



irregular

Summer Issue 2023

magazine

Ai Wargame

Vikings in Ireland

LotR 5e
D&D Samurai

Wargame Scales
Majestic 13

Plus Reviews, and much, much more



Cover Art; Adobe Firefly

<https://www.adobe.com/sensei/generative-ai/firefly.html>

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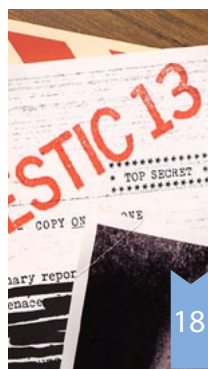
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Summer Issue 2023

Editorial

Jason Hubbard

Welcome back to another issue of Irregular Magazine.

We're halfway through the year, and on the downward slide towards Xmas. I finally managed to get my first show since Covid. I managed to get along to The Joy of Six in Sheffield. It was a great small show packed with a plethora of good gaming tables and traders. Did I buy any 6mm, no I bought more 15mm stuff...lol. There's always next year for me to be persuaded by some 6mm minis.

I've finally got around to starting a new ECW project (English Civil War). I've been talking starting an ECW project for some time and never managed to get one started, until now.

Well you've probably heard a lot about the new technology Ai all over the news in the last few months, especially Chat GPT. Well we decided to put it through its paces and tried to create a set of wargames rules, and background for a new game setting. We have an article about our endeavour, as well as a supplement for a new setting created with Ai.

Games Workshop have released the latest edition of the ever popular game 40K, they also announced the re-release of an old popular game Epic, though it's now called Legions Imperialis and it's set in the Horus Heresy. The planned release is expected to be in August, so we hope to get our hands on a copy for the next issue.

We now have a YouTube Channel and regularly post additional content on a regular basis. We plan to cover smaller scales a lot more on the channel, everything from 10mm through to 28mm.

Well that's all folks.....see you next time, and stay safe.

Jason

Dungeons & Dragons Adventurer



We're excited to announce there are just 2 months to go until the release of the brand new, officially licensed Dungeons & Dragons Adventurer collection!

Issue 1 will go on sale in stores on Wednesday 6th September. Alternatively, keep your eyes peeled for early subscription access. Subscribing to the collection gets you a whole host of benefits - see below for more details!

At its heart, Dungeons & Dragons is a game played by friends that focuses on storytelling. Everything is your decision, from what you look like, to how you act, to what happens next. Together you guide your heroes through quests, battle with deadly foes, engage in courtly intrigue, enact daring rescues, seek out treasure and much more.



WHAT'S IN THE COLLECTION?

In each issue of Dungeons & Dragons Adventurer, we'll explain the gameplay elements you need to understand how to successfully navigate this fantasy world. As well as your easy-to-follow guides, you'll also receive exclusive extras throughout the collection including dice (complete with velvet pouches or storage tins), miniatures, maps, booklets and inspiration tokens. Everything you need to survive this wild ride through the world of Dungeons & Dragons!

WHO'S THE COLLECTION FOR?

Dungeons & Dragons Adventurer is for everyone! Whether you're new to the game or a seasoned professional - there's something for everyone in this collection.

Every issue will guide you through the gameplay with easy-to-follow instructions that explain everything you need to know. Each magazine is filled with helpful advice and tips for Dungeon Masters and players alike.



For more experienced players with multiple campaigns under your belt, you're still sure to find inspiration from the exclusive adventures throughout the collection, all whilst growing your collection of specially designed dice, miniatures, maps and more created just for D&D Adventurer!

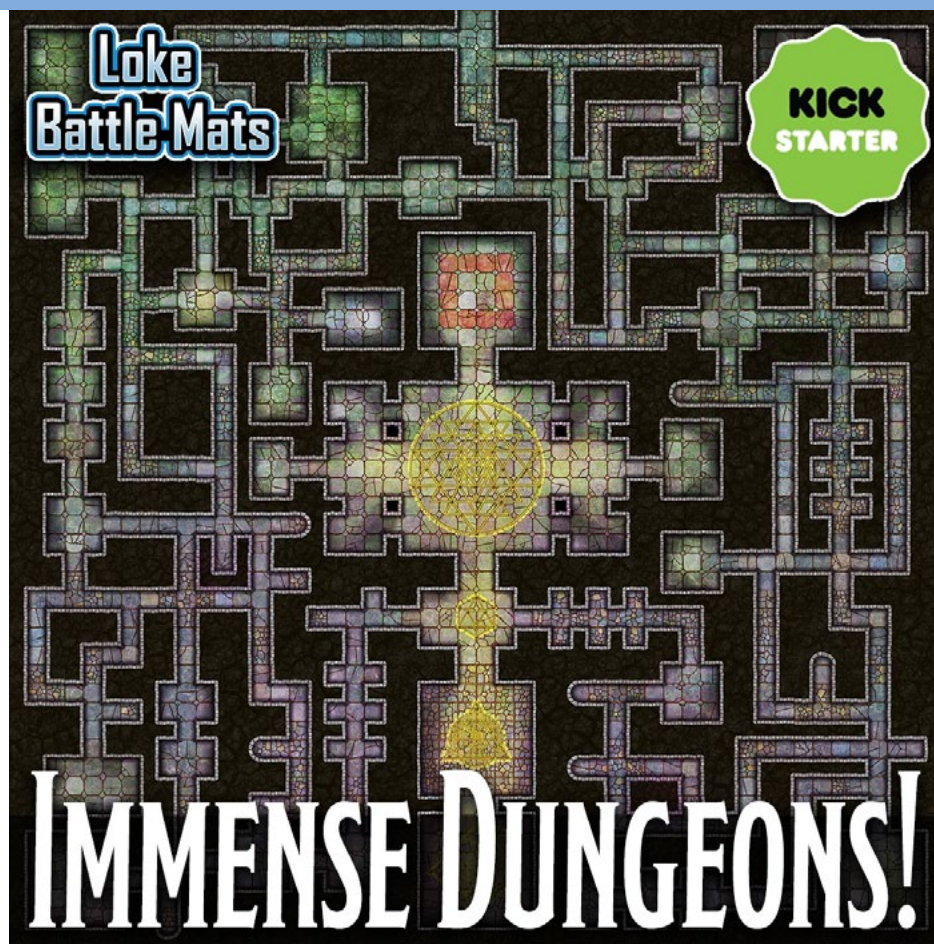
WHY SHOULD I SUBSCRIBE?

With issue 1 priced at just £1.99 (€2.99) and standard issue price only £8.99 (€13.99), D&D Adventurer is a bargain for any tabletop roleplaying fan!

When you subscribe, you'll receive 4 issues delivered to your door every 4 weeks with FREE P&P (€1 per issue for ROI customers).

Plus, if you subscribe to the collection from issues 1-4, you'll receive a FREE issue and 4 FREE gifts! Subscribing to the collection is the best way to guarantee you never miss an issue.

Introducing Immense Dungeons: Digital Maps for Discerning Game Masters



We are thrilled to announce our Kickstarter campaign for Immense Dungeons, a groundbreaking collection of digital RPG Battle Maps, map tiles to create your own layouts and tokens to customize them with.

All designed specifically for game masters who demand the highest level of creativity and customization.

Immense Dungeons provides an unparalleled collection of digital map tiles, tokens, and complete ready-to-roll maps, empowering you to construct complex bespoke dungeon layouts to suit their exacting requirements.

