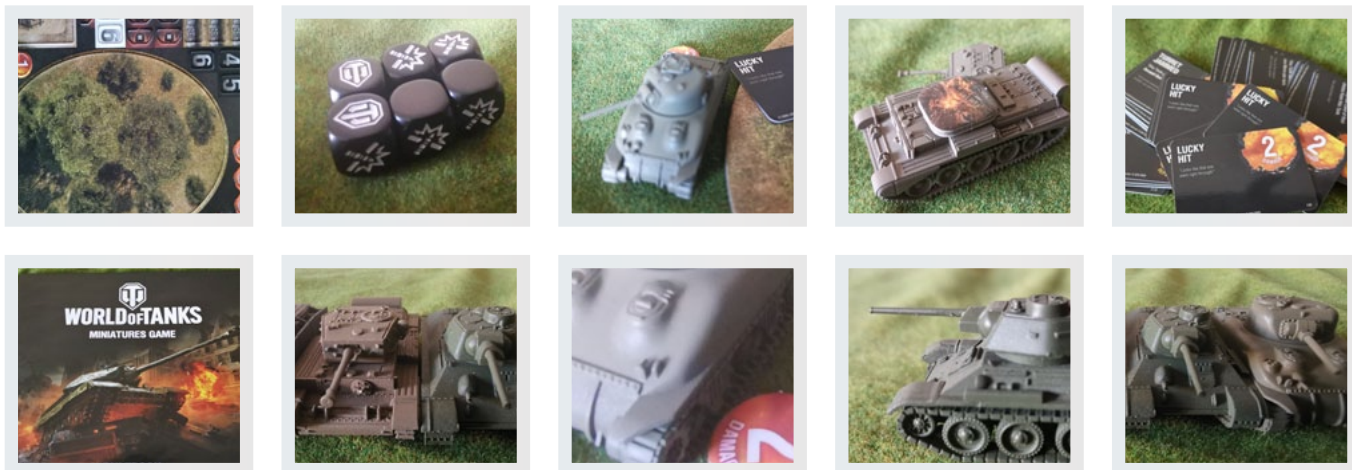
Another chapter I found of interest was chapter 6 regarding the Spanish Civil war, this was a bitter and at times nasty war fought just before the outbreak of the second world war. It attracted individuals from across Europe to fight, including the UK.



It reminded me of a similar situation during the Bosnian crisis in the 90's, where International Brigades were raised of volunteers from other parts of the world.

The author provides us with an insight into the military, social and political aspects that allowed for amateur regiments and armies to be raised. He also contrasts the actions of these units with their professional counterparts, which makes this an important study of the subject. It's been well researched and well written, but at only 200 pages the author unfortunately only really manages to skim the surface of what is a very fascinating subject, and maybe a follow up might be needed.

That aside this book is well worth grabbing, as I did find it an interesting read, and there's lots of scope for the war gamer to pull out some great background information for creating amateur units as well possible scenarios to replay such as Fishguard. This will appeal to many military historians out there and most would not be disappointed if they found this wrapped up under the Christmas tree.



WORLD OF TANKS MINIATURE GAME

Jason Hubbard

World of Tanks: Miniatures Game is an easy to learn, quick play game, where you take command of a unit of tanks, seeking to destroy your opponent and secure victory!

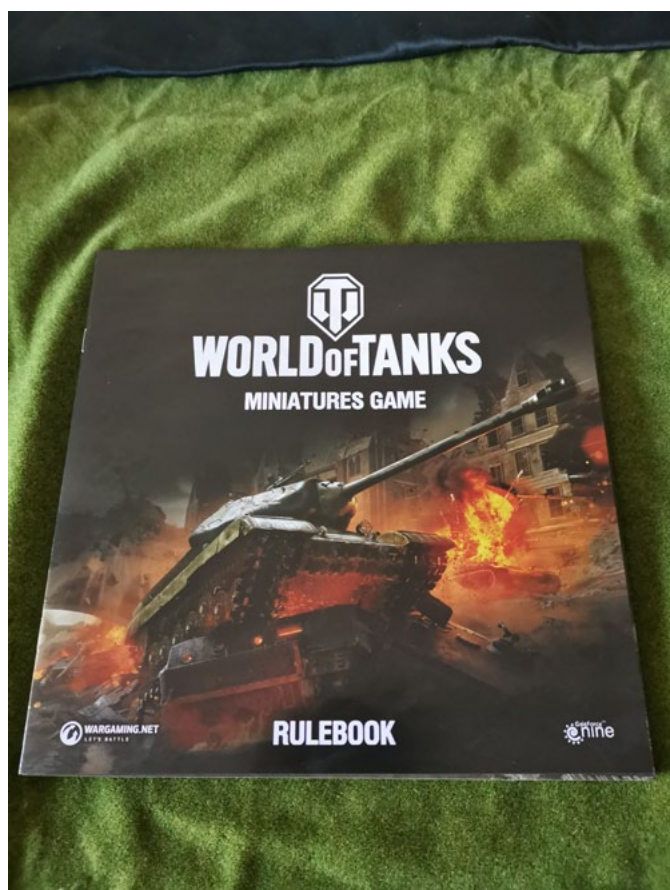
All the models in World of Tanks come ASSEMBLED, PAINTED, and BATTLE READY!

The starter set contains everything you need to start playing, including:

- 4x Highly Detailed, Assembled, Painted Plastic Tanks
- 6x Custom Dice
- Tank Cards
- Terrain and Tokens
- Crew & Equipment Upgrade Cards
- Damage Deck

Gale Force 9 have released a tabletop version of the popular computer game World of Tanks. The starter box comes with 4 fully assembled and painted tanks (base/under coated), along with dice, tank cards, terrain, tokens, crew and equipment cards and a damage deck. It's basically everything you need in one box to get started and playing as quickly and easily as possible.

The rule book is nicely laid out with clear instruction and nice large images to illustrate the rules being explained on each page. It's very easy to follow which allows you to grasp the rules very quickly. There are also videos on YouTube that will explain how to play the game as well.





The tanks are 15mm in scale, anyone familiar with Flames of War will recognise all the tanks. Provided in the box is a British Cromwell, German Panzer IV, US Sherman M4A1 and a Russian T-34. You don't require to assemble or paint these to start playing, though you could add some simple painting to make them look a lot better, and we've included a very simple tutorial in this issue.

The Pz.Kpfw. IV (or Panzer IV) is an iconic German tank, a true workhorse of that saw use throughout the war. The Ausf. H version was introduced in 1943 and saw numerous improvements over previous versions, including improved firepower and protection, that allowed to continue to deal with even the heaviest Allied tanks.



The Cromwell tank was one of a series of cruiser tanks fielded by the British in World War II. The concept of cruiser tanks was that they would combine speed with numbers, allowing them to swarm the enemy and overwhelm them. First deployed during the invasion of Normandy it found a natural home in the reconnaissance regiments where its excellent speed and low profile made it difficult to hit.



The T-34 tank was the cornerstone of Soviet armoured forces in World War II. Other tanks may have been lighter, better armed, or had a bigger gun, but there is only one T-34! When first encountered by German forces, they were shocked by just how good it was and scrambled to find ways to deal with the revolutionary design.



The M4A1 Sherman tank was, much like other releases in this wave, one of the most iconic tanks of the war. The Sherman first saw combat in the deserts of North Africa and continued to serve on battlefields till the end of the war in a variety of models.



Both the T-34 and the Sherman also saw action in the Korean War, with the US forces using the Sherman and the Korean/Chinese military using the T-34. Which means you could take your tank battles from Europe to the Korean Peninsula.



Each of the tanks come with its own stats card, which can be added to with upgrades and equipment just like the computer version of the game. Alongside this you can add and train up crew to make them perform better and in turn make your tank perform better.

They have also included a sheet of future tanks to upgrade to, which indicates what the future releases are for each faction.



This really is an easy to learn, and quick to play and games take around 30 minutes each. It's a great gateway game for someone who has never played a tabletop game before, especially if they're a fan of the computer/console version. It's also a good game to introduce those wargamers who normally only play fantasy or Sci-fi genre.



For me it's very reminiscent of the Fantasy Flight X-wing game, as in you purchase additional vehicles which come with stats and additional cards as you go. There has not been this type of game on the market for the historical genre, it may not appeal to old grognards, but it could be a good game to introduce to the kids or grand kids over Christmas.



Let's face it who doesn't love the idea of battling tanks on the kitchen table. I think it will also appeal to those of us who have the collector genre, as you will be able to build your collection of tanks with future releases.



As you progress from one tank to a much bigger and better tank. Wave 1 tanks are already available to expand on this starter set.

<https://www.gf9games.com/worldoftanks/>



ANCIENT BATTLE FORMATIONS

Author: Justin Swanton

Publisher: Pen and Sword

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

The author has compiled a detailed study of the battle winning formations from the ancient world. He examines how these formations worked and how effective they were in battle situations.

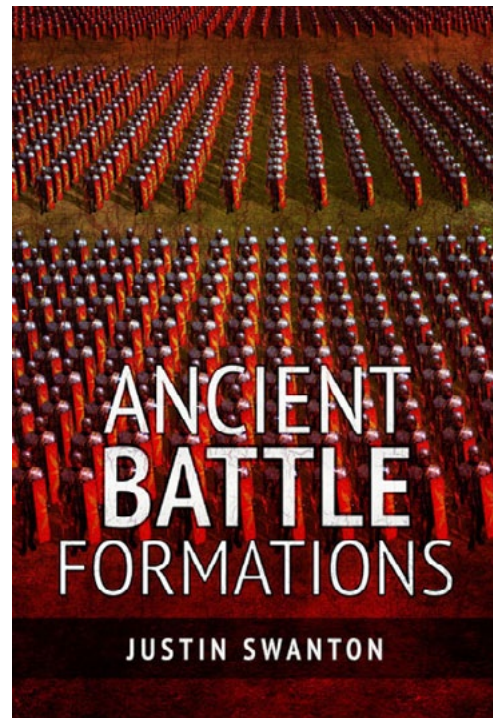
Justin takes a look at both foot and mounted formations of the ancient militaries, whilst focusing on the Hoplite formations of the Greek states, along with the Macedonian pike phalanx and the legions of the Roman Empire.

He offers some challenging new insights, especially regarding the organization of the Spartan Army, made famous by the film 300. He also investigates the close order of the pike phalanx and how it actually operated under battlefield conditions. He also examines the Roman triplex acies which, contrary to popular opinion, consisted of continuous lines in open order, with file spaces wide enough to allow embattled infantry to fall back after which those files closed up instantly against the enemy.

The introductory chapter looks at the components of heavy and light infantry, the use of cavalry, elephants and chariots, and how they bolstered a soldier's willingness to fight.

He has carefully studied the original sources and manages to shed some fresh light on how these formations were organized and operated. Many of his findings have re-evaluated many of the conventional notions and have led to some surprising conclusions in the book.

This is a great study of the subject matter, as a war gamer I found this a fascinating read, it gave a depth of knowledge that I'm hoping to implement on to the tabletop at some point.



I would definitely say if you're a war gamer, this one history book you need to get your hands on and read, especially if you play Ancient wargaming or Pike and shot.

I also think this will appeal to military historians as well, as it provides a great insight into the organization of effectiveness of these formations on the battlefield. This is one of those books that many a wargamer would be happy to find in their stocking on Christmas morning.

Last Days Zombie Apocalypse (A Game of Zombie Survival)



Last Days: Zombie Apocalypse is a skirmish-scale miniatures game of survival horror. It pits players against each other in a nightmarish near-future where the dead have returned to life and are feasting on the living.

Players build their own factions, representing desperate civilians, military personnel, or hardened survivors, and must explore, scavenge, and fight in order to survive another day. Rival gangs are only one of the dangers they face - mindless zombies wander the streets, driven by insatiable hunger and drawn by the sound of combat!

A gang's ability to scavenge is as vital as their combat ability, and players must ensure that they have the resources to survive in this hostile world. Scenarios and campaigns allow you to develop your gang, gain experience and recruit new henchmen to build up your strength or replace the inevitable casualties of the zombie apocalypse.

With TV shows like The Walking Dead and Z nation there has been an explosion of zombie games, from Zombicide to Mantic's Walking Dead. So, there's no surprise to see a zombie inspired skirmish war-game rule set. Most of these games I've enjoyed playing so it's no surprise that I found this a fun game to play. The book is well laid out, with some great looking artwork throughout. I found the rules easy to read and pick up, the rule mechanics reminded me of some old school games.





The games run really quickly, with enough surprises to keep you entertained.

The game is a skirmish game, so the playing area is smaller than most wargames, it's recommended that you play on an area 3x3. You'll need several zombies roughly around 15-20 should be enough, and then each player will require a warband, this can be around 6 miniatures. Your warband will be determined by the leader you choose, as this will restrict which and how many characters you can take.

Rules wise, they're quite simple and easy to pick up, there are just around 20 pages of core rules in the book. There are also some special rules which covers skills, abilities and equipment you can supply your warband members.

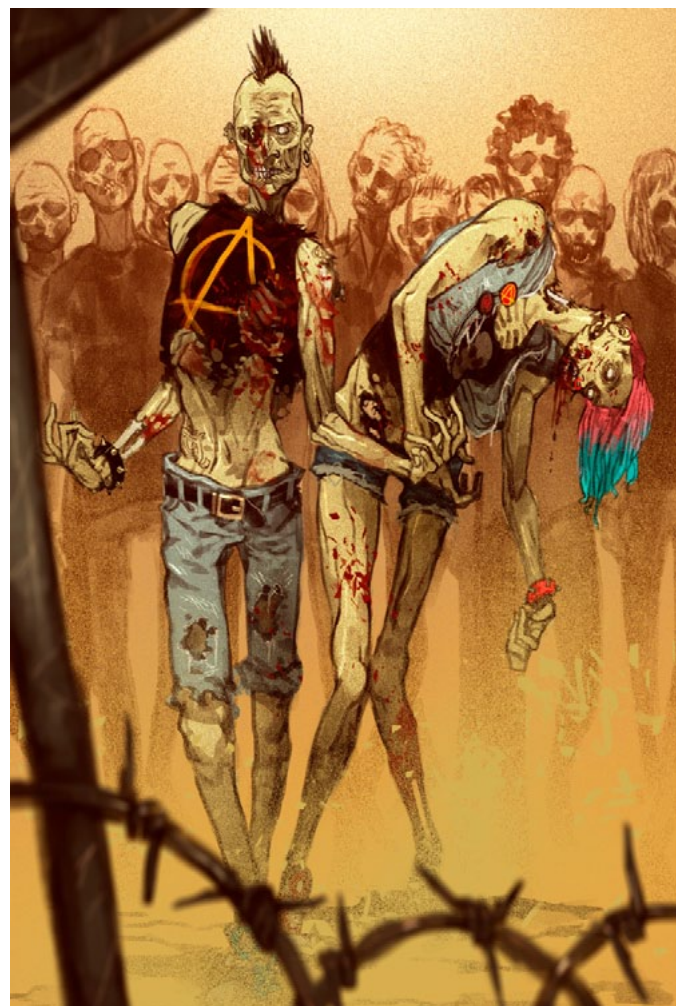


One of the best features of this game is the campaign system, it allows you to develop your warband members in a similar way an RPG does.

Another feature of the game is your refuge, or your base of operations. As part of the game you need to build a base for your warband, you can also upgrade and building perks for your base which make this an interesting aspect to the game.

One aspect I liked was the ability to add a dog to your warband, they're great in close combat, though there are some downsides such as they may not run and they can't gain experience and learn, plus you can't use them to retrieve loot. I would have liked rules for driving and having the ability to use cars as weapon, as currently their just terrain pieces to hide behind and use as cover.

I think the game has some great points and yet it limited at times, though these could be easily fixed with expansions. It is a fun game to play, though you will need a lot of zombies. In regards to miniatures you can use any you want. You're not tied to a specific range or manufacturer. It won't take you long to grasp the rules and get some minis on the table blasting zombies brains out. I can't wait to get a campaign under way as I feel this is where the game will excel. The game already has a very active community on-line where you should be able to ask questions and find additional material to use.



BAYONET TO BARRAGE

(WEAPONRY ON THE VICTORIAN BATTLEFIELD)

Author: Stephen Manning

Publisher: Pen and Sword

How did technical advances in weaponry alter the battlefield during the reign of Queen Victoria? In 1845, in the first Anglo-Sikh War, the outcome was decided by the bayonet; just over fifty years later, in the second Boer War, the combatants were many miles apart. How did this transformation come about, and what impact did it have on the experience of the soldiers of the period? Stephen Manning, in this meticulously researched and vividly written study, describes the developments in firepower and, using the first-hand accounts of the soldiers, shows how their perception of battle changed.

Innovations like the percussion and breech-loading rifle influenced the fighting in the Crimean War of the 1850s and the colonial campaigns of the 1870s and 1880s, in particular in the Anglo-Zulu War and the wars in Egypt and Sudan. The machine gun was used to deadly effect at the Battle of Omdurman in 1898, and equally dramatic advances in artillery took warfare into a new era of tactics and organization.