With a wide variety of options and variations, as well as sewers & caves, this collection is a must-have for any RPG enthusiast looking to take their gaming sessions to new heights of excitement and adventure.

Key Features of Immense Dungeons:

1000+ digital map tiles to create intricate and truly unique map layouts with a range of themes and settings included.

Furnish with Tokens: A vast selection of tokens representing furniture, traps, treasures, and more to customize your maps. With a comprehensive collection at your fingertips, you can create the maps for any dungeon encounter!

Ready-to-Roll Maps: Short on time? No problem.

Immense Dungeons; includes a collection of meticulously designed ready-to-roll maps, ensuring that you have immersive and captivating dungeons to hand.

Versatility and Customization: Whether you're running a classic fantasy campaign or exploring the depths of a hidden alien civilization, Immense Dungeons has the maps you need to run your adventure your way.

User-Friendly: Files will be supplied as VTT sized and print sized files via DriveThruRPG. These files can be uploaded into any of the usual VTTs, or onto home PCs to use in programmes such as Photoshop or Illustrator.

Roll20 pledge tier is available with preloaded files & dynamic lighting on the maps.

We understand the passion and dedication that game masters put into crafting memorable adventures for their players, said Matt Henderson, the creator of Immense Dungeons.

With our Kickstarter campaign, we aim to provide a game-changing collection that makes it easier than ever to create truly unique and bespoke dungeon maps. The Kickstarter campaign for Immense Dungeons will launch on June 22.

Star Trek Away Missions



Lead your away team into the aftermath of the Battle of Wolf 359, where the Borg have crushed the only fleet standing between Earth and assimilation.

In Star Trek Away Missions, players will lead their own landing parties to complete missions conduct espionage, fight in glorious battle, or assimilate distinctiveness

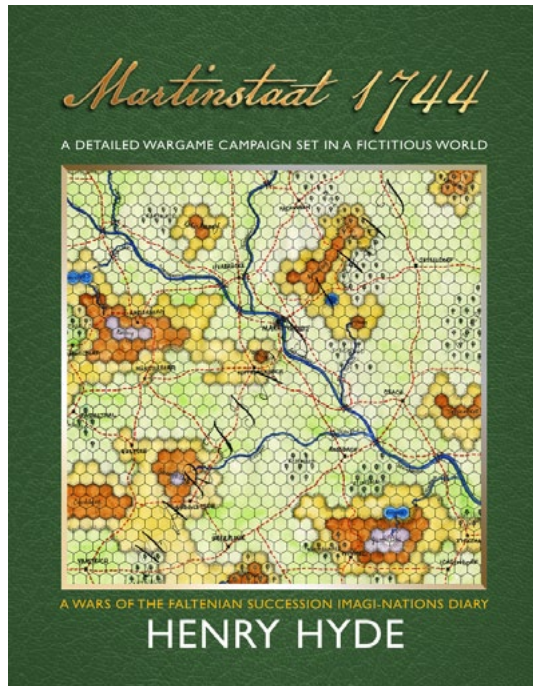
The objective is to score points by completing missions over the three rounds. Each completed mission earns you points. Score the most points to win the game



Lead Rikers landing party into the wreckage and search for information that will defeat the Borg to save Earth, or join Locutus of Borg and the Borg collective to assimilate your opposition.



Martinstaat 1744



A completely imaginary campaign, set in an imaginary world, fought by two imaginary countries over the territory of a third...

Sounds crazy? But not for wargamers, who have been undertaking such hobby projects for decades. Some players prefer the outright fantasy of pseudo-medieval worlds such as those described by J R R Tolkien, or made famous by games such as Warhammer or Dungeons and Dragons. But others, coming from the historical side of the hobby, have been well served by what is known as 'Ruritanian' literature such as the Prisoner of Zenda, where the action plays out in a world that looks suspiciously like our own, but with a few kinks.

It is in this genre that Henry Hyde has become well-known in the wargaming world, picking up the threads of such greats in the early hobby such as Charles Grant and Brigadier Peter Young, who fought countless battles and campaigns set in their own fictitious settings as, indeed, did wargaming pioneer H G Wells. Nowadays, wargamers have coined the term "imagi-nations" for such forays into not-quite-history, and hundreds of gamers around the world now collect armies that bear a suspicious resemblance to those of Prussia, Austria, France, Britain or the patchwork of Germanic micro-states during the eighteenth century and play games ranging from small skirmishes to huge, pitched battles and manoeuvre their armies across maps that are entirely made up by the players.

It is in this context that Martinstaat 1744 is firmly rooted. Back in the early 1990s, Henry and his chum Guy Hancock, both history graduates, leading the imaginary armies of Prunkland and Faltenland, pitched their wits against one another in a classic horse-and-musket era campaign, invading the territory of neutral Martinstaat in an attempt to outflank each other's northern border and grab natural resources and taxes to swell their own state coffers. This was part of what became known as The Wars of the Faltenian Succession.

This scenario, in itself, is not unique in wargaming—but what set this campaign apart was Henry's meticulous record-keeping in the pre-digital era, with page after page of beautiful, neat, handwritten notes and maps showing move-by-move precisely where the opposing forces were located. It was after posting a few pages of these notes online that a clamour grew amongst fans for him to turn these intricate records into a book—and here it is, including the full campaign rules used for that season.

In short, this book is unique in the world of wargaming. There is nothing else like it, and outside the world of fantasy and sci-fi gaming that tends to be dominated by 'big brands' of the hobby, Henry admits that this is a highly unusual project. It is hard to categorize and needs an audience with an open mind that will 'get' not only the pseudo-historical context and the degree of storytelling that involves, but also the author's vision of a world that mirrors our own, but with a tweak. His world-building has already spread through the eons of imagined history and extends thousands of miles around a fictitious planet. Where might it go next?



Introducing the Brand New RPG Toolboxes by Loke Battle



Each map, or area (a small group of maps combined) has its own encounters written just for it, so you can take out any area, individual map, encounter or monster to use as you see fit. And it really is that easy!



These toolboxes contain everything you need to travel The Long Road and explore the Veiled Dungeon respectively. Designed to be used either as a stand-alone adventure, or a toolbox of monsters, NPCs, encounters, maps and more that can be easily inserted into your own campaigns.

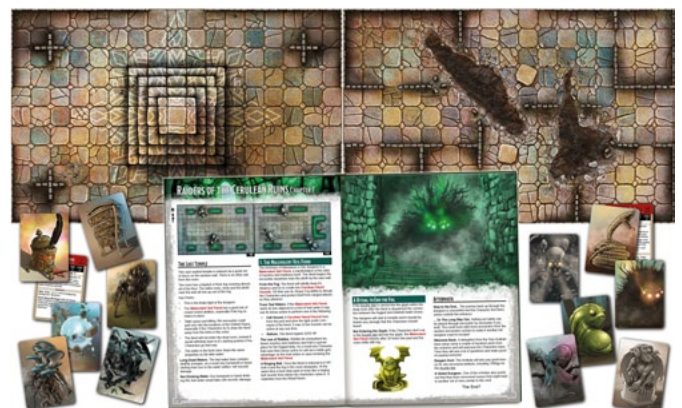
Each RPG Toolbox contains a 5E ready to roll adventure and the maps to play it on. They feature dozens of unique monsters and NPCs who can be encountered in our unique settings.

The modular writing allows the content to be easily inserted into your campaign!