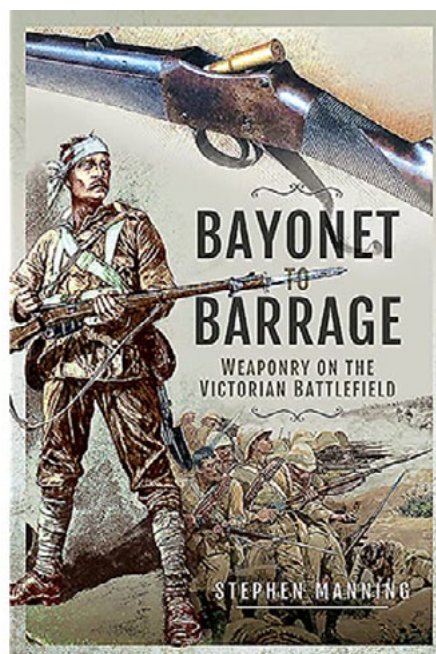
The Victorian period hasn't really been a big interest to me and I know very little about military advancements in weapons, apart from the Henry-Martini, simply because of the film Zulu and the artillery piece the Moncrief Disappearing gun, there is a fully functional one in Crownhill Fort, Plymouth UK. It also has a reenactment crew who operate it still today and give demonstrations of the gun in operation during the Spring and Summer months. Apart from those to, I actually realized I knew very little.

So I found this book quite fascinating as I was a noobie to the subject, now this book focuses on the development of weapons within the British Army only, and charts the rapid advancement of killing tools from the start of Victoria's reign until she passes away and thus the end of the Victorian Period.

Stephen manages to show how the advancement of the weapons transformed the battlefield, and how they went hand in hand with the growth of the empire. He provides a detailed insight into their technical advancement and the impact they had on the wars fought by the British.

Coupled with eyewitness accounts written by soldiers who had experience of using these weapons on the battlefield,

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD



we are given a very insightful account of the period and its firearms.

The book comes in at over 200 pages, and the author has broken this down in to 8 chapters, each one focuses on a particular weapon and the conflict they were utilized in. I particularly liked the chapter on the Henri-Martini as this is a rifle, I was familiar with and it's a slice of Victorian history I enjoy reading about. Though recently I've become interested in the Boxer Rebellion at the end of the period, especially as a wargamer, due to the differing factions involved in the war.

What I did find a little disappointing was the lack of images to illustrate the text throughout, there are some in the book but I'd have preferred a few more, which is really a little complaint, in general this is a very well research and written piece of military history, that many will find interesting. Especially those with a fascination in military history and Victorian history. It will also be a valuable read for anyone who war games this period, or anyone thinking of delving into this period of gaming. It will make a nice Christmas present for anyone with those interests.



The art of the Duel

Jason Hubbard

The practice of dueling was at its peak during the 11th to 20th centuries and involved two people engaging in combat with either sword or pistol in later centuries.

Today we have a sort of romantic notion regarding duels, as they are perceived to be about honor, duty and chivalry, but this is much further from the truth. Most were vicious brawls resulting in the death of one or both of the duelists.

From the early 17th century duels were often illegal in Europe, though in most societies where duelling was socially accepted, participants in a fair duel were not



prosecuted, or if they were, were not convicted. Only gentlemen were considered to have honour, and a gentleman would never duel with anyone of a lower social status.



Most sword fights were generally inconclusive, swordsmen generally died from wounds, rather than during a fight. They generally die after a fight from blood loss and infections. The majority of duels ended when blood was drawn, and honor was satisfied by one side or the other.

On occasion a sword blade may break, this would normally mean that combatants would finish the duel grappling, using similar techniques seen today in the



mixed martial arts arena. The use of elbows, knees and eye gouging were all acceptable. Duelists could and would use other parts of the sword, during a fight, for instance a swordsman may smash the pommel onto his opponent repeatedly, and this is where we get the term to pommel someone from.



Despite the modern idea of chivalry and the Marquis of Queensbury rules, most duels were vulgar scrappy street fights, nothing more than deadly brawls. There were no rules or chivalric behavior, these were fights to first blood or on the rare occasion to death. This meant that both sides were desperate to win and would use any tactic or technique at their disposal, no matter how ungentlemanly we may now think they are.

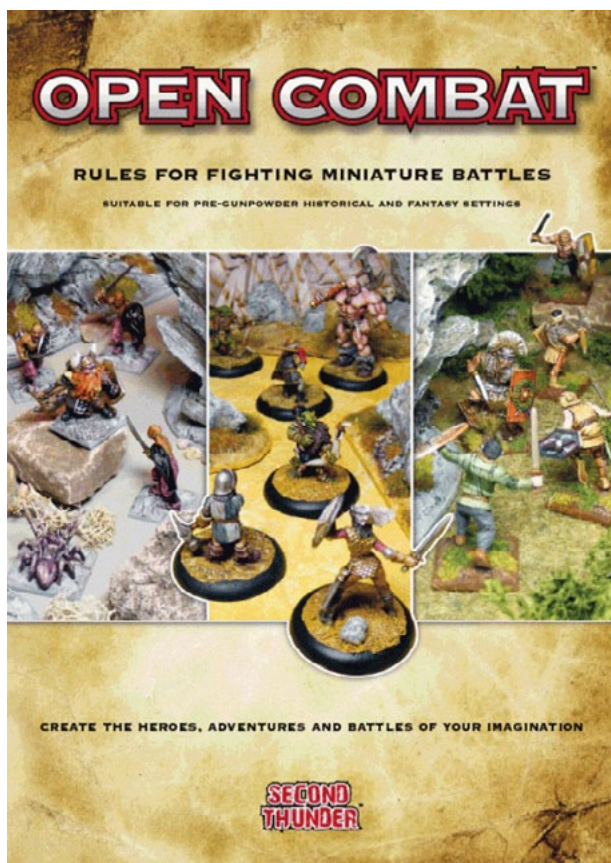


The most successful duelists were dashing swash-bucklers, but professional killers. Those who were considered swashbucklers were normally braggarts, as the term swashbuckler comes from the 16th century to describe rough, noisy and boastful swordsmen. It is based on a fighting style using a side sword with a buckler in the off-hand, which was filled with much "swashing and making a noise on the buckle.



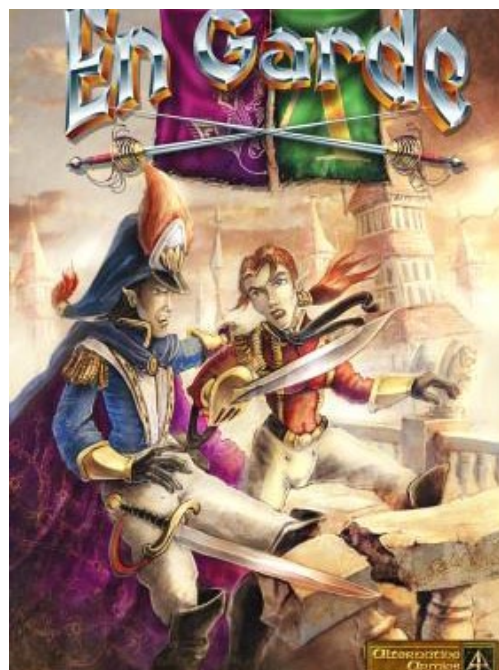
Today we would probably say that a duel is nothing more than cold blooded murder sanctioned by law.

When considering duelling for gaming ideas we probably all think of the Three Musketeers, but a duel could be between two champions from opposing sides, who call each other out before the start of battle. A similar scene to the one in the film Troy, when Brad Pitt's character Achilles is challenged to open combat.



There are several rules on the market that cater for a duel type scenario such as Open Combat coupled with the expansion Sword Masters, En Garde by Osprey Games or the aptly named fantasy rules set by Alternative Armies called En Garde

Anyone one of these would be perfect to stage a duel on the tabletop, especially if you want to recreate scene from the Three Musketeers books and films. For those wanting to recreate scenes of sword duels from Hong Kong films them I'd recommend A Fistful of Kung Fu.



The great thing about recreating a duel, is you could set it in any location indoor or outside. You could recreate a Tavern Brawl/Duel and fight amongst the table and chairs in a bar. You could fight on the city roof tops, leaping from roof to roof fighting and any mis footing could result in falling to your death.

Or you could just fight a single combat in front of an army on the battlefield. There are endless options available and this makes for a quick and exciting game to play, great for those with very little time on their hands.



LEADING THE ROMAN ARMY

(SOLDIERS & EMPERORS 31 BC -AD 235)

Author: Jonathan Eaton

Publisher: Pen and Sword

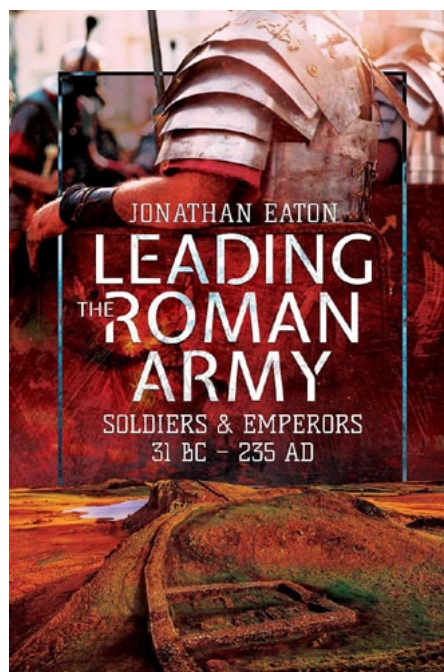
REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

The Roman imperial army represented one of the main factors in the exercise of political control by the emperors. The effective political management of the army was essential for maintaining the safety and well-being of the empire as a whole. This book analyses the means by which emperors controlled their soldiers and sustained their allegiance from the battle of Actium in 31 BC, to the demise of the Severan dynasty in AD 235.

Recent discoveries have revolutionized our understanding of the Roman army. This study provides an up to date synthesis of a range of evidence from archaeological, epigraphic, literary and numismatic sources on the relationship between the emperor and his soldiers. It demonstrates that this relationship was of an intensely personal nature. He was not only the commander-in-chief, but also their patron and benefactor, even after their discharge from military service. Yet the management of the army was more complex than this emperor-soldier relationship suggests.

An effective army requires an adequate military hierarchy to impose discipline and command the troops on a daily basis. This was of particular relevance for the imperial army which was mainly dispersed along the frontiers of the empire, effectively in a series of separate armies. The emperor needed to ensure the loyalty of his officers by building mutually beneficial relationships with them. In this way, the imperial army became a complex network of interlocking ties of loyalty which protected the emperor from military subversion.

The author examines the relationship between the Emperor and the military, researching how the military was actually led, and how discipline was imposed. He also looks at how much political clout the military actually held, and their direct relationship between them and the Emperor. He manages to draw a plethora of evidence that includes coins, literary sources and inscriptions from across the empire.



Jonathan provides us with the evidence that dismisses how much influence the Praetorian Guard commanded, it's always been assumed that they wielded great power and influence, but he shows us that this wasn't that effective compared to rivals who had command over the provincial armies. He also looks at the officer class, and their place with the command structure under the Emperors, showing us that while the centurions were considered the backbone of the military, they'd generally would become the first to be punished. He shows us that while a military career could benefit Roman citizen who had ambitions it was also at time precarious.

This was a an informative read especially in regard to how the military and politics mixed, it also showed how at times a glowing military career could be hindrance and at times dangerous. It's definitely one of those books that'll appeal to Roman historian and will be a valuable read for those gamers who play a Roman army.

IS HISTORICAL WARGAMING DYING OR DEAD?

JASON HUBBARD

This is a topic that has been raging all over the net quite recently after Little Wars uploaded a YouTube video regarding the topic. So as a historical war-gamer a few people have asked me for my opinion regarding this issue. Now I started wargaming in the early 80's playing a set of war-game rules using my Airfix models, before being introduced to Warhammer Fantasy Battles, along with D&D.

I've always played historical over the years and from my days as a teen up to day, most of my opponents have been older gamers, as a teenager I had to play gamers who were in their 20's or older, as I've gotten older the age of my opponents have come closer to my age. Though a lot of the gamers I play today didn't start off playing historical games when they were younger, they originally played Fantasy or Sci-Fi games, predominantly Warhammer Fantasy or 40K. They made the switch or added historical games to their repertoire as they became older.

The age demographic in my experience has always been an older age group, mostly guys over 40, with some younger, between 25-40. There was hardly anyone in their teens playing historical wargames when I was growing up. Most



of my peer group played fantasy games, along with a few Science-Fiction games. When I was in my 20's then the predominant game among the younger age group was 40K.

The main reason I believe for this was the simple fact of how easy it was and still is for someone to start playing war games. Companies like Games Workshop provide a starter box for their games, also they have a very visible high street presence which makes entering the hobby through those games very easy. Pop culture will play a large role influencing the younger age groups, when I was a kid growing up war films were always on the TV



along with old fashioned westerns. These days kids are influenced by Science fiction and fantasy based television, so they'll be drawn to games of those genres.

Historical games have always been thought of as having a difficult entry point, everything from rules through to miniatures. The biggest problem is the fact that history is some big, which means there are a plethora of periods



to play, and there are a ton of different rule sets for each period. Then getting hold of miniatures for any period can be quite difficult. The lack of starter boxes and easy to purchase units of the shelf have always made entry difficult and as a result deterred many a new gamer from historicals. It was easier as a kid to walk into a Games workshop store, grab a starter set that included two starting armies and the rule book. They even had starting panting sets which made entry into the hobby a breeze. For most of my youth I used Airfix or 1/72 plastic soldiers and model kits to play historical games, as this was an easy approach but the more, I played Fantasy battles I slowly stopped playing historical games. I would later pick up historical gaming as I became older in my twenties when I started attending war-game shows.



Then roughly 10-15 years ago things started changing, with companies like Warlord and Battlefront appearing onto the scene, who followed a similar model to Games Workshop. They started to make entry into historical war-gaming a lot easier. In fact, there was a shift of 40K players around 2010 to Bolt Action, Warlord's 28mm WW2 game system. These companies started making rule system starter boxes, or companies like Xyston Miniatures started producing starter armies from their ranges. Suddenly entry to playing historical gaming started to become a lot easier, as a result I noticed a shift of players picking up historical games who previously wouldn't have entertained one before.

Companies have realized that if historical gaming is to survive they need to produce easy entry through starter boxes, army starters or gateway games, such as World of Tanks, which was and is a PC game where players take control of a tank, which now has a table-top version. These types of games are easy to pick and play, they give a flavour of historical gaming without the necessity to build and paint a large army. There are plenty of examples of easy to start games, especially in the skirmish genre, a particular one I started playing a year or so ago

was Gangs of Rome. This is a great way of introducing someone to the world of Ancient Wargaming, without handing them either a massive pile of metal or a tower of plastic sprues.

Historical games have always in the past had a problem in that, there wasn't a game you could pick off the shelf with everything you need to get going. You had to hunt around for both rules and miniatures. When I was a teen the nearest shop was a 2-hour bus ride away, in Exeter. There was a Games Workshop and two independent stores. I would go in to all three outlets to browse and make purchases, now the two independent's didn't carry much in the way of historical products. They carried Avalon Hill style wargames, but not much in the way of miniature based wargames and the only miniatures they carried were generally medieval period, simply because they could be used in fantasy games.



Fast forward to today and it's much easier to purchase miniatures and rules, especially with the invention of the internet. There are also plenty of games across several historical periods that have games that you can lift straight off the shelf and play. Another development which has made entry into historical games is the explosion of skirmish gaming, it's not just the historical genre, there has been an explosion of fantasy and Sci-Fi skirmish games as well. Last year I picked up three skirmish games SPQR from Warlord, Mortal Gods, along with Test of Honor, all three are historical skirmish games that come with a starter box which contains everything you need to get playing straight away.

Basically, there is a change occurring in historical gaming whereby a lot of new players getting into the genre are playing skirmish and smaller games rather than the large historical armies facing each other across the table. The last time I played such a game would have been around 2011, when I played a battle of Towton in 1/72, it was fun to play but the process of building and painting such a large army was very time consuming.



These days I tend to play skirmish games across all genres, and starting a new historical period is easier for me especially if there is a skirmish rule set or a starter box.

So, is it dying, I don't think so? It's defiantly changing from what it was when I first started in gaming back in the 80's. It's now a lot easier to get started into historical gaming and there has been an explosion in great games available. The demographic has always in my experience been a lot older, and will probably always be older, as most youngsters who start playing war-games will most likely start with fantasy and Sci-Fi games. Several of those younger gamers will probably migrate across to historical games as they also get older.

I think it's in a healthy place especially in the UK, currently I believe that large scale battles of two large painted armies is probably dying out at the moment. There may also be a drop in particular periods of history being played, but on the whole, I think it's currently in a rather healthy position.



ARMIES OF ANCIENT GREECE CIRCA 500-388 BC

(HISTORY, ORGANIZATION AND EQUIPMENT)

Author: Gabrielle Esposito
Publisher: Pen and Sword

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

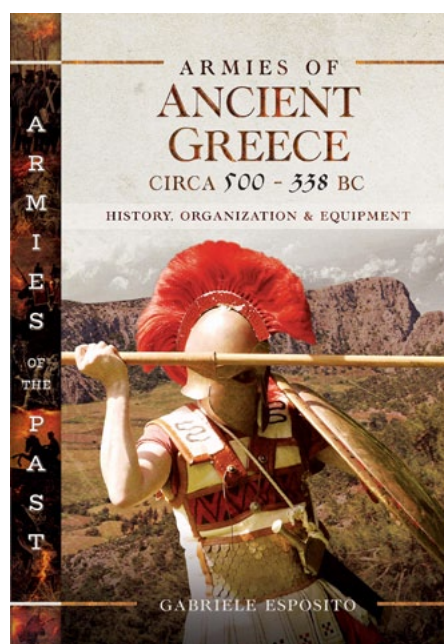
Conflict was rife among the Greeks of the Classical period, including some of the most famous wars and battles of the whole ancient period, such as the defeat of the Persians at Marathon, the Spartans' heroic last stand at Thermopylae, the gruelling Peloponnesian War and the epic March of the Ten Thousand. The Greek heavy infantry spearmen, or hoplites, are one of the most recognizable types of ancient warrior and their tightly packed phalanx formation dominated the battlefield.