Our RPG Toolboxes contain –

- Fold out modular maps
- 24 Maps
- Wet & Dry marker safe
- Laminated
- Modular designs to combine in multiple different ways.
- A detailed, fully illustrated reference book containing 5E Adventure
- Random encounters written for each map; area.
- Unique 5E Monsters
- Unique NPCs
- Adventure and plot generators
- Monster & NPC Cards
- 40 Unique cards with beautiful artwork

The Long Road RPG Toolbox and the Veiled Dungeon RPG Toolbox will be available through your local gaming store and favourite online retailers in September.



McFarlane Toys and WB: DC Announcement



McFarlane Toys and Warner Bros. Discovery Join Forces to Launch Innovative Line of DC Digital Collectibles

Tempe, AZ, July 19, 2023 - McFarlane Toys, a leading creator of premium collectible figures and toys, and Warner Bros. Discovery Global Consumer Products, are thrilled to announce their strategic partnership to create a ground-breaking assortment of DC digital collectibles on the McFarlane Toys Digital Platform.

This collaboration combines McFarlane Toys' exceptional craftsmanship and DC's iconic characters, resulting in an immersive and innovative collectible experience for fans around the world. Launching with items inspired by the DC Multiverse line of physical products, McFarlane Toys will create high-quality and interoperable digital collectibles starring unforgettable DC Super Heroes and Super-Villains.

"We're so excited to bring DC characters to life in a whole new way for fans around the world with our digital collectibles. These include all the intricate detail that fans know and expect from McFarlane, combined with AAA quality graphics as well as social, gamified online collecting, which makes them special," said Stephan Tetrault, Chief Operating Officer at McFarlane Toys.

To give fans an initial glimpse of what's to come, McFarlane Toys has unveiled a sneak peek of their new digital collectibles line across their social media channels. The preview includes a first look at the "Batman Year 2" sculpt designed by Todd McFarlane, the

throwback Batmobile from Warner Bros. and DC's The Flash movie, and a Todd McFarlane-designed Superman as seen in Action Comics #1000. And these are only a few of the incredible items that will be coming to the McFarlane Toys Digital Platform in the coming weeks!

McFarlane also teased early access to DC digital collectibles for top players within their existing ecosystem, as well as through partnered projects with Warner Bros. Discovery, such as DC's Bat Cows.

Furthermore, McFarlane Toys showed off their upcoming features that improve interoperability.

Visit www.mcfarlanetoysdigital.com to download the Viewer App and get started. Exclusive first access to these inaugural DC drops will be granted to already active players in the Viewer App. Within that app, fans can earn XP by collecting, holding, visiting, and sharing to climb the leaderboard, which are just a

few of the things that increase the chances of gaining early and/or discounted access to drops throughout a player's collecting journey. McFarlane's custom digital storefront is powered by Rarible, a leading NFT platform for creators, brands, and collectibles, and all items will be released via the Polygon blockchain. Digital collectibles can be held in any Polygon-supported digital wallet.

Zidhe 15mm Space Elves updated and value pack



Recently Alternative remastered our Zidhe infantry codes and upgraded their imagery as well. Sculpted by Steve Young and Rob Alderman and a nice little array. In line with other parts of the HOF 15mm Science Fiction Range we added a new value pack of all the poses with a saving baked in.

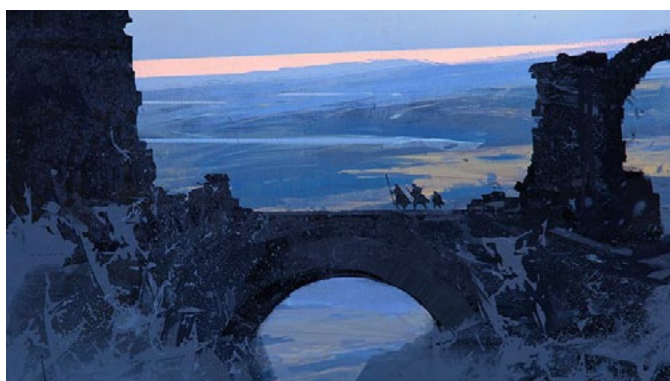


As with all other codes in the now near 190 pack range every pose can be had as a single within the packs on their page; see the menu on each page and you can filter by group on the main page too.



Here is a scale line up shot so you can see how the Zidhe Space Elves match up next to SFA Human, Cultist Human, Octopod and a Corporate Ashigaru





The Lord of the Rings 5e

This is the Master-ring, the One Ring to rule them all

The Lord of the Rings™ Roleplaying is 236-page beautifully designed and illustrated hardback volume that contains what players need to create 5E adventures set in the world's most popular fantasy setting: six original heroic cultures from the land of Eriador, six new classes, a host of terrifying adversaries, and comprehensive rules for journeys, councils, wondrous artefacts, and the subtle magic of Middle-earth.

The Lord of the Rings™ Roleplaying is 236-page beautifully designed and illustrated hardback volume that contains what players need to create 5E adventures set in the world's most popular fantasy setting: six original heroic cultures from the land of Eriador, six new classes, a host of terrifying adversaries, and comprehensive rules for journeys, councils, wondrous artefacts, and the subtle magic of Middle-earth.

Shire™ Adventures is a 104-page hardback volume that describes the Shire in great detail, as well as five short adventures and seven pre-generated characters, including famous Bagginses, Tookes, and Brandybucks! The contents of Shire™ Adventures are adapted from the Starter Set for The One Ring™ RPG.

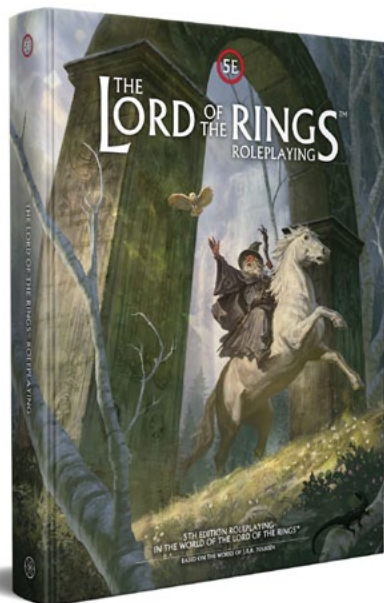
A Loremaster's Screen with a compendium about Rivendell, including a map of the valley and a plan of the house itself, is also available.

Now you can delve into the setting, explore the world and fight in the struggle against the dark forces of Mordor.

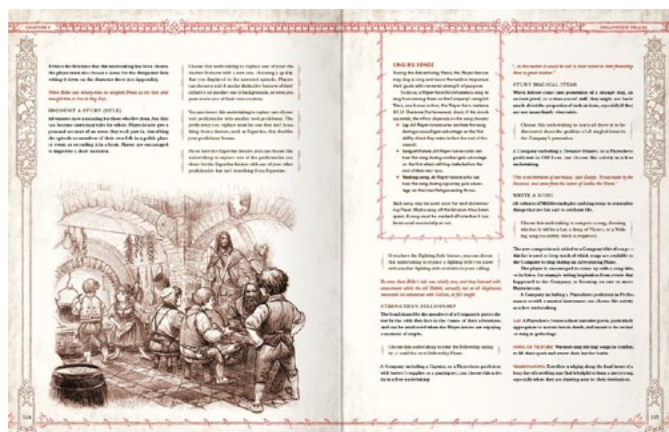
The game comes as both a core rule book and an impressive source book set in the shire allowing you explore the popular location of the hobbits.