Covering the period from the Persian Wars to the Macedonian victory at the Battle of Chaeronea, Gabriele Esposito examines not only the hoplites but also the other troops that featured in Greek armies with growing importance as time went on, such as light infantry skirmishers and cavalry.

He details their arms, armour and equipment, organization and tactics. His clear, informative text is beautifully illustrated with dozens of colour photographs showing how the equipment was worn and used.

This is one of those books which is a great starting point for anyone researching ancient Greek military. It's been well written, in a clear and concise manner, and it's superbly illustrated throughout with full colour photographs of re-enactors. These photographs will prove invaluable to anyone wanting painting reference images. The author covers the history, tactics, organization, uniforms, and equipment of the soldiers who formed the units of the Greek city states. There is a plethora of research material available and finding a book or website to start from can be a little daunting, which is why this book is the perfect resource to kick start any research into the subject.

I'd previously read the book *Armies of the Hellenistic States* by the same author and was impressed by that volume, well this particular book in the series is equally as good.



It's very well laid out and easy to read, the photographs used to illustrate throughout are an added bonus, and one which provided great reference material for the Greek army I've started painting for *Mortal Gods* and *SPQR* games.

This is a definite must have for any gamer who is building or considering building an Ancient Greek army. I found it a very valuable read, and the photographs were also very useful, so I highly recommend putting this on your Christmas list.

You won't go far wrong by having this on your bookshelf, especially any war-gamers interested in this period of history.

THE MILITARY HISTORY OF LATE ROME 425-457

Author: Ilkka Syvanne

Publisher: Pen and Sword

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

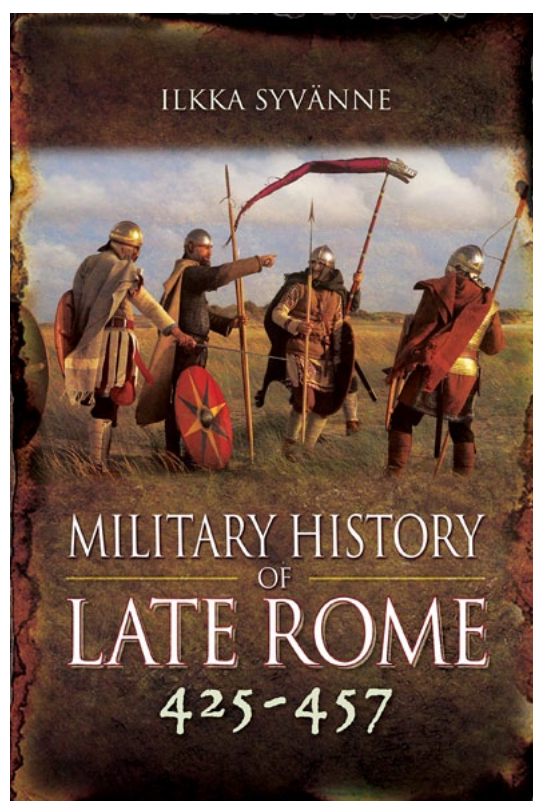
Ilkka analyses in great detail how the Romans coped with the challenge posed by masses of Huns in a situation in which the Germanic tribes had gained a permanent foothold in the territories of West Rome. This analysis reassesses the strategy and tactics of the period.

The book shows how cooperation between the West Roman Master of Soldiers, Aetius, and East Roman Emperor Marcian saved Western civilization from the barbarian nightmare posed by the Huns of Attila. A fresh appraisal of the great clash at the Catalaunian Fields in 451 offers new insights into the mechanics of the fighting and shows that it was a true battle of nations which decided nothing less than the fate of human civilization. Had Aetius and his allies lost the battle and had Marcian not cooperated with Aetius in 451 and 452, we would not have seen the rise of the West and the rise of the scientific thinking.

As the book suggests, this focuses on a very short period of history and the decline of the Roman Empire. This is an indepth study of military actions that involved the Roman military machine, their allies and auxiliary units, along with the many armies and peoples pressing on the fringe of the empire and also those from within.

He provides a fresh appraisal of the battle of the Catalaunian fields in 451 AD, where he offers some new insights into the nitty gritty of the fighting, and highlights it was a true battle of competing nations which decided the fate of the empire and civilization. His analysis of the period reassesses the strategy and tactic utilised during this time.

The book is very well written, clear and precise, it's not a typical dry historical read. I found this quite an interesting read, and I will probably pick up the other titles in this series of books by the author.



The book is illustrated throughout with maps and images to support the text, it's a very insightful read and one I can recommend to anyone with an interest in this period, both historians and war-gamers will enjoy this read.

I particularly liked chapter 6 as the author covers some of the events and participants that were occurring during this period in Britain, which helped with some of my research for prepping a possible Saga campaign set during this time period.



Delving into Team Yankee

Jason Hubbard

Team Yankee is a tabletop miniatures game set in a Cold War gone hot environment.

It's based on the book written by Harold Coyle in 1987, Team Yankee brings the conflict that simmered throughout the Cold War to life in a game by Battlefront Miniatures where you command your troops in miniature on a realistic battlefield.

This is a 15mm or 1/100 scale miniatures game set in Western Europe, where the Soviet Union has attacked the Western Powers. The Cold War was an era where the Superpowers were constantly at a stage of near conflict, fingers hovering over the button so to speak.

Through out this period from Post WW2 right up to the Nineties there were several incidents that could have sparked another global conflict. It was also a period of proxy wars, these were conflicts between factions or countries that were directed or supplied by the Superpowers, but those powers didn't get



involved directly with their own military.

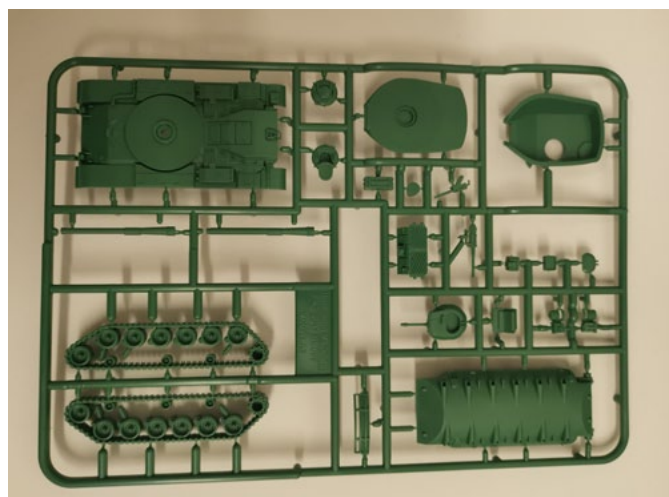
There was a smaller starter set called Hammerfall, though was a good introduction to the game it didn't have enough miniatures in the box. This new starter set is a much better introduction to the game.



So, what's in the box?
 Three Abrams Tanks
 Two Bradley Scouts
 Two M60 Patton Tanks
 Four T-80 Tanks
 Three T-64 Tanks
 Two BMP-3 Scouts
 One Complete A5 Rulebook,
 One Quick Start Guide
 Eight Unit Cards
 Twenty Dice (Two Sets)

All of the miniatures are plastic which is a massive reason alone for getting this box set. The vehicles are really easy to build, they are quite simple model kits but at the same time extremely well detailed especially for this scale.

So, the two factions in this box are the Superpowers that dominated the Cold War period, the USA and USSR. The US forces are supplied with the mighty Abrams tank and you get three of these, alongside these there are two M60 Patton tanks and a couple of Bradley Scouts. The Abrams pack a serious punch and are your main fire power with this set. There aren't many tanks on the Soviet side that can deal with these beasts one on one.



All of the vehicles come with their own stat cards and formation card, which is very useful when playing the game as you don't need to constantly refer to the rule book for this information. They're made from a study laminated card and will stand up to some wear and tear.



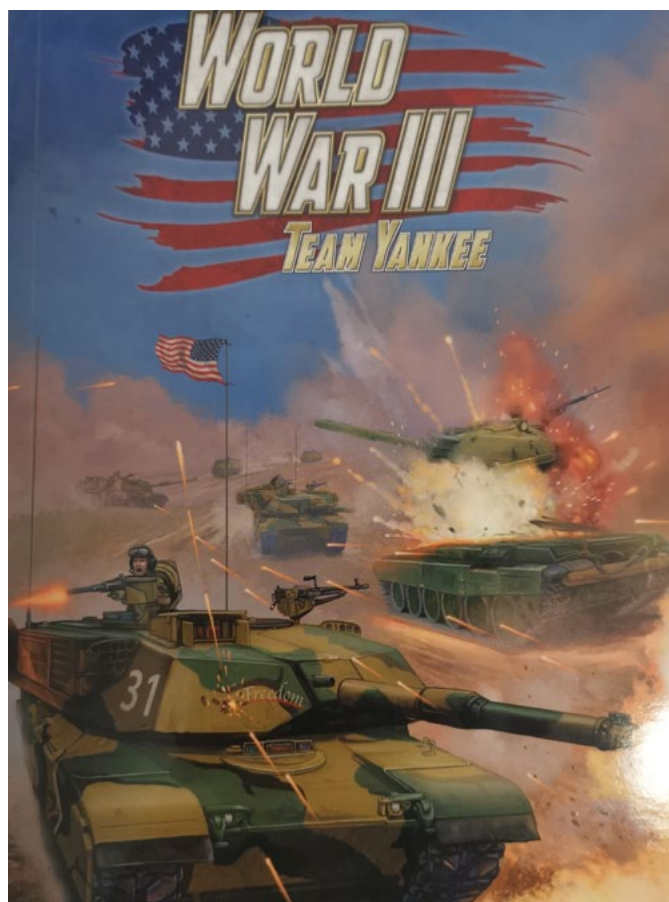
So, what do you get with the Soviet forces, as you'd expect you get more vehicles or tanks than the US? These come in the form of T-80s and T-64 tanks. The T-80 is your main MBT and it's quite a powerful armored tank though not as good as the Abrams or the British Challenger nevertheless it can still hold its own.

Alongside this there are some T-64s, these are dependable tanks though they lack the punch of the T-80 and will need to attack a Challenger or Abrams as a group rather than one on one. I've decided to build a Soviet force which will also double up as a Chinese army as well for gaming in the east. On top of these there are some BMPs as well, these were the standard APC of the Soviet military, the Chinese only purchased the original BMP-1 from the Soviets, so I would need to purchase BMP-1 to use as part of a Chinese army.



So, what else come in this starter set, well you get an A5 size rule book which is quite handy for travelling. I have purchased an A4 hardback version of the

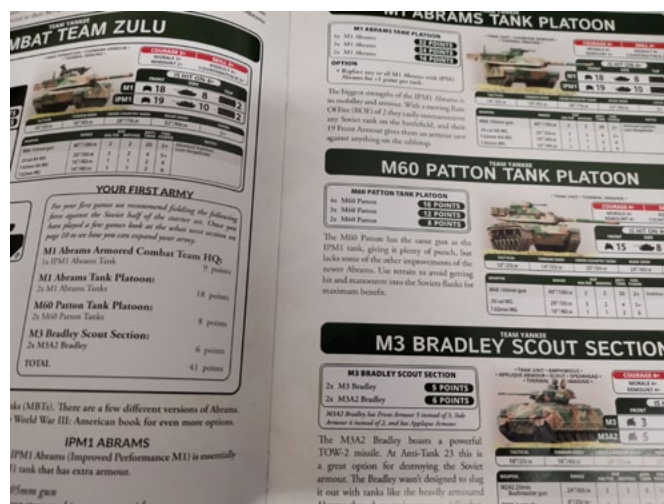
rulebook, but it's not really necessary. There are also dice, the unit cards which I've mentioned already and a QuickStart guide which also includes instructions on building the miniatures.



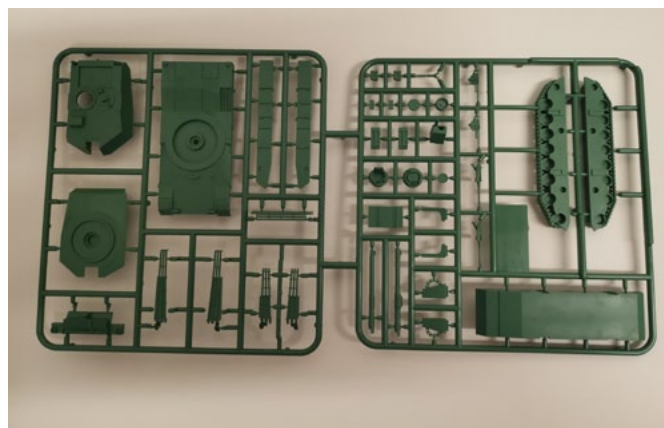
So where could you after purchasing this to expand your army, well firstly I'd recommend picking up the appropriate army book as this will aid you in deciding what you should add to your force. Another recommendation to pick up is the Colours of War painting guide as this has a lot of useful information in regards to slapping some paint on the minis.



As I've decided to build a Soviet force I've already added more tanks to my army in the form of some T-62s and T-55 tanks, these are cheap to field and while they're not as advanced as the T-80 they can slow you opponent down. My intention is to use them to help flank the evil Western capitalists' thugs on the battlefield. I'm also looking at air support and will most likely pick up a couple of Mil Mi 24 Helicopters to give my force that additional punch and moveability.



This is a great starter and just like Flames of War it's great value for money, in the UK it's retailed at £35, and if you look around it can be found cheaper. I have seen this set on one website for £27 at either price is a bargain. I'd go as far as to say it's probably worth picking up two sets as this will give you a really great starting army.



Each starter sets from Battlefront for Flames and Team Yankee are probably the best value for money starter boxes on the market. You really can't go wrong with either, the miniatures in both are exceptional and the rules play out nicely for both games. In fact, at these prices you could get both games.

TANK CRAFT SERIES; LEOPARD 2

(NATO'S FIRST LINE OF DEFENCE 1979-202)

Author: David Grummitt
Publisher: Pen and Sword

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

When the Leopard 2, a third-generation main battle tank, first entered service with the Bundeswehr in 1979, at the height of the Cold War, it was indisputably the most advanced and potent tank in the world. During the last four decades it has undergone numerous upgrades and modifications to ensure it remains one of the most powerful tanks operating today. It currently serves with the armies of seventeen nations, from Canada to Turkey and including many European states.

The Leopard 2 is also a popular subject for modelers which is why David Grummitt's highly illustrated expert guide is so valuable. As well as describing in detail the Leopard 2's design, development and combat history, he gives a full account of the wide range of modeling kits and accessories available in all the popular scales. Included is a modeling gallery, which features six builds covering a range of Leopard 2s serving with different nations and a section of large-scale color profiles which provide both reference and inspiration for modelers and military enthusiasts alike.

Just like other book in this series there's a breath of information regarding the Leopard, along with reviews on the current available model kits in varying scales, along with his res images of finished models. There are also several highly detailed colour profiles of the tank, which will be very useful as a painting guide for both modellers and war-gamers.



The book runs to over 60 pages and is illustrated throughout with full colour photographs. I quite liked the information regarding the development of the tank, and tank development post WW2. As always, the colour profiles and model kit sections proved to be very useful, especially as a reference for painting.

These books will appeal to several readers all for differing reasons, as a war-gamer and model kit builder I found this to be a useful resource for information and image research. The one thing that did disappoint me was the fact that no 15mm scale model kits were included in the modelling section. Especially as there are some available for the game Team Yankee. Overall as usual with this series of books it's a good read and many modellers and gamers will find it a very valuable reference resource.

THE LONG-RANGE DESERT GROUP IN THE AEGEAN

Author: Brendan O'Carroll

Publisher: Pen and Sword

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

Shortly after the invasion of Sicily and to distract German attention from the Italian campaign, Churchill ordered the occupation of the Dodecanese Islands in the Aegean.

The Long Range Desert Group, retraining in Lebanon, were now part of Raiding Forces, Middle East, along with the Special Boat Service and No 30 Commando. In support of 3,000 regulars in 234 Brigade, the LRDG landed covertly on Leros establishing observation posts, reporting movement of enemy shipping and aircraft.

In October the LRDG were ordered to assault the island of Levitha losing forty highly skilled men killed or captured. The Germans invaded Leros with overwhelming force on 12 November 1943, five days later the battle was over. While many British troops were captured most of the LRDG and SBS escaped. Their individual stories make for enthralling reading.

A measure of the intensity of the fighting is the fact that the LRDG lost more men in three months in the Aegean than in three years in the desert operating behind enemy lines.

The author conducted over 30 interviews with veterans whilst writing *The Kiwi Scorpions* and other publications on the LRDG over the years, using these along with official sources from both British and German, he has pieced together a very detailed account of this costly campaign.

The book comes in at over 300 pages, which is illustrated throughout with maps and photographs, this is an invaluable piece of research on one of the world's first Special Forces unit. I always enjoy reading about these guys often referred to as a band of brigands, a motley crew of hard and brave fighting men. This is one of those books that's hard to put down, it reads really easily, full of dramatic detail and gives you a sense of how these guys operated on the battlefield.



At the end of the book there are some interesting appendices such as Appendix 1 which details of equipment to be carried. Wargamers will find Appendix II useful as it details Patrols in Observation, which includes on strength of a patrol and the kit they should carry.

It's an engaging read that makes use of first-hand accounts and detailed reports to give you a very vivid picture of the campaign. The author starts the book looking at the events and details occurring on the islands, then in the second half of the book he starts to get into the nitty gritty of the campaign through the use of first hand accounts from those who served.