This RPG will allow players to travel and explore the Northern regions of Middle-Earth, where they'll encounter all the classic monsters from the books or meet some of the iconic characters such as Gandalf or Arathorn.



There are plenty of options to create characters from a range of options that includes Men of Bree, Elves of Lindon and even the Rangers of the North. The rules are relatively simple in comparison to other RPGs such as Dungeons and Dragons. The mechanics work via Fellowship points, Shadow points along with Hope and Wit. Which all pushes towards the driving force behind the RPG which is to team up with fellow players and wander around the realms of Middle -Earth in a fun and exciting way.



This game isn't about leading armies against the dark forces in battle but exploring the world at large. This is about exploring the parts of the world that were ignored in the novels and engaging with the cultures and people of Middle-Earth.

The Shire Adventures source book concentrates on the Shire with some premade scenarios for players to explore.



There won't be kings, wizards or powerful empires in the source book but the rural landscape of Eriador. In the adventure book there is a series of five scenarios which stars Bilbo Baggins as the lead non player character, who will lead and provide advice to the players whilst they embark on small quests. This will allow new players to get to grips with the rule system and ease them into the world of Middle-Earth. It also comes with pre-generated characters so new players can jump right in without too much fuss.

There's plenty of information on the realms in both the Shire Adventures book and core rules to allow both new and existing players with enough background to set out exploring the world of Middle Earth.

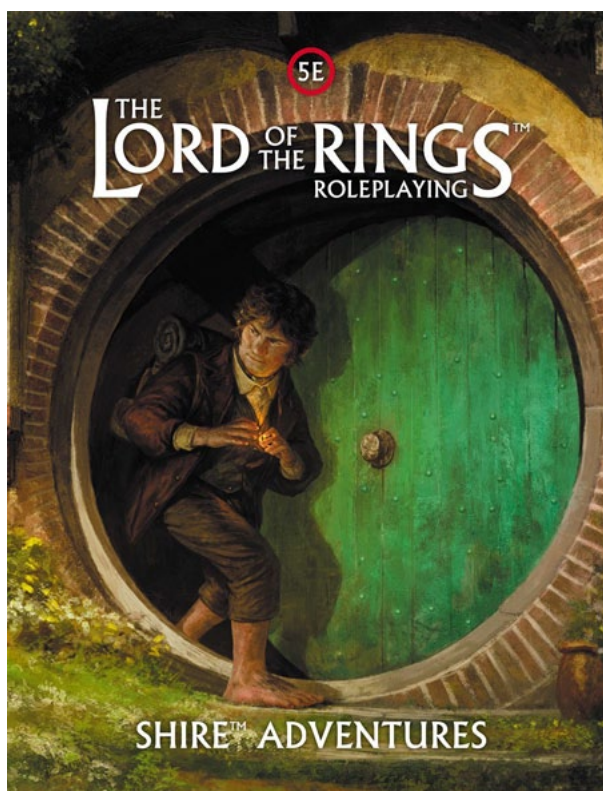


There are rules for travelling across the land (Journey), facing frightening foes (Combat), and meeting the personalities of Middle earth (Council).

It also includes in-depth information on six Patrons — individuals sponsoring the adventures of the Player-heroes — including Bilbo Baggins and Gandalf the Grey.



There is a bestiary containing a spread of adversaries, from lowly Orc Soldiers and Highway-robbers to monstrous Cave-Trolls and Barrow-Wights. As well as tables to create your very own Nameless Things — unknowable beings from the dark corners of the world.



This works well for 5e D&D, some aspects have been changed from One Ring rule set but of the rules have been converted across to 5e. Normally 5e players can go up to level 20 but Lord of the Ring RPG limits players to level 10 only. Also, characters are more grounded in comparison as well to typical D&D settings, which means players still need to be cautious in combat. Which should make even the Leroy Jenkins in a group pause before charging in without any strategy.



The one aspect I like from the One Ring which has been kept, is players select a heroic ancestry and a calling rather than a race and class. Characters will travel the realms facing numerous foes such as orcs, giant spiders and trolls to name a few. Most of the character options will feel similar to most D&D players, yet the virtue system and equipment upgrades have been carried across from The One Ring.

The books are produced to the typical outstanding quality seen in all of Freeleague's RPG games. They're lavish illustrated throughout with a mix of colour and black/white artwork. The Shire Adventures has been designed with the beginner in mind and allows players to explore the shire. This is a great starting point especially those who are new to role playing.

Overall, I think this is a great edition to the D&D library, which will allow players to dive into a great world setting that's beloved by many fans of the fantasy genre. It also differs enough from typical D&D settings to be interesting and exciting for long time players, whilst being a great place for newbies to jump into and explore.

Desert Armour

Tank Warfare in North Africa

Author: Robert Forczyk

Publisher: Osprey Publishing

Review by Jason Hubbard

Robert Forczyk covers the development of armoured warfare in North Africa from the earliest Anglo-Italian engagements in 1940 to the British victory over the German Afrika korps in Operation Crusader in 1941.

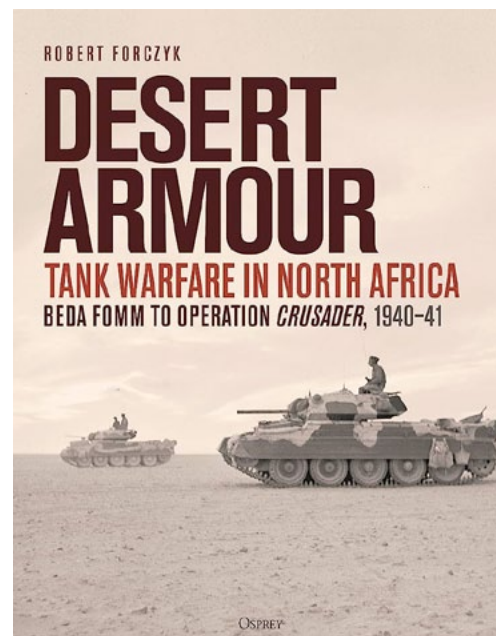
The war in the North African desert was pure mechanized warfare, and in many respects the most technologically advanced theatre of World War II. It was also the only theatre where for three years British and Commonwealth, and later US, troops were in constant contact with Axis forces.

World War II best-selling author Robert Forczyk explores the first half of the history of the campaign, from the initial Italian offensive and the arrival of Rommel's Panzergruppe Afrika to the British Operation Crusader offensive that led to the relief of Tobruk. He examines the armoured forces, equipment, doctrine, training, logistics and operations employed by both Allied and Axis forces throughout the period, focusing especially on the brigade and regimental level of operations.

Fully illustrated throughout with photographs, profile artwork and maps, and featuring tactical-level vignettes and appendices analysing tank data, tank deliveries in-theatre and orders of battle, this book goes back to the sources to provide a new study of armoured warfare in the desert.

The first thing I can say about this book, is the fact that it's well researched, in fact it's an extremely detailed body of work. The book is well written, that provides a great look at the events occurring in North Africa, and the forces competing against each other.

What I did like about this book is the author gives an honest view of those in command of the troops fighting in the campaign. He points out that Rommel was at times erratic and prone to impetuous behaviour something that most other researchers fail to point out,



he also notes that a lot of the British commanders were incompetently useless, whilst he paints a fairer picture of the Italian commanders and soldiers. Normally most people regard the Italian military very poorly, which is generally an unfair image of them.