If you're interested in special forces units that operated during WW2 then this is for you, any military historian with an interest in the second world war should give this a read. If you're a wargamer who like me is building or considering building an LRDG/SAS force for game such as Bolt Action or Rapid Fire, then this is a must have research material.

TANK CRAFT SERIES

Author: Dennis Oliver

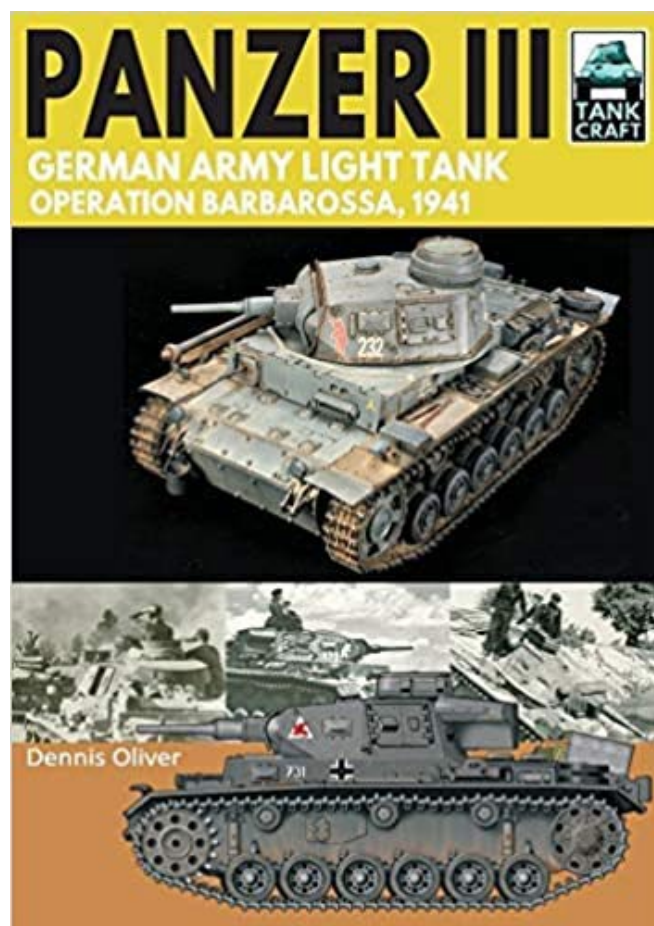
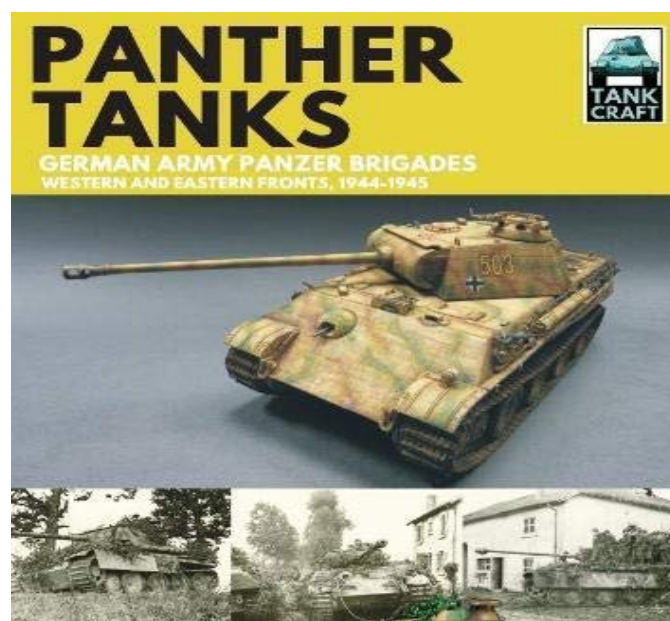
Publisher: Pen and Sword

Panzer III: German Army Light Tank: Operation Barbarossa 1941

The Pzkw III tank was the mainstay of the Panzer divisions during the Blitzkrieg era, which could fairly be said to have ended with the Germans' failure to take Moscow in the winter of 1941. Although less heavily armoured than many of its opponents and somewhat outgunned by the latest Soviet types, the Pzkw III was at the forefront of the advances made over almost impossible distances during the summer and autumn and provided the core of the armoured reserve that fought the defensive battles of the winter months.

In Dennis Oliver's latest volume in the TankCraft series he uses archive photos and extensively researched colour illustrations to examine the Pzkw III and the units that operated this deservedly famous armoured vehicle along a 1,000-mile front during the battles of Operation Barbarossa, the German invasion of the Soviet Union.

A key section of his book displays available model kits and aftermarket products, complemented by a gallery of beautifully constructed and painted models in various scales.



Technical details as well as modifications introduced during production and in the field are also examined, providing everything the modeller needs to recreate an accurate representation of these historic tanks.

Panther Tanks: Germany Army Panzer Brigades: Western and Eastern Fronts, 1944-1945

In July 1944, with the Eastern Front crumbling and the first cracks appearing in the Normandy defences, Hitler ordered the creation of a new type of unit based on the ad-hoc Kampfgruppen which the Germans used so successfully throughout the war. Hastily assembled and short-lived these independent Panzer brigades nevertheless served on both fronts in some of the fiercest fighting of the conflict. The real striking

power of the initial units would a battalion equipped with the Pzkwf V Panther, perhaps the most effective armoured vehicle produced by Germany during the Second World War.

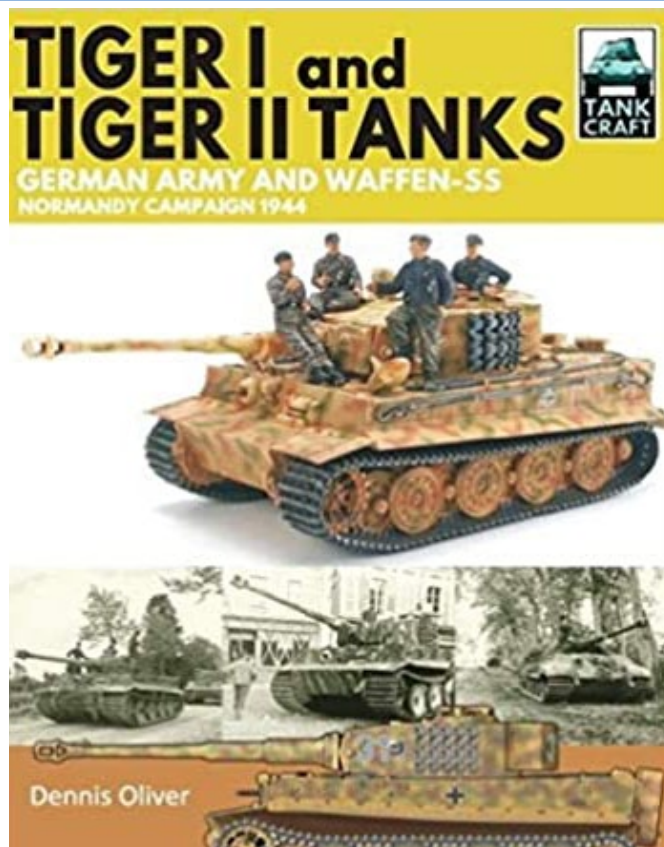
The author uses archive photos and extensively researched colour illustrations to examine the Panther battalions of the Panzer brigades that fought to hold back the Allied advance during the last months of 1944. A key section of his book displays available model kits and aftermarket products, complemented by a gallery of beautifully constructed and painted models in various scales. Technical details as well as modifications introduced during production and in the field are also examined providing everything the modeller needs to recreate an accurate representation of these historic tanks.

Jagdpanzer IV: German Army and Waffen-SS Tank Destroyers: Western Front, 1944-1945

Combining the destructive firepower of the 75mm gun with the mobility of the Pzkwf IV medium tank, the Jagdpanzer IV was quite possibly the most effective tank destroyer of the Second World War.

From early 1944 these vehicles were allocated to the anti-tank battalions of Panzer and Panzergrenadier divisions and saw action in Normandy, the Ardennes and the final battles in Germany.

Dennis Oliver uses contemporary photographs and meticulously researched, superbly presented colour and monochrome illustrations to tell the story of these



self-propelled anti-tank guns and the units which operated them in the German defence of the Western Front. As with all the books in the TankCraft series, a large part of this work showcases available model kits and aftermarket products, complemented by a gallery of expertly constructed and painted models. Technical details as well as modifications introduced during production and in the field are also explained giving the modeller all the information and knowledge required.

Tiger 1 and Tiger 2 Tanks (German Army & Waffen SS Normandy Campaign 1944)

In spite of the relatively small numbers involved, the Tiger I and Tiger II tanks of the German Army and Waffen-SS heavy Panzer formations played a central role in resisting the Allied invasion of France in the summer of 1944. British and American tank crews



found to their dismay that the Tigers could survive numerous hits while a single round from one of their 88mm guns was enough to penetrate the strongest armour. In his latest book in the TankCraft series Dennis Oliver uses archive photographs and painstakingly researched, exquisitely presented colour illustrations to examine the part these powerful tanks played in the Normandy battles and the units that operated them.

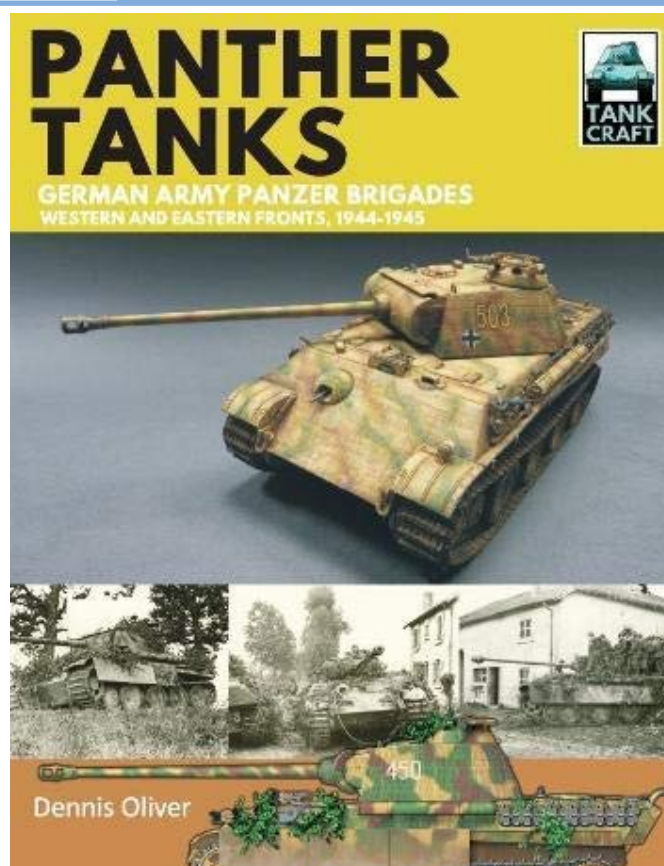
As with previous titles, a large part of this book showcases available model kits and aftermarket products and accessories, complemented by a gallery of skillfully constructed and painted models. Descriptions of technical details as well as modifications introduced during production and in the field are also provided giving the modeller all the information and knowledge required to recreate authentic miniature representations of the Panthers that fought in the fields and hedgerows of Normandy during the summer of 1944.

The format of the Tank Craft series is well established, and Dennis Oliver has written several books on Armoured Fighting Vehicles from the series. Each volume combines a history of the real vehicle with along with model kits builds and ten pages of illustrations. The Panther book focuses more on the ad-hoc tank brigades, rather than on the actual tank, which will prove vitally interesting to historian and wargamer alike. This will give some wargamers the ability to recreate some of these brigades for the table-top and allow them to make an unconventional army that will differ from anyone else.



The bulk of Panzer book looks at the organisation and combat history of the tank, and the Panzer division which employed the tank. Alongside this information are some excellent organisation charts that will be of great interests to historians and war-gamers.

There are several useful illustrations and photographs throughout which will aid model kit builders and gamers when it comes to building and painting the tanks.



In the Tiger book Dennis has included 10 pages full of colour side views which depicts 20 different tanks and their unit markings. This is a great resource for both modeller and wargamer alike. All four books contain an indepth amount of information regarding technical analysis, histories of units that operated these tanks along with illustrations and photographs throughout. As usual the author, who is a well-known authority on German armour has produced three superb books. All three are well researched and written to a high standard.

These books will prove to invaluable research resources to anyone interested in model kit building, military history and war-gaming. Here at Irregular we absolutely love this series of books, and highly recommend tabletop wargamers investing in some of this range. Especially if you play games set in WW2 such as Flames of War, Bolt Action and Rapid Fire to name a few. I would say that it'd be nice if the authors of this series also included 15mm scale models, especially for tanks from WW2.

Although these books are primarily aimed at the modeller, they are still a great resource for both historians and war gamers. I particularly found these books useful for building and painting my German armour for both my Flames of War Army and Bolt Action force. I would definitely recommend any wargamer to invest in this series of books.



A Tank Museum Christmas for Military History Fans

Struggling to know what to buy for the military history fan in your life? The Tank Museum's Online Shop has it covered. From tank Christmas jumpers, models and books to tank slippers, there's everything you'll need for that impossible-to-buy-for person on your Christmas list.

Tank-themed Best Sellers

Some of the most popular items with Tank Museum shoppers this year include inflatable tank shells, tank beers, bullet-shaped thermos flasks and tank chocolate. Sherman tank-shaped slippers have been a particular success, with them selling out regularly.

<https://tankmuseumshop.org/collections/best-selling-products>



Models

For beginners and seasoned model makers, the Museum has a formidable range of tank and armoured vehicle models and accessories.

The starter kits make a great gift for people who are

new to modelling, while the COBI building block sets are perfect for children. The modelling section also includes every accessory for highly detailed projects.

<https://tankmuseumshop.org/collections/modelling>

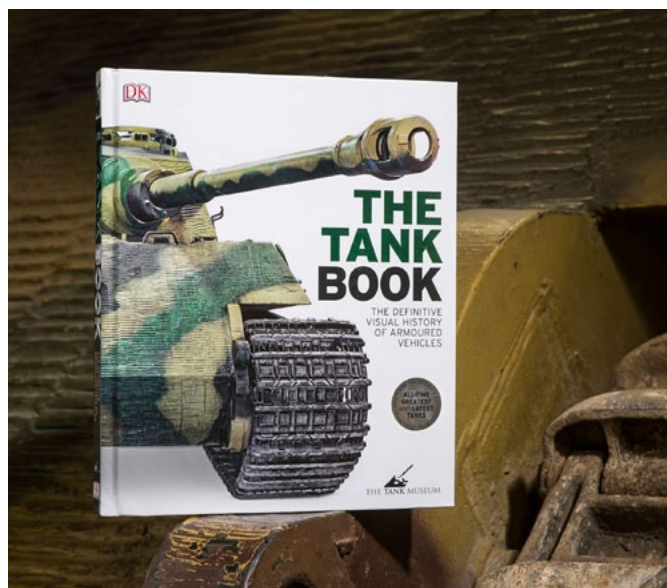


Tanks at Christmas

The Tank Museum Christmas Jumper has been a surprise hit for the Museum over the past couple of years. This year's knitted design is a stylish grey with bright orange accents, featuring the Sherman and Tiger tanks.

A Christmas scarf, socks and Christmas themed face-masks all make great stocking fillers.

<https://tankmuseumshop.org/collections/christmas-gifts>



Books

The Dorling Kindersley 'Tank Book', published in partnership with The Tank Museum, features beautiful photography and is one of the Museum's best-selling publications.



The Tank Museum online shop has over 4000 items on sale.

To discover the full range please visit <https://tankmuseumshop.org/>



Team Yankee

British Challenger Armoured Squadron

Jason Hubbard

With its usual professionalism, the British Army had prepared for war. Now, as the Soviet Army flooded across the border into West Germany, it was ready and waiting. Fox, Scorpion and Scimitar recon vehicles skirmished with the Soviet forward detachments as the Challenger and Chieftain armoured regiments waited. The infantry held the towns and woods, forcing the enemy into killing zones, new Warrior infantry fighting vehicles in fire support. If anything broke through, the airmobile troops in their Lynx helicopters would hold them.

What's inside the box

- 5 Challenger Tanks
- 2 Chieftain Tanks
- 2 Warrior with Milan Anti-tank Vehicles
- 2 Scimitar or Scorpion Light Tanks
- 4 Fox Armoured Cars,
- 2, MLRS Rocket Launchers
- 2 plastic Lynx helicopters
- 8 rare-earth magnets
- 4 decal sheets
- One Complete A5 Rulebook,
- One British "Start Here Booklet"



- 11 Unit cards
- One set of Death or Glory Tokens



The great thing about this set are the 5 Challengers, yep I did just say five of the beasts. I would suggest adding another one to make two troops of 3, as this will avoid taking morale tests early on if you drop to 1 tank in a troop. The Challenger is probably the best tank in the game, and most likely the best at that time in reality. To go alongside these are two Chieftains and likewise I'd add another 1 to make up a troop of three.

A friend of mine from the 14th/20th Hussar once told me of an incident involving his tank. They had entered an Iraqi Tank position and somehow ended up being surrounded by about 5-6 tanks. Thinking their number was up, as the Iraqi tanks fired at the Challenger tank he was sat in, the rounds just bounced off the armour. He said it was a few minutes before realising they were still intact. He then said they slowly took each tank out one after the other, calmly and glad to still be in one piece.



This will provide your force with a substantial offensive punch to punish any Soviet force in front on you.