This is a very well detailed look at tank warfare of the period and in particular North Africa, the informative text is supported throughout with photographs and excellent illustrations. This is one of those books that will appeal to a wide range of individuals, wargamers will find this a great resource for the information provided as well as the illustrations, tank fans will find this a great read especially the information around the tactics and tanks used by all sides in the campaign. For military historians this one of those books they'll have trouble putting down, it a fascinating read about a technology that had only been around since the later part of the Great War.

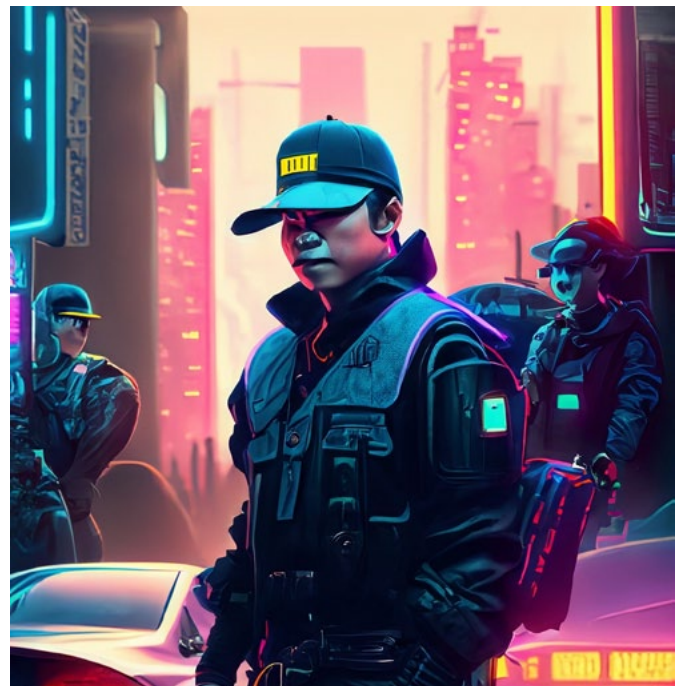
Using AI to create a wargame

by Jason Hubbard

Recently we decided to explore the steps involved in building a wargame with AI software, from designing the game mechanics to training the AI algorithm. So, whether you're a seasoned game developer or a hobbyist looking to create your first wargame, join us as we delve into the exciting world of wargaming with AI technology!

War games have always been a popular way to test strategy and tactics, but with advancements in artificial intelligence, we can now create opponents that can challenge even the most seasoned gamers. Table-top wargames have been a beloved hobby for decades, but what if I told you that artificial intelligence could help revolutionize the way we play these games?

With AI-powered software, you can create an immersive gaming experience that is fun, challenging, and uniquely your own.



And the best part? You don't need any prior experience in game design. That's the theory, so I decided to test this theory out. For the text I used ChatGPT and for the artwork Adobe Firefly.

ChatGPT uses advanced algorithms to create balanced games that are tailored to your specific preferences. It takes into account everything from the number of players to the available game pieces, and even the skill level of the players.

I decided to set the game in Shanghai 2095, after a global war and collapse in society. The world has become a series of city states. The idea was to take Shanghai of the 1930's which was full of various factions that included spies, criminals, rich elite and police then drop it all into a cyberpunk version in the future.

The first stage was to get ChatGPT to create the background fluff of the game.





This involved asking the software a series of questions to output the background material needed. You also need to remember the language you use will elicit a particular response, words such as explain, describe will matter.

The software didn't struggle outputting decent background material but I must reiterate this the material that the software outputs will still to be edited and in parts re-written. It's a great method to quickly generate a huge chunk of written text that can be utilised.

The next step was to generate some art to illustrate the text, there are several texts to image Ai software, that include Midjourney and Adobe Firefly. As I have access to Firefly, I decided to use that.



It's a pretty simple software to use, the idea is you write in a detailed description or a list of keywords which will allow the software to generate an image.

Finally, I tried to get ChatGPT to generate a set of rules. I decided a D6 system would be appropriate and started the process. This was where the Ai did struggle, whilst it managed to output options and ideas around rules. I couldn't get a functional working game system. Now whilst I did get some very useful ideas, and some rules I realised at this stage I'd need to have more human input into creating a rule system. Or it could be that I don't know enough about how the Ai works to get to output a workable set of rules.

Overall, it was a good experience, and I did find using the software an enjoyable process. The Ai software will definitely output a workable background fluff for a game and the Text to Image software will generate great looking artwork. I'm going to still need to do a bulk of the leg work when it comes to creating a rule system, but if you're just looking to create a new background to use with your favourite set of rules then definitely make use of ChatGPT.

I've included the background that was created in ChatGPT as a supplement with this issue of the magazine. There are no rules but it can be easily used for set of rules you currently play.



The Dacians & Getae at War

4th Century BC -2nd Century AD

Author: Adrei Pogacias

Publisher: Osprey Publishing

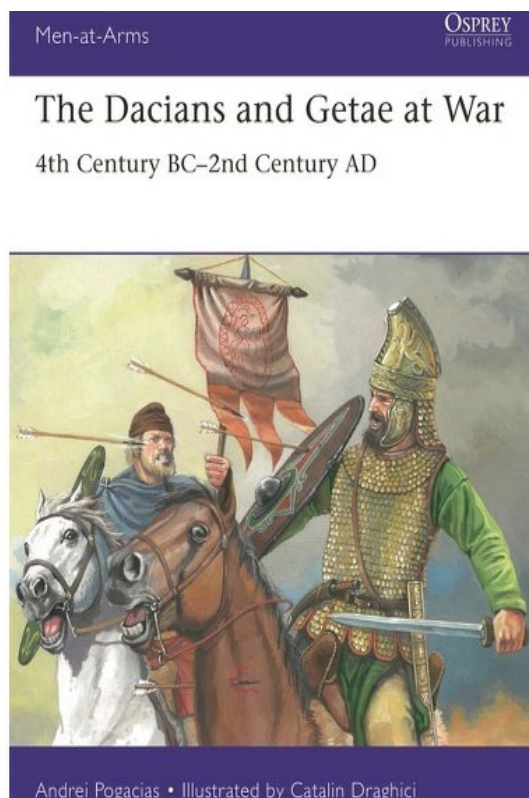
Review by Jason Hubbard

This intriguing book describes the Romans' formidably warlike enemies in modern Romania and Bulgaria - their 'most illustrated' opponents, thanks to friezes on Trajan's Column and carvings on Trajan's Adamklissi monument. Formidable warriors, able to field tens of thousands of infantry and cavalry and led by a military aristocracy, the Dacians and Getae presented a real threat to Rome's north-eastern frontier. They inflicted several defeats on Rome, crossing the Danube to invade the province of Moesia, and later stubbornly resisting counter-invasions from their strong mountain fortresses.

Historians believe that the Dacians and Getae were essentially the same group of tribes during successive periods, related to Thracian tribes from territory south of the Carpathian Mountains, but their exact relationship in place and time is a subject for debate. Those called the 'Getae' by ancient Greek sources were actively expanding by at least the 4th century BC; some enlisted as mercenaries in Roman armies during the 1st century BC, and others later clashed with the army of Augustus, fighting alongside the Sarmatians.

The people whom the Romans called the 'Dacians' are best known from wars against the emperors Domitian in AD 85-89 and Trajan in 101-106. At their peak, the Dacians and Getae defeated neighbouring peoples stretching from modern Slovakia to southern Ukraine and it is believed that the effectiveness of their weapons caused modifications in Roman infantry armour.

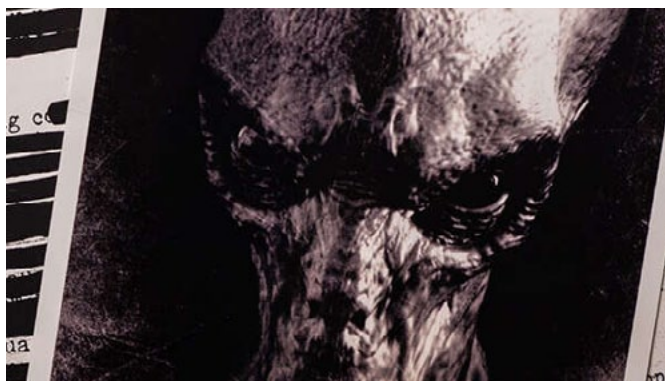
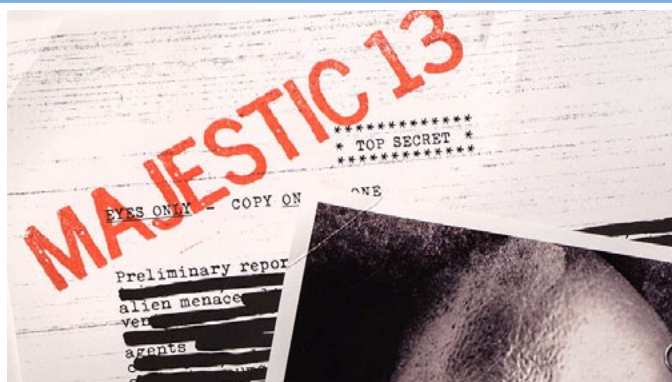
Although most direct ancient sources have been lost to us, enough references remain to reconstruct a picture of their society and culture. Using previously unseen photos of archaeological finds with colour illustrations showing the appearance and weaponry of their warrior kings, noblemen, infantry and cavalry, this detailed book draws upon the latest literary and archaeological research to provide a complete account of these fascinating fighters.



Both of these tribes lived in what is now known as modern day Romania, previously very little has been written about these two tribes, how they lived and fought. A lot of what we know comes from when the Dacians faced the Roman legions, so this slim but extremely detailed volume provides a very useful insight.

This is a great read for anyone wanting to build either army to face the Romans, or to fight local tribal conflicts that were fought before the Legions bullied their way in to the realms of these two tribes.

An excellent addition to the Men at Arms series of books, these books tend to around the 50-page mark, with this one hitting 48 pages. One of the great features of these books are the superb illustrations which can be as painting references for those building a wargame army.



Majestic 13

Unleashing Extraterrestrial Intrigue on the Tabletop

In recent years, the tabletop gaming industry has witnessed a surge in popularity, with an increasing number of unique and engaging games hitting the market. Majestic 13, a captivating tabletop game developed by visionary game designer Alex Chambers, has emerged as a shining star among enthusiasts.

This review article delves into the captivating world of Majestic 13, exploring its gameplay mechanics, thematic depth, and overall gaming experience.

Gameplay Mechanics

Majestic 13 is a cooperative storytelling game that places players in the role of a team of government agents working in a clandestine organization dedicated to uncovering the truth about extraterrestrial activity on Earth.

The game seamlessly blends elements of deduction, strategy, and resource management, ensuring an immersive and dynamic gameplay experience.

At the core of Majestic 13 is its ingenious card-based system. Each player controls a unique character with specific abilities and resources, represented by a deck of cards. These cards can be used for various purposes, such as investigating leads, gathering evidence, or engaging in thrilling encounters.

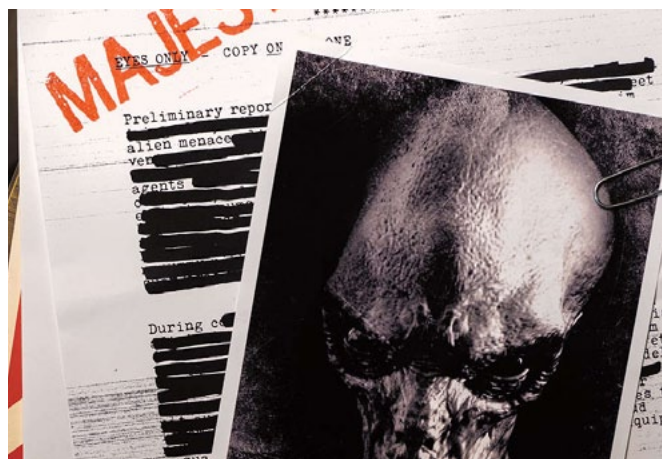
The game master, taking on the role of the enigmatic alien presence, guides the players through a series of challenging scenarios, ensuring a constant sense of tension and excitement.



Thematic Depth

Majestic 13 excels in immersing players in a rich and detailed thematic setting. The game's overarching narrative weaves a complex web of government conspiracies, ancient alien artifacts, and covert operations.

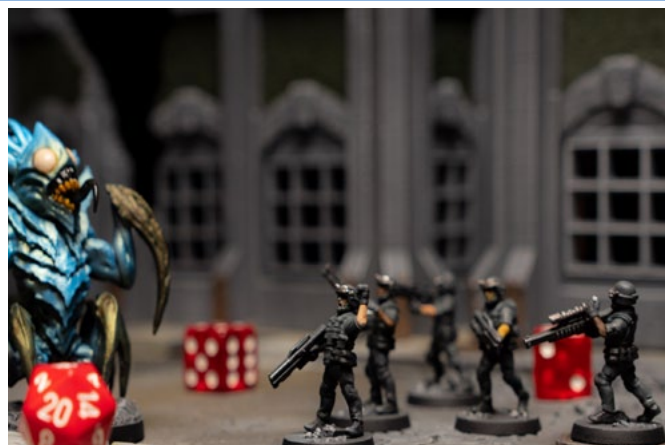
The attention to detail in the game's artwork, character designs, and scenario descriptions is commendable, drawing players into a world where the line between reality and fiction blurs.



Furthermore, the game strikes a delicate balance between realism and supernatural elements. It captures the sense of mystery and awe associated with extraterrestrial phenomena, while also grounding the gameplay in strategic decision-making and logical deduction. The thematic consistency is one of the game's strongest aspects, keeping players invested in the unfolding story.

Gaming Experience

Majestic 13 offers a unique cooperative experience that fosters communication and collaboration among players.



The game encourages players to pool their knowledge, share insights, and develop strategies collectively, fostering a strong sense of camaraderie and teamwork. Successfully overcoming challenges requires a careful allocation of resources, thoughtful planning, and clever utilization of character abilities.

One of the game's standout features is its replayability. Majestic 13 incorporates a modular campaign structure, allowing players to embark on different story arcs and face new challenges with each playthrough.

This ensures that no two games are alike, offering a fresh and exciting experience every time.

Moreover, Majestic 13's rulebook and game components are well-designed and user-friendly. The game's mechanics are relatively easy to grasp, making it accessible to both experienced tabletop enthusiasts and newcomers to the hobby.

Conclusion:

Majestic 13 stands as a testament to the ingenuity and creativity prevalent in the modern tabletop gaming landscape. Its engaging gameplay mechanics, immersive thematic depth, and cooperative experience make it a standout title in its genre.