The box also provides some great support units to go alongside your armoured punch. So where do we start, well artillery of cause. In this box there are two MLRS (Multi Launch Rocket System), a devastating piece of kit.

One afternoon during the ground war during Operation Desert Storm, a battery of these had pulled in behind our M109 battery without us realizing it until



they fired off a rocket salvo. The sound of them launching was frightening enough without being on the receiving end. We all looked at them in absolute awe, an absolutely devastating artillery kit. I'd definitely advise adding some more of these to your army.

Next, we have some REECE units in the form of 4 Fox 4-wheel drive armoured cars, these guys are very fast and agile on the battlefield. Armed with a 30mm Rarden Cannon which gives it a nice punch. Added to that are the Scimitar/Scorpion light tanks, you have the ability to make either option. These are excellent nippy tanks that can zip around the battlefield providing reconnaissance while denying your enemy the opportunity to identify your defenses.





Next, we have a couple of Warriors, when some of these first arrived in my unit everyone was really excited. They replaced the old 432, which were slow and cumbersome. The warrior is a whole different beast, its fast, and I mean fast. On top of that it's armed with a 30mm Rarden cannon, which I know the Stafford's used to great effect on trenches during the Gulf war. Add a Milan missile system to your Warrior suddenly has tank hunter capability which gives it an added jab of the battlefield.



Finally, we have two of the Lynx Helicopters, this is a nimble chopper which make it ideal for tank hunting and you're going to need as much tank killing pieces of kit as you can field. Simply because the Soviets will be fielding scores of tanks against you, everything from T-55s right up to T-80s. The more you can field that has the capability to knock as many of them out of the picture the better.



So, I've decided to build a 4th Armoured Brigade force for Team Yankee, originally, I was going to the army in Desert colours but have since opted to go for a Northern European paint scheme. The reason for choosing this Brigade is the simple fact that I served in 2nd Field Artillery in the 90's which is part of 4th Armoured Brigade.



The brigade was stationed during this time in Munster Germany. This also meant that I served on an M109 during the Gulf War, which is why initially I was tempted to go desert colour scheme but in the end I thought a Northern European theatre would be a better option. Also, this colour scheme would also allow me to field them in Asia against Soviet, Chinese or North Koreans.



What do I plan to add next, well some M109s for starters, a few more tanks to boost the Challengers and Chieftains I have with this box? Some form of Air Defence, such as Rapier would be a good idea. Ideally a few more Scimitars, and additional Warriors. I'll bulk out the MLRS as well as these are tasty pieces of kit to field.

Overall, this is a great starter set for anyone thinking of jumping into Team Yankee and wanting to start a British force. It gives you enough to get your teeth into and provide a good jumping off point.

T-34

(AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF STALIN'S GREATEST TANK)

Author: Wolfgang Fleischer

Publisher: Greenhill Books

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

The T-34 was one of the most remarkable tanks of the Second World War. Although the Red Army suffered continual heavy tank losses, the rugged and reliable T-34 was an immense success story and was ultimately instrumental in turning the tide of the war. This photographic history follows the story of this exceptional armoured vehicle from its disastrous first action during Operation Barbarossa to its miraculous defence of Moscow, its envelopment of the Axis forces at Stalingrad and victory at Kursk, and finally, the advance to the gates of Warsaw then on to Berlin.

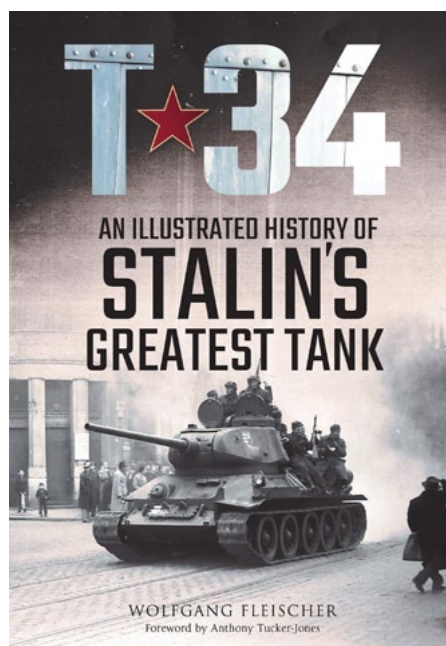
Packed with a wealth of images, including rare archive photographs and photographs of surviving examples, this is an extraordinary record of both the tank and its personnel. The accompanying text features an in-depth technical evaluation outlining the differences in the myriad of models, including detailed plans of each type, alongside a gripping breakdown of the tank's entire operational history.

The T-34 was considered one of the most remarkable tanks of WW2 and proved itself time and time again in battle against the German armoured might. The author has produced a book worthy of this tank, in fact I personally would go as far as to say it's one of the best books I've read regarding a tank.

The author has compiled a comprehensive guide to this tank, the information provided is highly detailed that covers its development and performance on the battlefield. Alongside this is a plethora of photographs and diagrams. He also covers variations of the tank including SU-85/100/122 Self Propelled Gun alongside other designs that incorporated flame throwers and mine clearance.

I can't praise this book enough, it's definitely one that anyone with an interest in tanks, WW2, Russian military as well as model kit builders and wargamers should have on the shelf. I've read quite a few good books this year during lockdown 1 & 2 and this has to be in my top ten.

The book is broken down into 5 chapters that starts with its place in history before moving onto the development of the tank, specialised variants, self-propelled artillery and finally T-34 Data.



It's a comprehensive in-depth look at one of the stalwarts of the WW2 battlefield, that also saw action in Korea and Vietnam post World War 2.

One of the aspects I enjoyed the most were the numerous diagrams and cross sections throughout the book which gave the book a more technical manual feel rather than just a dry historical read. The author also provides a German perspective on what it was like to go up against a T-34 on the battlefield.

One German tank commander described the T-34 as especially difficult to engage. The Russians managed to mass produce this new tank and sent them in large numbers to engage the German armoured units.

I found the chapter on the development of the tank very interesting especially some of the earlier prototypes.

This is one of those books you should have on your shelf if tanks are your interest, or you're a gamer thinking of building a Soviet force. It'll also be a great reference material for model kit builders especially some of the images used in the book. It would definitely make someone a great present for Christmas.

ROMES THIRD SAMITE WAR 298-290 BC

(THE LAST STAND OF THE LINEN LEGION)

Author: Mike Roberts

Publisher: Pen and Sword

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

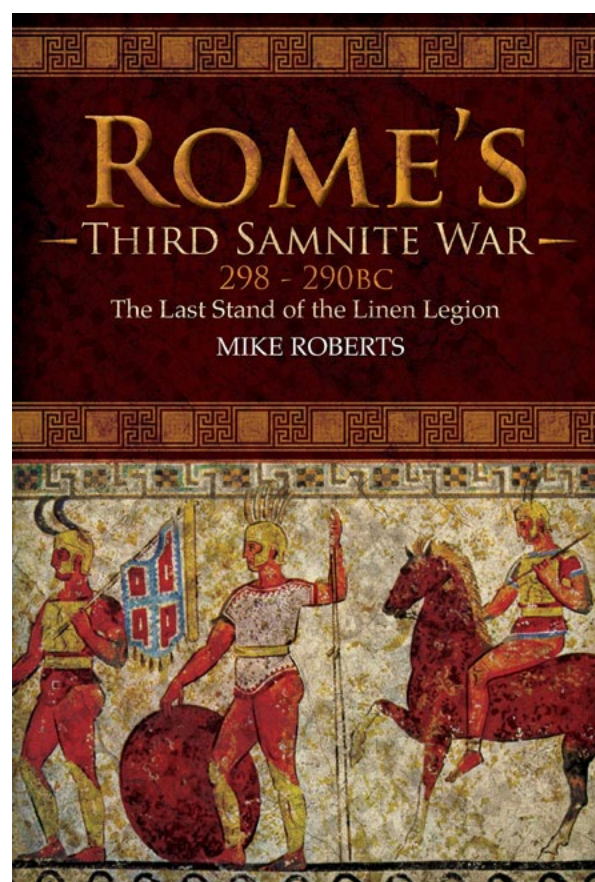
The Third Samnite War (298-290 BC) was a crucial episode in the early history of Rome. Upon its outcome rested mastery of central Italy, and the independent survival of both Rome and the Samnites. Determined to resist aggressive Roman expansion, the Samnites forged a powerful alliance with the Senones (a tribe of Italian Gauls), Etruscans and Umbrians.

The result was eight years of hard campaigning, brutal sieges and bitter battles that stretched Rome to the limit. The desperate nature of the struggle is illustrated by the ritual self-sacrifice (*devotio*) by the Roman consul Publius Decimus Mus at the Battle of Sentinum (295 BC), which restored the resolve of the wavering Roman troops, and by the Samnite Linen Legion at the Battle of Aquilonia (393 BC), each man of which was bound by a sacred oath to conquer or die on the battlefield.

The author has made great use of various sources and has walked the landscape upon which these events from the book were carried out to produce a very engaging narrative of this significant conflict.

This was a crucial episode in the early history of Rome, the outcome of the war gave Rome mastery of Central Italy. It was a conflict that stretched Rome to its limits and winning was Rome's only option for independent survival. For the Samnites it was a conflict to stop Rome's aggressive expansion. The author has conveyed this conflict through the many bitter battles and brutal sieges across the region. Usually Rome would incorporate a defeated foe which allowed them to expand and grow, but they didn't allow this with the Samnites, they were pretty much eradicated as a people, which was unusual for Rome.

This was an excellent account of a period I knew very little about, it was a fascinating read that I found to be very enjoyable, and promoted me to think about building an early Roman army and re-playing out this campaign.



This is one of those books that is an ideal read for anyone studying ancient history but it's also a great resource for a wargamer considering this particular period in Ancient Roman history.

The author has meticulously analysed the events of this war weaving together the political and military details to build an informative and valuable account of the conflict.

FANTASYING-HISTORY

JASON HUBBARD



Alternative history campaigns, battles and back-grounds have always held an interest for both war gamers and historians, it's the question, What If? Such as what would have happened during World War 2 if Hitler had invaded Britain?

A campaign could be built around the that question, in which the first wave of German military are paratroopers, followed by beach landings. The possibilities are endless and the scenarios numerous, but an alternative campaign setting needn't be restricted to the 2nd world war, any period can be used as a possible alternative setting. Such as the Imperial Roman military might marching to conquer ancient China, or just making the existence of magic real in the ancient world.

In the last couple of years alternative settings have become extremely popular, especially with campaign settings around the 2nd world war, both leading up to it and during. A very popular growing setting is A Very British Civil War, set in 1930's Britain, surrounding the abdication of the King. In real life the king abdicated, in the setting he doesn't, and this leads to a civil war, with various factions all fighting for control of the country. Much more mainstream and popular settings are those set during the war, based on the Nazi's



obsession with the occult. In the setting they discover a way to harness the power of the occult. This sees the war take a different turn, with demons, vampires, zombies and advanced technology. Let's face it anything with zombies will be popular, and these are Nazi zombies.

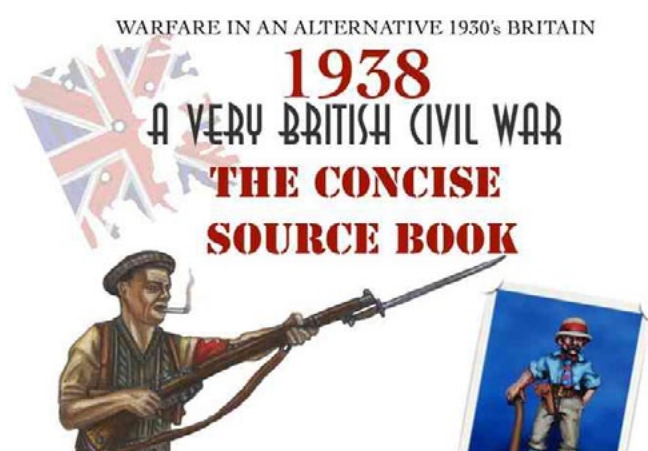
Though you don't have to purchase into a back-ground, as there are plenty of good resources on the net and they're not all set in and around the 2nd world war, which is quite popular at the moment. There are plenty out there for free, which is always a good thing, and these delve into other areas of history. Also, you could always develop your own alternative background, which could be developed with the armies and periods you already own. A possible idea could be an invasion of England by France during the Napoleonic period. A good jump off point may be the invasion of Fishguard in Wales in 1797, though in reality this invasion was a dismal failure for the French, you could decide that they manage to get a foot hold, which leads to a massive invasion of French forces.

I'm going to look at some of the current alternative backgrounds available commercially and those which are free out on the internet.

A Very British Civil War

A very British civil war is an alternative history setting based around the abdication of King Edward VIII. In the setting it assumes that he didn't abdicate, and this in turn sets in motion a civil war in Britain. The background is centered around the idea of wargames played with small companies of soldiers who represent factions and locals, who many assume if history had unfolded in this manner.

AVBCW doesn't have a set of rules to play by this is left to the players, allowing them to use a set they are already familiar with. It's become very popular over the last 12-18 months. The reason for this is the organic nature of the background, players have the ability to



input their take ideas on how the background should develop. I myself shaped and developed the initial flavor of the conflict in Cornwall. This has now been developed and nurtured by other players on Gentlemen's Wargame Parlour. It's also that element of being set in our own backyard and the ability to fight battles and skirmishes in our own towns, cities and villages which make this an interesting and fun game to play.

There's the fun aspect of developing of new units, adding local flavour to them, being able to add fun local flavour to the background as well is a great aspect of this game. I decided to make Druidry the main religion of the Cornish Nationalists, with druids joining units and factions within the nationalists. The reason being that a druid society was created during the 1930's in Cornwall, plus I thought this would be a fun aspect to the Cornish. There is basically no restrictions to how you develop your game or factions. More information can be found at the following websites.

www.solwaycraftsandminiatures.com
www.wargamesp.18.forumer.com



1588 and All That (Spanish Invade England)

This is an alternative background developed by Tim Eagling over at the website www.spiritofthegame.org.uk. Set in Elizabethan England, during the period of the great Armada and the question. What would have happened if the Spanish had invaded England?



It's a period sandwiched between two hugely popular gaming periods, The War of The Roses and the English Civil War. The period of 1588 is a period of transition in war and weapons, it's the switch from Medieval Europe through to the early modern period. It also comes after climatic change and in the wake of the black death.

Had the Spanish landed in England it would have been an interesting period in history. There was no trained standing army in England, the trained bands in the counties varied from each other. Though there would have been thousands of men, mainly peasants, equipped and ready to fight, though they would have varied in training and competency. The trained bands were provided by each of the counties, and this meant that a trained band could get held up if required at a national level.

It was during this period that saw the decline in the use of the longbow, it was slowly being replaced by the forerunner of the musket. This was a weapon that was easier to supply and train troops to use, whereas the longbow required years of training to become competent in its use. The longbow would have still featured heavily on the battlefield still, it was also during this period that soldiers started to lose their armour, which made the use of the longbow more devastating.

So, could the Spanish have conquered England if they had managed to invade? The Spanish would have faced problems with supply lines between mainland Spain and England. This could be a very interesting alternative history to explore. It allows the use of both longbow and early muskets/handguns. Though best of all it's completely free.

More information can be found at.
<http://www.spiritofthegame.org.uk/1588andallthat/about.htm>



Another alternative history idea would be one that looks at the recent riots, developing a storyline that sinks Britain into a modern civil war. The Falklands war has the potential to be used as an alternative backdrop. What would have happened if the war had escalated and Britain was forced to invade Argentina? What would have been the consequences and how would the rest of South America react?

The possibilities are endless which is why alternative history gaming can be an interesting and fun to play.

So, I decided to take a look at an event in ancient history and specifically the 9th Legion.

Professor Birley once wrote.
The fate of the ninth still engages
The minds of both nitwits and sages
But for that problem one fears
Will be with us for years

And for ages and ages and ages

One of the most infamous legions to be connected to Britain is the ninth. There is a legend or myth that surrounds this legion, which has fascinated a lot of people down the ages. These myths are connected to the disappearance of the 9th, of which there are several theories. The last record we have of the legion is in Britain, is that they were stationed at York in 108 AD, later in AD 122 they are replaced by the 6th.

The usual theory is that the ninth was routinely replaced by the 6th. Yet another interesting theory is that the ninth was destroyed in the Carlisle area, when they were sent north due to problems in that locality with the local tribes. Some people have suggested that this was the main reason for the construction of the wall by Hadrian.

Another theory put forward by C.E Stevens, was that the ninth were sent to Carlisle to assist with the construction of the wall. He noted that the wall was originally built in turf and timber in the Carlisle area, because of this we don't have any inscriptions, as evidence. It was during this phase of construction that the ninth was defeated and destroyed. Which he then states, for the sudden change from a turf and timber wall to a more permanent stone wall.

Many people believe that the 9th's last days as a legion are connected to the wall and the Carlisle area. Another theory has the ninth legion leaving Britain, being reposted to the Rhine and then onto Armenia where they were destroyed in 161 AD.

I have a very different theory as to what happened to the infamous 9th legion in Britain and afterwards.

The Ninth becomes the official legion that deals with supernatural events and zombie outbreaks. I was thinking that when something occurs that is extraordinary and can't be explained then the Ninth is sent to deal with the situation. The Ninth has become a clandestine organisation that doesn't exist on paper (or scroll), and only the Emperor and certain senators know of their existence, which is why they disappear from official records.

You could play a range of scenarios involving all manner of supernatural and strange creatures, including Cthulhu Mythos. I would suggest looking Osprey's Broken Legions as a possible rules set and you could kit bash a small warband of Roman warriors with a variety of kit and weapons to deal with the unnatural world.