With its compelling narrative, strategic decision-making, and captivating artwork, Majestic 13 takes players on an unforgettable journey into the realm of extraterrestrial intrigue. Whether you're a seasoned gamer or new to the hobby, Majestic 13 is an excellent addition to any tabletop collection, promising hours of thrilling gameplay and collaborative storytelling.

The Hydaspes 326 BC

The Limit of Alexander the Great's Conquests

Author: Nic Fields

Publisher: Osprey Publishing

Review by Jason Hubbard

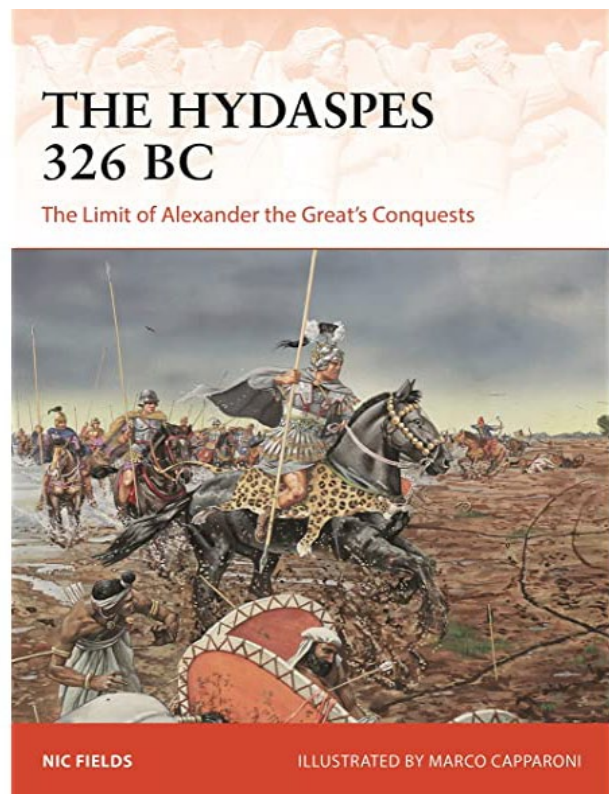
The first dedicated examination of Alexander the Great's final battle and acknowledged tactical masterpiece.

In the years that followed Alexander the Great's victory at Gaugamela on 1 October 331 BC, his Macedonian and Greek army fought a truly 'Herculean' series of campaigns in what is today Iran, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. But it was in the Indus Valley, on the banks of the Hydaspes River (known today as the Jhelum) in 326 BC that Alexander would fight his last major battle against King Poros.

Using detailed maps and 3D diagrams, this beautifully illustrated work shows how Alexander used feints and deception to transport a select force from his army across the swollen River Hydaspes without attracting the enemy's attention, allowing his troops the crucial element of surprise. Battlescene artworks and photographs reveal the fascinating array of forces that clashed in the battle, including Indian war elephants and chariots, and horse archers and phalanx formations. Also examined are the differences in weaponry and armour between the opposing sides, which would prove crucial to the outcome. Although a tactical masterpiece, the Hydaspes was the closest that Alexander the Great came to defeat and was one of the costliest battles fought by his near-exhausted army.

The author does a great job of describing the battle that was the limit of Alexander's conquests. His army had managed to plunge deep into the Persian Empire but the Hydaspes was the limit of their reach. Nic managed to detail the battle and the tactical expertise of Alexander and his generals.

The campaign series of books follow a very formulaic layout, so they feel similar to each other. The book starts with an overview of what events brought Alexander to this battle, and then he spends time focusing on the actual battle.



He then takes a look at the two commanders, Alexander a well-known historical character and the opposing general Poros, who isn't well known outside of certain historical circles.

The author also spends some time providing some detailed information of the two armies, the Greek Phalanx against the mighty Elephants under the command of Poros. There is obviously other units involved but these are going to be the two that wargamers will be drawn to. This is a great introduction to the battle, it's well written and superbly illustrated throughout including battle maps, which is always a useful resource for wargamers. What was interesting was not the forces of Alexander but learning more about the Indian military under Poros. I do like the idea of fielding elephants in an army.

Shadow Drake

BECMI D&D

Description: Shadow Drakes are vicious predators that hunt in the darkness. They resemble large, winged reptiles with black scales that absorb light, making them difficult to spot in low light conditions. Their eyes glow with an eerie red light, and their breath is a cloud of inky blackness that can blind and disorient their prey.

Abilities: Shadow Drakes have powerful jaws that can crush bone and powerful wings that allow them to fly at great speeds. They can also breathe a cloud of darkness that obscures vision and can confuse their prey. They are immune to cold damage and resistant to necrotic damage. They are weak to radiant damage and vulnerable to bright light.

Combat: Shadow Drakes are stealthy predators and prefer to attack from ambush. They will use their breath weapon to blind and confuse their prey, then swoop in for the kill. They are quick and agile in combat and can use their wings to knock over opponents or fly out of reach.

They are also capable of grappling and pinning opponents with their powerful jaws.





Habitat: Shadow Drakes are found in dark, secluded places, such as deep caves or abandoned ruins.

They are most active at night and prefer to hunt in areas with little to no light.

Treasure: Shadow Drakes do not hoard treasure, but their scales and bones are highly valued by alchemists and craftsmen for their unique properties.

Alignment: Shadow Drakes are typically neutral, but some may be evil or chaotic.

Overall, the Shadow Drake is a dangerous and elusive predator that can pose a threat to even experienced adventurers. Its ability to blend into the shadows and obscure vision makes it a challenging foe to defeat, and its valuable scales and bones make it a desirable target for those seeking rare materials.

Here are the D&D 5e stats for the Shadow Drake:

Shadow Drake

Large dragon, neutral

Armor Class: 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points: 168 (16d10 + 80)

Speed: 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR 22 (+6) DEX 16 (+3) CON 20 (+5) INT 10 (+0) WIS 14 (+2) CHA 8 (-1)

Skills: Stealth +7, Perception +6

Damage Immunities: Cold

Condition Immunities: Frightened, Charmed

Senses: Darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages: Draconic

Challenge Rating: 9 (5,000 XP)

Shadow Stealth: While in dim light or darkness, the Shadow Drake can take the Hide action as a bonus action.

Actions

Multiattack: The Shadow Drake can use its Frightful Presence. It then makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite: Melee Weapon Attack: +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 17 (2d10 + 6) piercing damage.

Claw: Melee Weapon Attack: +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage.

Breath Weapon (Recharge 5-6): The Shadow Drake exhales a cloud of darkness in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A creature that fails its saving throw is blinded for 1 minute. The blinded creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success.

Frightful Presence: Each creature of the Shadow Drake's choice within 120 feet of it and aware of it must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute.



A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success.

Legendary Actions

The Shadow Drake can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The Shadow Drake regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Wing Attack: The Shadow Drake beats its wings. Each creature within 10 feet of the Shadow Drake must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or take 15 (2d6 + 8) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. The Shadow Drake can then fly up to half its flying speed.

Darkness Cloud: The Shadow Drake can use its Breath Weapon.

Pinning Bite (Costs 2 Actions): The Shadow Drake bites a creature, grappling it and dealing bite damage. The creature is restrained until the grapple ends. The Shadow Drake can't make any other attacks while the creature is grappled.