A Very British Civil War

The Plymouth Incident

The conflict between Kernow and its neighboring enemies has been raging for a while. Skirmishes across the border have been ongoing for some time. Yet a daring raid into Plymouth by a newly trained commando raiding unit saw an upscale in the conflict.

The Kernow Commandos are a highly specialized unit trained in making raids into enemy territory with the aim of causing as much destruction as possible. After a few successful small raids along the border they were ready to carry out quite a daring attack on Plymouth and the Royalists stationed there.

The plan is to attack two targets, the main attack would be on the Royal William Naval yard, with the intention of destroying as much as possible. The other would be a diversionary attack on areas around Devonport, this would be designed to make as much noise as possible, so that the main attack goes unhindered as Royalist resources are dragged over to the diversionary attack.

Both teams would be armed with small arms in the form of SMGs, hand grenades and high explosives. They would attack at night and cross the estuary to Plymouth from Salt Ash in small water going craft.

The main attack would plant explosives and return to Salt Ash by boat. The diversionary attack would create as much noise and damage as possible and the



commandoes would have to make their own way back by any means possible, capture is a likely situation. One of the targets for the diversion attack is the Royal Marine barracks at Stonehouse, attack the main gates and throw grenades and high explosives into the buildings where possible.

The main naval dock yards would be another target to attack and cause mayhem.



During all this chaos the main attack would sneak into the Royal William yard to strategically place high explosives. The two ships in dry dock would be a prime target, along with various buildings. The aim is to give the Royalists a bloody nose.

For this scenario you could use any number of possible rule systems, though we recommend Bolt Action. We would suggest making the commando teams veterans, to allow for their specialized training and the fact that most served professionally in the army before the civil war.



You could play this as two separate games for each of the attacks, for the diversion I would suggest to just play through an attack on an area of Plymouth attacking anything and everything. It's all fair game, the team can attack anything.



For the attack on the Royal William Yard, you could play rules to see if they manage to sneak in undetected and plant explosives. If they're spotted, then it all goes to chaos and the commandoes just attack anything to try and damage as much as possible before being killed or captured.

Suggestions for size of units for the attack, I would say two platoons of veteran commandoes for each of them armed with SMG's. The Royalist defender can have a larger force and I would suggest that is decided between the two players. I would say the more the merrier, but both attacks should be treated as surprise attacks, so the opposing player won't know they're coming until either they are spotted by sentries or the commandoes start shooting, then at that point it's all guns blazing on both sides.





Flames of War Waffen-SS Panther Kampfgruppe Starter Force (Late War)

The SS panzer divisions were all-arms forces, with an armoured group of tanks and armoured infantry mounted in halftracks, infantry groups fighting on foot, and a reconnaissance group of armoured cars and panzergrenadiers in light halftracks that was often used as the divisional reserve. These elite troops stopped attack after attack, fighting with fanatical determination against great odds.

The starter armies are a great way to jump into Flames of War without buying the starter box, they are also an excellent way for those who have purchased the starter set to quickly add to your army.

So, this particular set would make a good way to expand your German forces especially in regard to the armour that's included with this set. As normal with a Battlefront product the box is absolutely rammed with goodies.

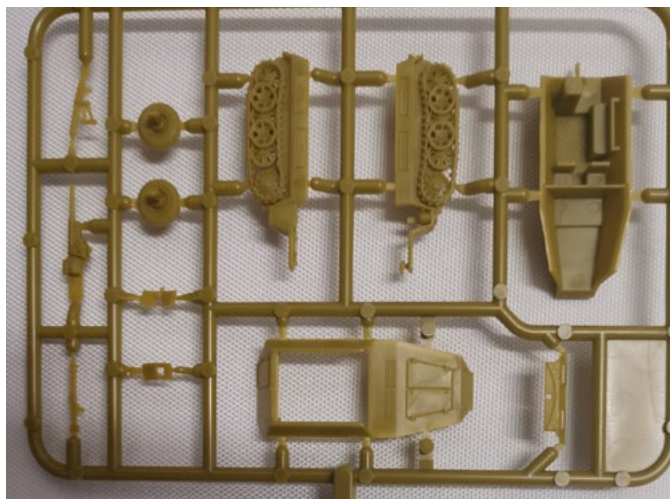
What's included:
 Five Panther (7.5cm) tanks
 Two Tiger (8.8cm) tanks
 One SS Panzergrenadier Platoon
 Two Puma (5cm) Armoured Cars
 Six Sd Kfz 250 (MG) Half-tracks
 Two 8.8cm Guns
 Complete A5 Flames of War rulebook
 One Waffen-SS "Start Here" Guide
 Two Decal Sheets
 Ten Unit cards.



The units in the German Waffen-SS Panther Kampfgruppe have a combined points value of 85 points. When this set arrived, I particularly liked the armour that comes with the set, especially 5 Panthers and 2 Tigers, now that's got some punch to it. If like me you have Hit the Beach, you're adding those to the three Panzer III's you already have. That's more than enough to deal with some Sherman's, T-34's or Cromwell's. While the Panther tank was nominally a medium tank,



its gun could penetrate any Allied tank with ease, while its own armour was difficult to penetrate in return



The Tiger I E heavy tank was the most feared German tank of the war—its reputation for death and destruction proven in every attack.



Both of these tanks are nice kits to build and paint, plus there are some excellent detailing on both tanks. I already have 2 Tigers and I enjoyed building them and getting some paint slapped on them both. The Tiger is one of those iconic tank designs that nearly everyone will recognise from TV and film, as the most feared German tank of WW2. So, getting two of these in the box is great, it gives you that extra added punch that will distract your opponent, and hopefully force him or her to expend their resources trying to stop them.



The Panthers for me were the golden goose, these are great tanks. They're well armoured and the gun is more than enough to deal with Allied armour that may try and threaten them on the battlefield, getting 5 means you have a punch like Mike Tyson in your army. These are definitely worth the price of the box set.



So we've looked at the big boys but what else do you get inside the box, well first up there are 2 Pumas, which are a wheeled armoured car, with quite a powerful gun which makes it a very useful addition to your army. It's quite mobile, and at the same time can handle itself in a fire fight really well. Again, this is a nice kit to put together, with relative ease.



Now if you thought that was more than enough for your punching power, they've gone one step further by adding a 2 88's, yes, I did just say there are a couple of 88's in the box. The 88 was an incredibly powerful anti-tank gun, it was originally designed as an anti-aircraft armament, but it worked really well against tanks. The 88 earned its reputation as the best overall gun of the war. It was justifiably feared by Allied airmen, tankers, and foot soldiers because of its accuracy, lethality, and versatility.

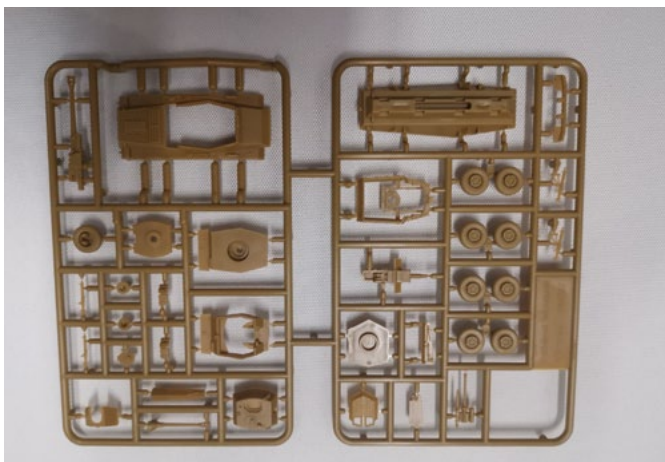




The kit for the 88's comes with additional crew in plastic, and it there some fiddley parts to fit on to the gun but overall, it's yet again a simple kit to construct.

Next up are the two Sd Kfz 250 half-tracks armed with a 2cm gun, that spear head of the army to act as recon, they can deal with soft targets only, such as Allied armoured cars, infantry and supply vehicles. They should avoid at all costs any encounters with armour such as a Sherman as they'll most likely loose.

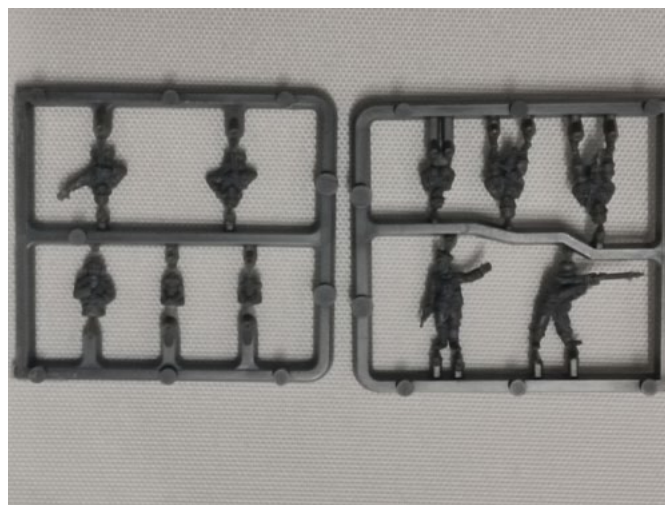
There are also some Sd Kfz 250 MG Half-Tracks which are smaller than the Sd Kfz 251, so their primary role is recon rather than as a dedicated troop carrier. The main advantage they have over the 251 is speed, the 250 is much faster which is why it makes a good recon vehicle.



Also, in the box are some infantry, 4 MG42 teams in resin, this was the only disappointing aspect of the box set. When placed alongside the newer plastic infantry, these look dated and quite ugly. There are some flash on the miniatures, and I'd prefer to replace them with plastic versions. There are also unit cards and a copy of the rule book inside the box, it's basically everything you need to get started.



Overall, it's an impressive starter set, great value for money with a nice selection of vehicles to either start with or bulk out an existing army. I personally probably wouldn't use the resin infantry simply because I just didn't like them. Other than that, it definitely worth the price tag, and a good way to jump in to Flames of War.



PAINTING WARGAMING FIGURES

(ROME'S NORTHERN ENEMIES: BRITISH, CELTS, GERMANS AND DACIANS)

Author: Andy Singleton

Publisher: Pen and Sword

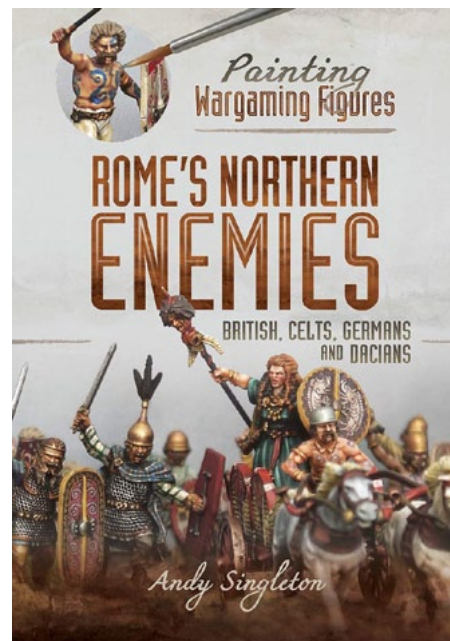
Throughout their history, the Romans were troubled by formidable warlike tribes along their northern borders. The Celts of Gaul and Northern Italy, who sacked Rome itself, the British who repulsed Julius Caesar and resisted later occupation, the Germanic tribes along the Rhine and the fearsome falx-wielding Dacians on the Danube, all proved worthy foes of the legions.

If you are raising your own army to defy the might of Rome, Andy Singleton will help you get them ready for battle with ease. The emphasis is on achievable results and practical advice to get your army painted and ready for gaming in a reasonable time frame, and achieve a fine collection that will look great on the shelf or table. Most of the figures featured in the numerous illustrations are 28mm but the techniques described are easily adaptable to smaller scales and to plastic or metal. Step-by-step guidance takes the process from initial preparation and assembly of the figure, to finishing and basing. Themed chapters cover armour, clothing, skin tones, warpaint and tattoos, shields and horses.

Yet again Andy has produced a great book, he shows you achievable results with easy to follow practical advice and painting techniques. His step by step tutorials will show you how to get an army painted and ready for battle in a reasonably quick manner. Most of the miniatures he paints in the tutorials are 28mm scale, but you can easily transfer those techniques to other scales.

It's well written in an easy to understand manner, with well-illustrated photographs, which makes each of the tutorials easy to follow. There are plenty of skills illustrated in the book, and will give the reader a good range of skills and techniques for future projects. One of the tutorials in the book is for Tartan Weave in the garmets chapter. This is probably one of the easiest ways to paint Tartan, Andy has produced a really easy way to paint what is considered by many hobbyists as a difficult technique.

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD



There is also a very good chapter on basing, and Andy covers a range of different basing styles. Yet again he does this in an easy to follow step by step approach. I particularly liked his grass basing tutorial, though I wasn't keen on the way he does snow basing, but that's a personal preference. There are seven chapters in the book that covers everything from cloth, shield designs, horses and basing.

I now have every book Andy has written and have enjoyed every single one of them. In each I've found some techniques that I either wasn't sure about or a quicker way of implementing. I would highly recommend this book along with his other books not just for beginners but veteran hobbyists alike.

It's definitely a book most hobbyists that are interested in gaming the ancient world should pick up there's plenty information that would be useful for most gamers out there. This is one of those books that would be a perfect present for any wargamer who plays or is about to start playing Ancients.

TANK PAINTING TUTORIAL

WORLD OF TANKS MINIATURE GAME

JASON HUBBARD



This is a very basic tutorial aimed at those who don't normally paint miniatures, those who have never painted a mini or for anyone who wants to a fully painted tank quickly onto to the tabletop.

We're going to suggest that those who don't have any paints to use some from Games Workshop as for most people these are probably the easiest to purchase, especially for anyone living in the UK. As the tanks are already undercoated/base painted then we are able to skip these first couple of steps.

So, what will you need for this tutorial?

Paint: Nuln Oil (Wash), Agrax Earthshade (wash), Leadbelcher (metallic), a brown, green and Tallarn Sand. The choice of brown and green are up to you, the green should be as close as possible to the green used on the tanks.

Whereas the brown can be any shade of brown, as it's going to be used to pick out detail such as wooden handles on tools. You'll also need a couple of brushes



one of which will need to be a dry brush. Other items you'll need is some kitchen roll, just a couple of sheets, water and something suitable to be used as a paint palette, an old plastic lid can be used or a ceramic tile.



Step 1

This is a quite simple step; we're going to paint on a wash all over the tank. So, for the German tank, use Nuln oil, and on the rest use the Agrax. Remember that when doing flat area brush the wash on in one direction and try to use it sparingly on the flat areas.

This is because the wash will pool which works well on areas which aren't flat.



Step 2

Once the wash has dried, we're going to dry brush the tanks. Panzer use the grey, the Cromwell use Tallarn sand and on the other two use the green you bought.

What is dry brushing?

This is a technique where you add paint onto the brush and then brush it off onto a piece of kitchen roll before painting the miniature.



You will brush the paint off until there is very little paint left on the brush, then you'll flick the brush over the raised areas of the tanks and flat areas.



Step 3

Now we're going to paint the tracks using the Leadbelcher metallic. Once you've done this and it has dried you then go over the tracks with the Nuln wash to dull it down.



Step 4

This is an optional step, as we're going to paint the tools on the tank, such as shovels and spanners. This is where you'll use the brown colour to paint wooden handles. After you've done this dry brush some metallic on areas such as hatches to give the impression of wear and tear.



Step 5

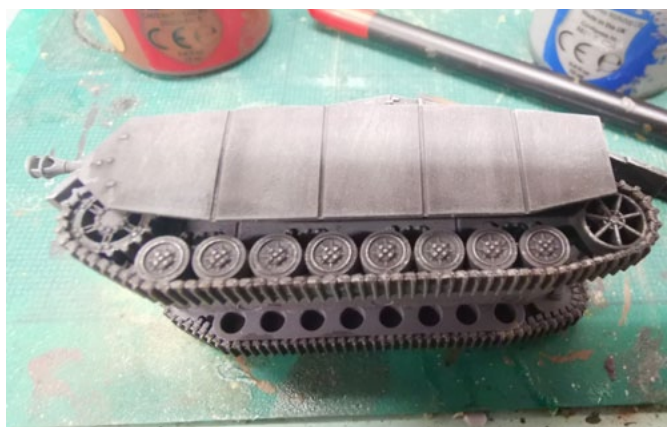
This is an extra step that some may want to do but it's not necessary. We're going to add some weathering to the tanks to make them look like they've been out in the field fighting for some time.



In order to do this, I've used the Tamiya Weathering Master set A, which is available from model shops and some local gaming stores may carry it, otherwise you can order it online.



All you'll do is brush some of the weathering color on the front, sides and back of the tank. This will add a level of realism to the miniature.



Now you're already to do battle on the table-top.

I've included images of the other tanks from the game that have been finished using the same techniques I used on the Panzer tank.



IMAGES OF WAR

Publisher; Pen and Sword

JASON HUBBARD

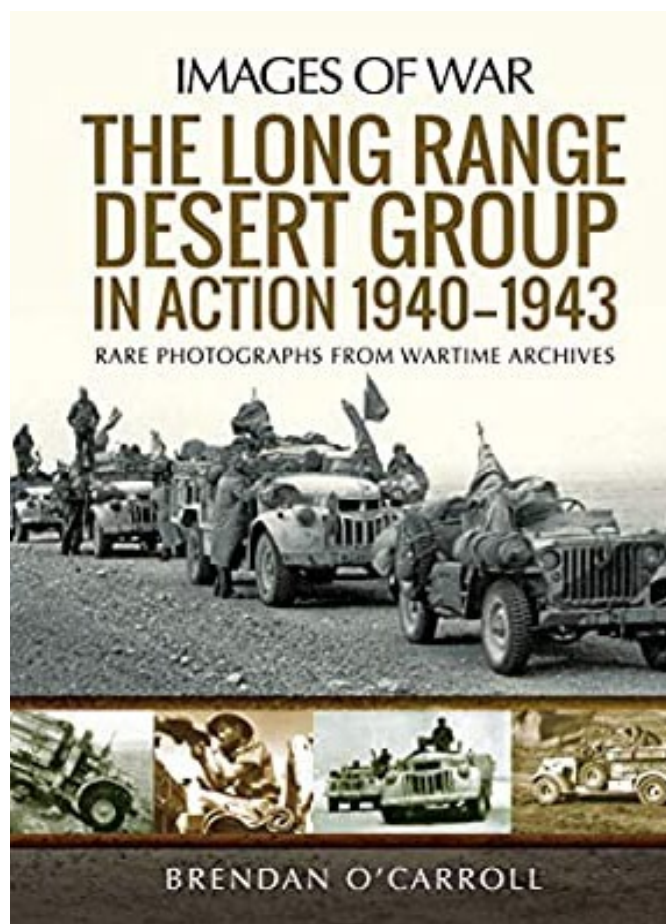
The Long-Range Desert Group in Action 1940-43
Author: Brendan O'Carroll

The Long-Range Desert Group has a strong claim to the first Special Forces unit in the British Army. This superb, illustrated history follows the LRDG from its July 1940 formation as the Long-Range Patrol in North Africa, tasked with intelligence gathering, mapping and reconnaissance deep behind enemy lines.

Manned initially by New Zealanders, in 1940 the unit became the LRDG with members drawn from British Guards and Yeomanry regiments and Rhodesians.

So successful were the LRDG patrols, that when the Special Air Service were formed, they often relied on their navigational and tactical skills to achieve their missions.

After victory in North Africa the LRDG relocated to Lebanon before being sent on the ill-fated mission to the Dodecanese Islands in the Aegean.



Serving independently, when the Germans overwhelmed and captured the British garrisons, many LRDG personnel escaped using their well-honed skills.

Many images in this, the first pictorial history of the LRDG, were taken unofficially by serving members. The result is a superb record of the LRDG's achievements, the personalities, their weapons and vehicles which will delight laymen and specialists alike. As with all the books in this range I've read I've found them to be a very useful resource.

The book sits at over 200 pages and is packed with photographs of this unit. Accompanying the images is wealth of information. This is a great starting point for anyone researching this unit, it also provides some

great photographs of the vehicles and how much equipment they managed to pack on them. These will be extremely useful for both modellers and war gamers when it comes to building the vehicles the LRDG used.

They were often described as a bunch of pirates by many British officers and looking at some of the photographs I can see why especially when compared other soldiers from the 8th Army.



If you're a wargamer thinking of building an LRDG/SAS force to fight in the desert, then this is a great book to pick up. Even though the photographs are in Black and White they are still a useful resource.

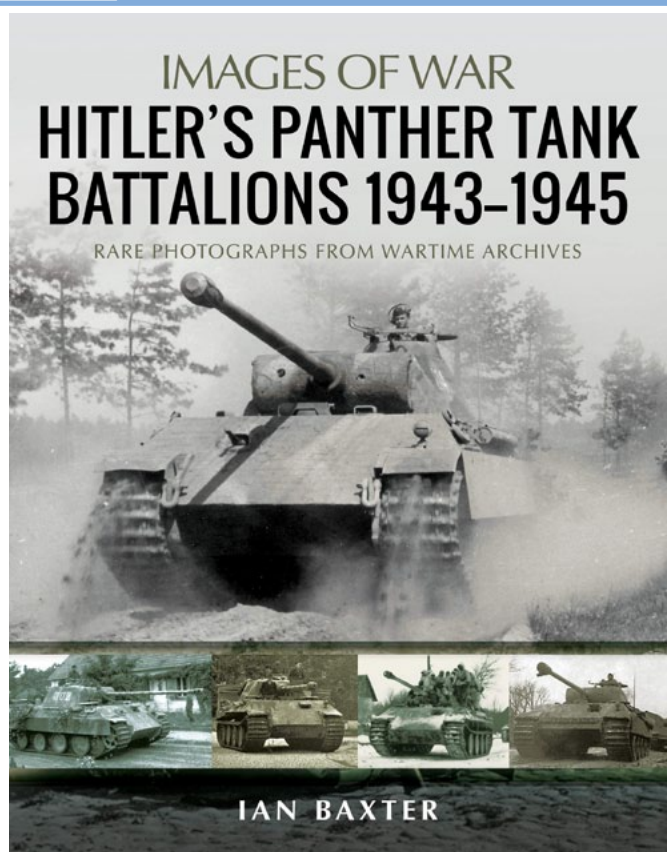
The final chapter in the book moves away from the desert operations to the Aegean, and the fight amongst the Greek Islands and the ill-fated mission to the Dodecanese Islands. By the end of the war the LRDG had earned the right to be classed as one of the best Special Forces unit that operated during World War 2.

Hitler's Panther Tank Battalions 1943-1945



Author: Ian Baxter

From July 1943 to the Nazis' final defeat in May 1945 the Panther main battle tank and its variants were the mainstay of Germany's armoured forces. This superbly engineered fighting vehicle offered a lethal combination of firepower, mobility and protection.



As this classic Images of War series title reveals, the Panther saw non-stop fighting on the Eastern, Western and Italian fronts.

Using rare and often unpublished contemporary photographs with full captions and authoritative text, it provides a comprehensive coverage of elite Panther battalions in action. The book traces the development of the Panther, for example into tank hunter (Panzerjäger), and also covers the other supporting vehicles that formed part of the Panther battalions' establishment. These included armoured recovery, Bergepanther, halftracks, Sd.kfz.2 Kettenrad, gun tractors and communications vehicles.

The author has compiled over 200 black and white photographs of the Panther Tank and its development.



The book is as is usual for this series predominantly images, though there is some very informative information to go alongside these images.

These books will appeal more to the modeller and wargamer rather than the historian, as they'll probably look for books with a far greater depth of information. It's the images that's going to appeal to those building model tank kits, especially in regard to stowage, and other additions tank crews made to their tanks.



At the back of the book there is an appendix that will greatly interest war gamers, as it's a composition of a Panzer Grenadier Battalion 1943-44. This gives a break down of men and equipment that was standard during this period.



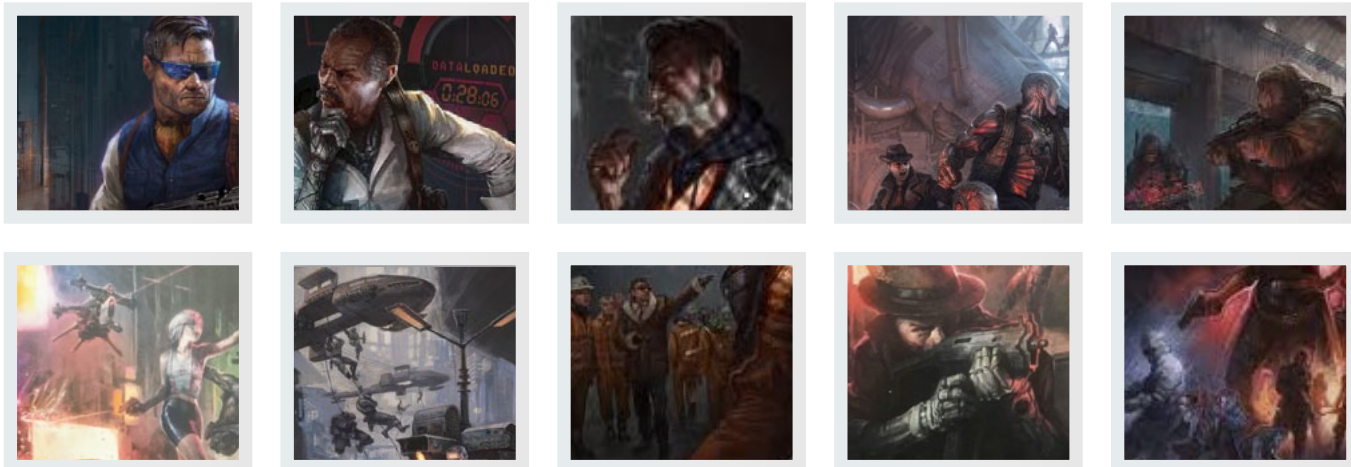
This will be of great help for anyone building a Panzer Grenadier force for the tabletop.



Again, this is a superb book from the Images of War range, the photographs are a great resource with some excellent information to go alongside them.

I always enjoy reading these books and have found them to be very useful. So, anyone building a late war German force or tank kits then this is probably another book you should consider picking up.





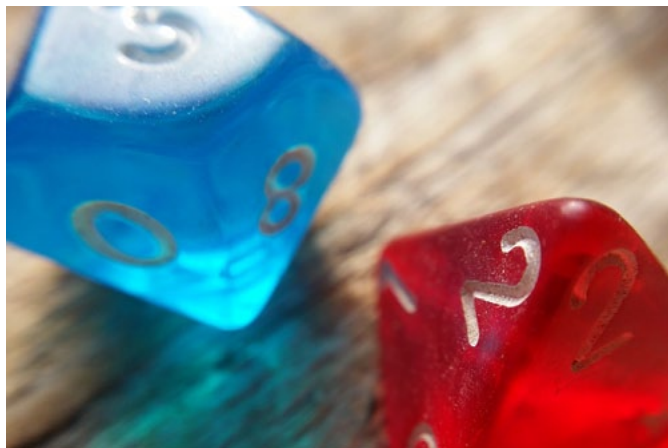
Introduction to Solo Gaming



So, with a pandemic enveloping the world, and most countries enacting some form of lockdown to slow the spread of Covid-19, and in even when lockdown has been lifted social distancing has become the new normal. This has meant that getting out to clubs, stores or at a friend's house for a game or two has been limited, but that doesn't mean you can't play a game, there are several solo options out there and in this art we'll explore some of those options.

The trend for solo gaming has increased this year, not because we've all become unsocial fiends but simply because of the global pandemic. We've been limited to either gaming with a very small select group of friends or family, or on our own during periods of lockdown.

Solo gaming isn't anything new, it's been around for a long time. In fact, I suspect most of us have already at some point partaken in solo gaming. When I was a teenager Fighting Fantasy adventure books appeared on the market and I played several of those, and I suspect many of you out there this has been how you've also participated in gaming solo. Yet I suspect you want to experience other options in the world of solo gaming but are unsure how to get started. Well we hope this article will give you a kick start.



This article is intended to be an introduction to the world of possibilities you can experience through solo gaming.

What is a Solo Game?

A solo game is a tabletop game which has been designed so that it's possible to be played with by a single person. In the past most people have probably only played games which required a minimum of two players. Yet with the advent of the pandemic this year, and with lockdowns instilled in most countries there's been a growing interest, need and desire for solo gaming.

There are some benefits to solo gaming, it's a great way to learn the rules of a game before introducing to friends and it's also a good way to relax on your own. So, without the ability to meet up with friends to play a game or two, solo gaming may be your best option for the time being.



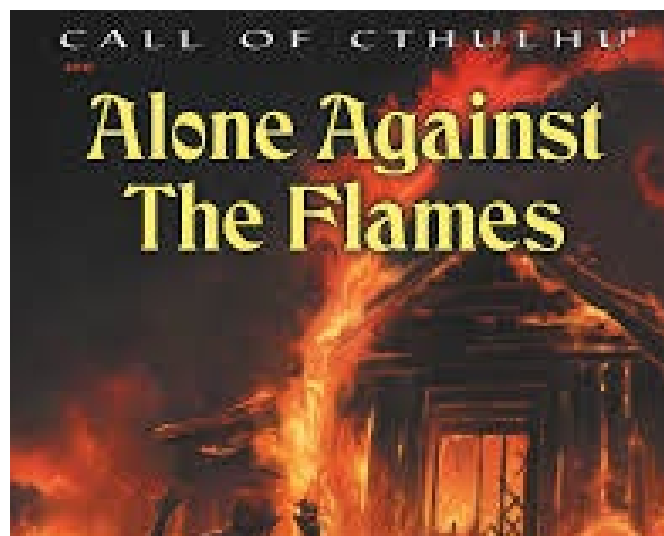
So, what is out there for solo gaming

Several manufacturers have responded to this need for solo gaming and developed some rules of existing games. For the purpose of this article I am going to concentrate mainly on free rule sets, supplemental

rules and Print n Play downloads. Most of these are on on-line digital file sites such as DriveThruRPG.com, which is the first site we will take a look at.

DriveThruRPG is one of the largest of these sites and belongs to a group of online marketplaces that also include Wargame Vault and Dungeon Masters Guild. These sites sell both digital and print on demand products.

There are a lot of solo supplements on this site both official and unofficial for a number of pre-existing rule sets.



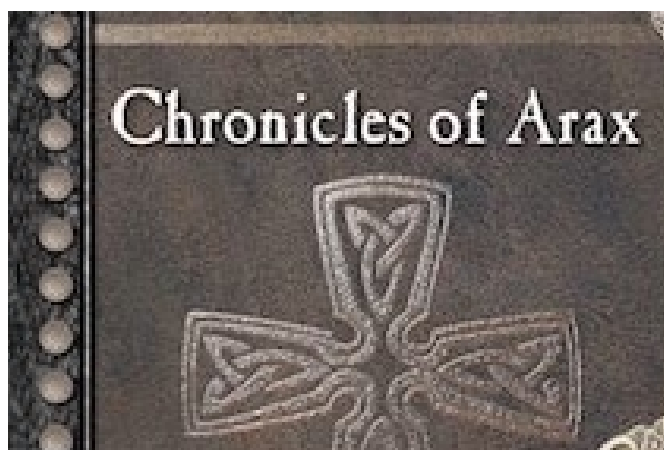
Here are some of my recommendations

Alone against the Flames

This is an introductory solo adventure for 'Call of Cthulhu' set in the 1920's, where you are the main character, and your choices determine the outcome. It's also been designed to guide and teach you the basic rules for the main RPG in a gradual and easy manner.

Chronicles of Arax – Solo Adventure

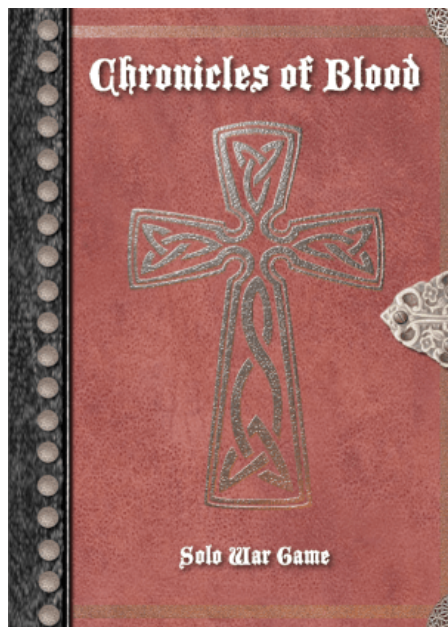
In this game you take on the role of a hero who in the face of darkness stands up for light by undertaking



missions and adventures. The core rules are free, and some adventures will cost about a dollar.

Chronicles of Blood – Solo War Game

This game is produced by the same company that produced Chronicles of Arax and is set in the same world. In this game you will take on the role of an army commander trying to take your army to glory.



Advanced Fighting Fantasy (Quick start)

This is a great set of rules, easy to use, unexperienced players will be up and running in 10 minutes, with pre-generated characters. It's also a great set for more experienced gamers as it's a very fast and adaptable system.

One company to check out for solo gaming is Micro RPG who produce a range of solo products that includes several free games. The Micro Chapbook RPG system is an ultra-simple RPG game that can be played either as a solo game or in a more traditional mode with several players. The Core rule book is available for around \$1.99 on several sites including DriveThruRPG. I've played this myself during lockdown whilst stuck at home and found it to be a good enjoyable system to play.



Having had a quick look at some of the RPG offerings out there, we'll move onto war-gaming something I much prefer. I'm interested in finding some suitable war-game and skirmish rules I can get to grips with. Now normally these games are played with 2 players and in some instances possibly more, but what's out there for us war-gamers. Unlike board games wargaming has a whole plethora of options for us to get to grips with, in a variety of genres and historical periods.

So, I jumped on to War Game Vault to have a look at some of the games available. Just like DriveThru RPG there's plenty of choice available to you, so here's a few of my picks below.

Lock N Load Tactical Core Rules

Lock n load is a squad level game with an innovative game play mechanic, historical scope which is suitable for both new players and veterans. It's a hex based board/War game covering WWII and modern combat at the tactical level, with counters representing individual squads, vehicles and support weapons. A lot info and resources can be found on their own website (<https://store.lnlpublishing.com/>)



Relic World Expeditions

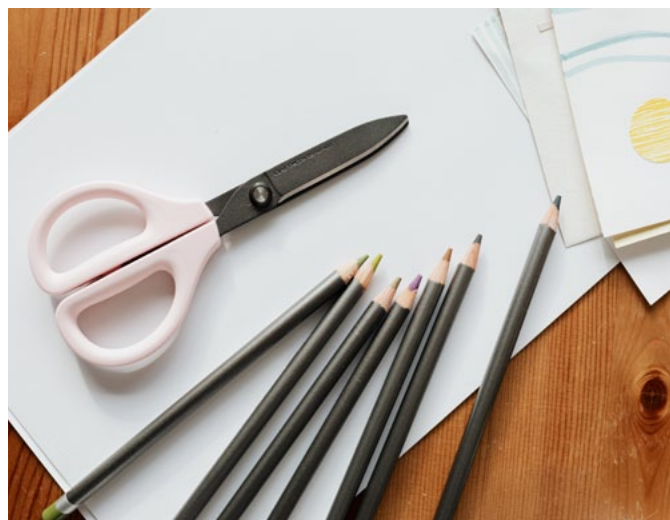
Seek out ancient treasures and battle your enemies in Relic World Expeditions, but beware, secret traps and fierce monsters await within the ruins of an ancient alien civilisations. Build a warband of treasure hunters, pirates, corporate armies, spies and more from the vast Relic World Universe. Then battle against other players or play in solo mode.



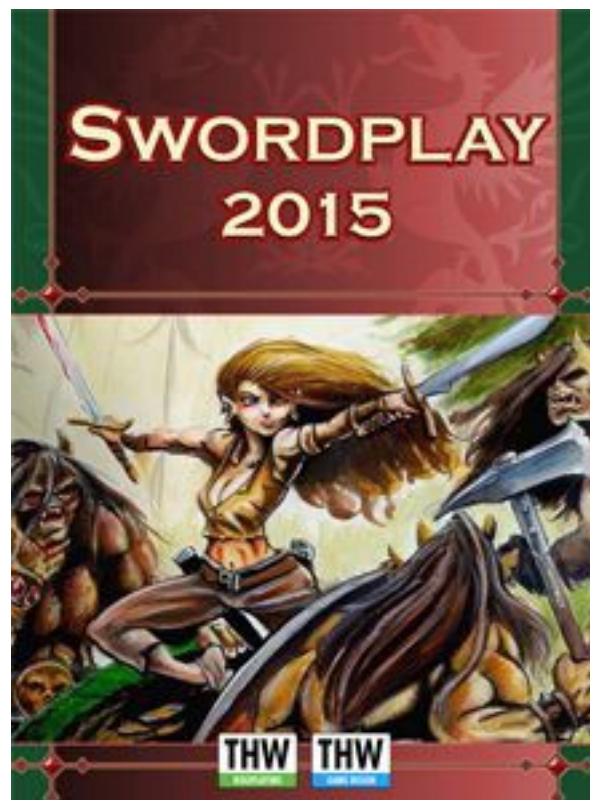
The Adventurer

This is a journal writing game for a solo player. As you play the game, you'll be creating a world and populating it with people, creatures, traditions and myths simply by writing about your characters adventures.

<https://jameschip.itch.io/the-adventurer>



Two Hour Wargames (<https://www.twohourwargames.com/chainreaction.html>) publish two sets of rules for free which can be played solo or with several players. The first is Chain reaction focuses on fighting with firearms covering historical periods and beyond, whilst the second set they produce Sword Play covers gaming with swords, spells and shields. These are a both good robust sets of rules and there's plenty of supplementary products to purchase to go alongside the core rules.



Several publishers have released free solo rules for existing rules sets they produce; this includes Mantic Games who announced recently a free supplement for download allowing you to play The Walking Dead in solo mode. Osprey were another publisher who has also released free solo supplements for download that includes Frostgrave, Last Days, Zona Alpha and Burrows and Badgers (https://ospreypublishing.com/blog/8_games_solo_players/).

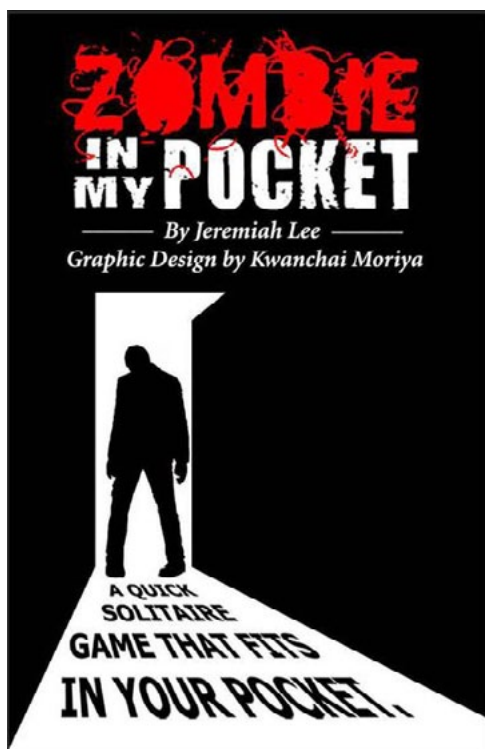


Print N Play board games is the next stop on our introductory look at solo gaming. What is Print n Play I hear you ask well, "Print and Play" games have made game collecting a lot more affordable and have put hundreds of titles right at the fingertips of gamers. Print and Play are games that can be downloaded, with printable game pieces, and are often free.

Zombie in my Pocket

(<http://funmines.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/zimp.pdf>)

Zombie in my Pocket is a print-and-play game solo game. The game fits in your pocket, and the modular board combined with the development cards make it a different game every time.



9-Bit Dungeon

(<https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/277427/9-bit-dungeon>)

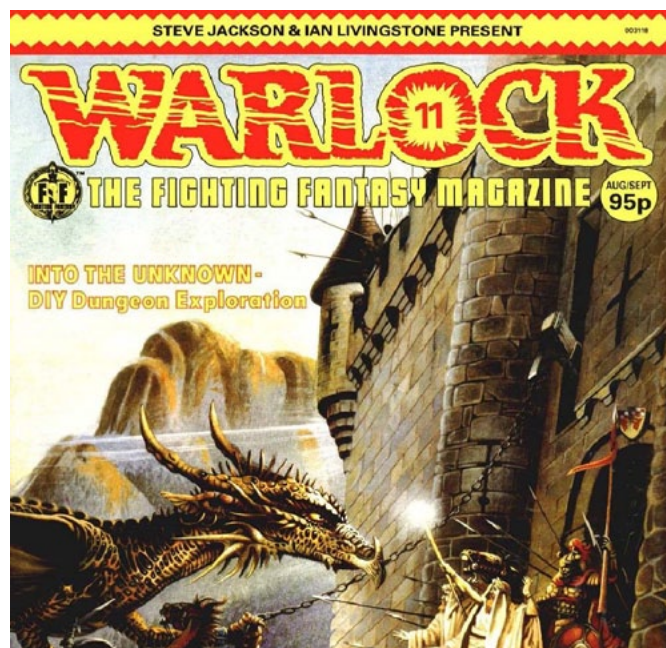
9-Bit Dungeon is a 9 Card Print and Play Rogue like Solo Game, with a randomly generated dungeon with over 1500 possible layouts, retro artwork, four increasingly difficult levels, random enemies and events, and shops full of upgrades.

Board Game Geek website has a plethora of free solo games to download, print and play. So it's worth heading over there and signing up as a member, which is free (<https://boardgamegeek.com/>). The site is an on-line board gaming resource and community, there's plenty on the site to keep you busy. The site includes reviews, ratings, images, play-aids, translations and session reports from players around the world, well as forums for discussing everything board game related.



There's plenty of options available on the internet to get your teeth into without having to spend a great deal of money, with plenty of freebies as well.

So, there's no stopping you from getting a game in or two whilst stuck at home in lockdown, or whilst we're having to implement social distancing rules. While we may not be able to meet up with friends to play a game there's no reason why we can't get some hobby time in by playing a solo version of a game you already play or downloading a new solo game. As they say where there's a will there's a way.



Personally, I've been going old school and searching for out of print games on sites such as Scribd and Drive Through RPG. I recently discovered an old OOP magazine for the Fighting Fantasy world called Warlock, which back in the day was the main source for FF and in many issues a solo adventure was included. You'll find several issues on Scribd, for any more you'll have to scour the internet.

So, until we're able to meet with our gaming groups and friends, solo gaming may be the way forward and could a great way to learn a new rules set and stop you going bored.

WOMEN OF POWER IN ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND

Author: Annie Whitehead

Publisher: Pen and Sword

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

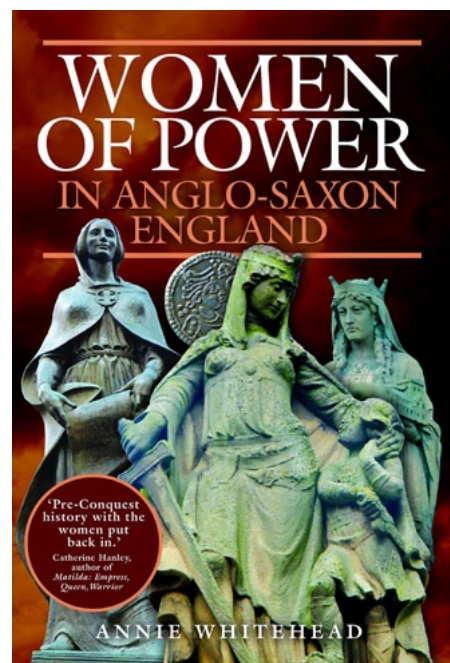
Many Anglo-Saxon kings are familiar. Æthelred the Unready is one, yet less is written of his wife, who was consort of two kings and championed one of her sons over the others, or his mother who was an anointed queen and powerful regent, but was also accused of witchcraft and regicide. A royal abbess educated five bishops and was instrumental in deciding the date of Easter; another took on the might of Canterbury and Rome and was accused by the monks of fratricide.

Anglo-Saxon women were prized for their bloodlines - one had such rich blood that it sparked a war - and one was appointed regent of a foreign country. Royal mothers wielded power; Eadgifu, wife of Edward the Elder, maintained a position of authority during the reigns of both her sons.

Æthelflaed, Lady of the Mercians, was a queen in all but name, while few have heard of Queen Seaxburh, who ruled Wessex, or Queen Cynethryth, who issued her own coinage. She, too, was accused of murder, but was also, like many of the royal women, literate and highly-educated.

From seventh-century Northumbria to eleventh-century Wessex and making extensive use of primary sources, *Women of Power in Anglo-Saxon England* examines the lives of individual women in a way that has often been done for the Anglo-Saxon men but not for their wives, sisters, mothers and daughters. It tells their stories: those who ruled and schemed, the peace-weavers and the warrior women, the saints and the sinners. It explores, and restores, their reputations.

The author has written a very well researched account of some of the most powerful females who lived in the early medieval period, and the influence they wielded on people and the events that occurred during this stage of history. Through the examples Annie has used in this volume she gives us an insight into the character of these influential women. Most are known by name but very little is understood or known regarding their actual power. This study fills in some of the missing information and greatly expands on their history, and their place in it.



The author highlights the fact that many of the women were far more educated and literate than previously given credit for. Along with the facts they were powerful individuals as landowners, high status members of the church, and royals, rather than just mere wives or mothers of powerful men.

This book is very well researched, and the author has drawn on primary sources which included the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and Bede, as well as citing several scholars and contemporary archaeologists. She has quite skilfully weaved together fragments of information and has attempted to place some meat on the bones of that info.

Whilst I found this a very interesting read, as a war-gamer it didn't provide me with any information I could use in my games, but it did provide some fascinating background regarding some of the personalities of the period which I found very interesting to read. This book will appeal to the armchair historian or student of history, as it's a valuable piece of research into this period of history and some of the personalities who helped shape the world around them.



Take a trip to Zombie World

A Reality's Edge Scenario

Jason Hubbard

Recently the Gataga Corporation opened a new adventure theme park based on old Earth TV Shows. The most popular is Zombie World. The resort is filled with android zombies for visitors to the park to try and kill. The Zombies are programmed not to injure or kill the visitors. There are also alongside the zombies some survivors who are also androids, they're aim is to obstruct and make life difficult for the visitors.

Visitors take on the role of a survivors who try to live in a zombie post apocalypse world. Things started to go wrong at the park when one of the programming staff was fired. They hacked into the system and re-programmed the androids to attack the visitors.

The owners of the theme park have been in contact to hire you to go into the park and rescue some high value visitors who are trapped in a building within the park surrounded by killer androids.

On one of the buildings is a console which can be easily hacked and there is a program that can be run to temporarily shut down the androids for 1 turn. They'll stop dead, but if you go close to an individual one it's built in sensors will alert the android and return it to life. So, the aim of any of team will be to stay at least 1 inch away from each android whilst moving around whilst they are temporarily shut down. This can only be used three times before it stops working and it takes 1d2 turns to reboot the program.

After two turns more androids will start arriving to the area, so 1d6 will have to be rolled before each turn to



determine how many new android zombies arrive. The only way direction to take the VIPs is the way you came in, as that's the safe zone. You'll get paid for every VIP you manage to rescue.



One player will have to play the androids, or players can take turns moving the zombie's androids and remember they'll move to the nearest human miniature or will move towards any noise like weapon fire. More than one Showrunner may compete, but this may reduce the pay-off if the rewards are split. Also, it will up the risk as both teams will see each other as a rival and so will become an additional hazard to each other.



Deadline

The aim is to complete the mission in 6 turns, once this has surpassed the additional REP points can't be awarded. After 8 turns it will be considered a fail and no REP points will be awarded.



Setup

There should be several buildings on the board with a central one which contains the VIPs. There are 6 VIPs in the building. Everywhere else there are Android zombies wandering around roll 1d6 per person in your team to calculate the number of zombies on the table at the start. Choose one side of the table which is at least 12 inches from the VIP building. This is the safe zone and Zombie Androids can't be placed any closer



than 6 inches to this table edge. There can be two safe zones if there are two teams competing.

On one of the buildings place a terminal on the roof, this is where the system can be hacked.



Pay-off

For every VIP rescued will earn a Rep point and additional +2 REP points will be awarded if this is completed under 6 turns. Players will also earn 5CC for each Android Zombie taken out of action.

If the system is hacked successfully the player will gain 1 INFO for each successful hack up to a maximum of 3. The winning showrunner will gain 1 experience point.

Note: Android Zombies move at -1 movement of a human. This can be sped up via a terminal hack to a maximum of 6. Zombies can only engage in close combat.

JAMES OF ST. GEORGE AND THE CASTLES OF THE WELSH WAR

Author: Stephen M Cullen

Publisher: Pen and Sword

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

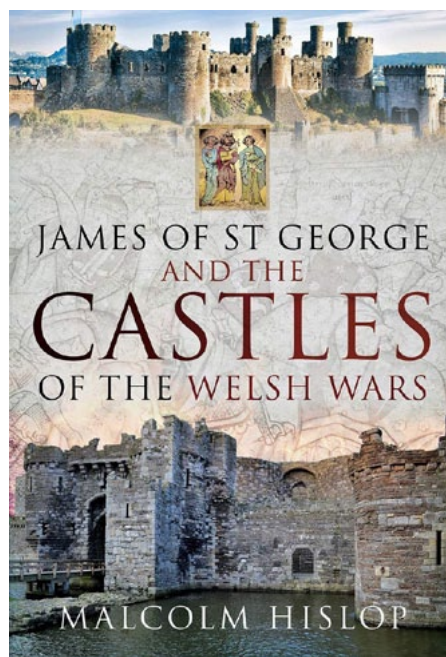
James of St George has a reputation as one of the most significant castle builders of the Middle Ages. His origins and early career at the heart of Europe, and his subsequent masterminding of Edward I of England's castle-building programs in Wales and Scotland, bestow upon him an international status afforded to few other master builders retained by the English crown.

The works erected under his leadership represent what many consider to be the apogee of castle development in the British Isles, and Malcolm Hislop's absorbing new study of the architecture is the most important reassessment to be published in recent times. His book explores the evolution of the Edwardian castle and James of St George's contribution to it. He gives a fascinating insight into the design, construction and organisation of such large-scale building projects, and the structural, military and domestic characters of the castles themselves. James's work on castles in the medieval duchy of Savoy is revisited, as are the native and foreign influences on the design of those he built for Edward I.

I was fortunate to spend several years living in Wales and during that time took it upon myself to visit as many of the Welsh castles as possible. For anyone interested in the medieval castle, Wales is the one place to visit to see some of the finest examples of Medieval castle construction, and this book is the perfect companion to read and take along.

It's an in-depth look at the architecture of a castle in this period, it's an essential read for anyone hoping to gain an understanding in the development of the castle as a building and military site. The author has produced a very detailed appraisal of the Welsh castles, and there's a plethora of images throughout the book to illustrate the text.

One of my favorite castles to visit is Conwy, and Malcom has provided a very informative account of the not only the castle but also the town's defenses. I thoroughly



enjoyed reading this, it brought back memories of wandering around the many castles in Wales. If you're looking for a book to provide some informative background material before visiting one of the Welsh castles, then you won't go far wrong picking up a copy of this book.

The book is nearly 300 pages and is broken down into 12 chapters covering Castles from the first and second Welsh wars, along with the Baronial and Royal castles, there is also a chapter on Edwardian castles in Scotland, along with the impact these castles had in Wales. It is illustrated with photographs and castle plans throughout.

This is one of those books that will appeal to many readers, those with an interest in architecture, military history, Welsh history, war-gamers and those with just a passing interest in castles. It was an interesting read, and I wish I'd read the book before visiting many of the castles, as there were plenty of things, I missed on my many outings. So now I have a perfect excuse to re-visit many of those castles next time I'm in Wales.



WE NEED YOU

irregular
magazine

WE NEED YOUR HELP

**COVER ARTISTS
INTERIOR ARTISTS
WRITERS**

Contact Us
irregularmagazine@gmail.com



[Irregularmag](#)



facebook.com/irregularmagazine

irregular magazine

Next Issue out Winter 2020