British Light Infantryman Vs Patriot Rifleman

Author: Robbie MacNiven

Publisher: Osprey Publishing

Review by Jason Hubbard

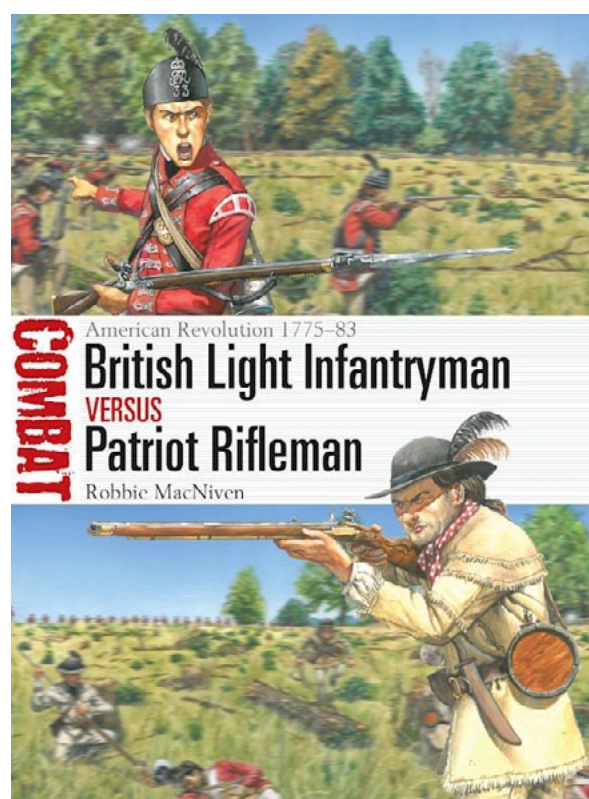
Fully illustrated, this book assesses the origins, equipment, and fighting styles of the irregular warfare specialists fighting on both sides during the American Revolutionary War.

Amid North America's often forested, broken, or rugged terrain, 18th-century armies came to rely on soldiers capable of fighting individually or in small groups. During the American Revolutionary War, rifle-armed companies were incorporated into the newly created Continental Army, while Patriot militiamen and partisans also made use of rifled weapons.

Facing them were the British Army's light infantrymen; among the most experienced regular soldiers fighting for the Crown, they were joined by Loyalist units able to operate in dispersed formations and German hired troops skilled in open-order fighting, including the rifle-armed Jäger.

The strengths and limitations of both sides' open-order specialists are evaluated in this book, with particular focus upon three revealing battles: Harlem Heights (September 16, 1776), where the Patriots took heart from being able to hold their own in an escalating clash with Crown light forces; Freeman's Farm (September 19, 1777), where British light infantry engaged Patriot riflemen in notably rough terrain; and Hanging Rock (August 6, 1780), where Patriot riflemen and partisans attacked a Loyalist encampment, including Provincial Corps light infantry. Specially commissioned artwork, archive illustrations, and newly drawn mapping complement the authoritative text.

The author has managed to write an interesting comparison of the British Elite Light infantryman and the American Continental riflemen during the American War of Independence. Both troop types proved their worth on several battlefields of this conflict. The American riflemen though weren't as well trained or as disciplined as the British Light Infantry, they did prove their worth on numerous occasions.



The author Robbie does an excellent job of researching and writing about their abilities in combat, by the use of three battles. He analyses the performance, skill and tactics of both during these battles which provides a good overview of the two combat troops.

As usual with these books, they're well written, and superbly illustrated throughout. This book will provide most readers with a good insight into the American Revolution, would act as perfect starting point for may wargamers considering starting an army of either side. This has been a conflict I've been considering jumping into, and I'd recommend another book we review in this issue, The US Marine Corps 1775-1859 as well. Both books are a great resource for any wargamer who's potentially considering building an American Continental Army.

Warhammer 40,000 10th Edition

A Stellar Evolution in the Grim Darkness of the Future

Warhammer 40,000, also known as Warhammer 40K or simply 40K, has captivated tabletop gamers and hobbyists for decades with its immersive sci-fi universe and strategic gameplay. With the release of the 10th edition, Games Workshop has once again elevated the grim darkness of the future to new heights. In this review, we delve into the key features and improvements that make Warhammer 40,000 10th Edition a must-play for both seasoned veterans and newcomers alike



The 10th edition brings significant improvements to the game's ruleset, enhancing clarity and streamlining gameplay. The core rules have been refined, making them more accessible and easier to understand, without sacrificing the depth and complexity that Warhammer 40K is known for. The revised ruleset strikes a great balance between tactical depth and ease of play.



The codex system, which provides rules and background information for each army faction, has received a thorough overhaul. The 10th edition codexes offer comprehensive and balanced army building options, ensuring that each faction feels unique and powerful. The improved codex system allows for more strategic choices and greater customization, enhancing the overall gameplay experience.

Warhammer 40,000 has always been renowned for its rich lore and immersive narrative, and the 10th edition continues this tradition. The latest edition introduces exciting developments in the ongoing storyline, bringing new conflicts, heroes, and threats to the forefront.



Players can immerse themselves in epic battles that shape the fate of the Imperium, Chaos, Xenos races, and more. The narrative element adds depth and meaning to each game, making every battle feel significant and compelling.

One of the hallmarks of Warhammer 40K is its breathtaking miniatures, and the 10th edition continues to deliver in this aspect. The miniatures are exquisitely detailed, showcasing impressive sculpts and dynamic poses that bring the characters and units to life. Whether it's the towering Space Marines, menacing Orks, or sinister Chaos forces, the miniatures are a true visual feast and a testament to Games Workshop's commitment to craftsmanship.



Game balance is crucial for any tabletop game, and Warhammer 40,000 10th edition excels in this regard. The developers have put a significant focus on ensuring fair and balanced gameplay across all factions.



Each army has its own strengths and weaknesses, encouraging strategic decision-making and tactical play. The improved balance allows players to engage in exciting, competitive matches while also fostering a healthy and diverse meta.

Warhammer 40,000 has a vibrant and dedicated community of players, which adds immense value to the overall experience. The 10th edition benefits from this passionate community, with numerous player resources, online forums, and local gaming groups available for support and interaction.

Furthermore, Games Workshop provides regular updates, addressing rules clarifications and introducing new content, ensuring that the game remains fresh and engaging.

Warhammer 40,000 10th Edition is a testament to Games Workshop's commitment to delivering an exceptional tabletop gaming experience.

With streamlined rules, revamped codexes, immersive narrative, stunning miniatures, balanced gameplay, and a supportive community, the 10th edition offers countless hours of enjoyment for both newcomers and long-time fans of the franchise.

Prepare to embark on epic battles in the grim darkness of the 41st millennium, where victory and glory await those who dare to take up arms in the war-t

Essential Histories

The Korean War 1950-53

Author: Carter Malkasian

Publisher: Osprey Publishing

Review by Jason Hubbard

In this fully illustrated introduction, Dr Carter Malkasian provides a concise overview of the so-called "Forgotten War" in Korea.

From 1950 to 1953, the most powerful countries in the world engaged in a major conventional war in Korea. Yet ironically this conflict has come to be known as the USA's "Forgotten War." Esteemed historian Dr Carter Malkasian explains how this conflict in a small peninsula in East Asia had a tremendous impact on the entire international system and the balance of power between the two superpowers, America and Russia. In this illustrated history, he examines how the West demonstrated its resolve to thwart Communist aggression and the armed forces of China, the Soviet Union and the United States came into direct combat for the only time during the Cold War.

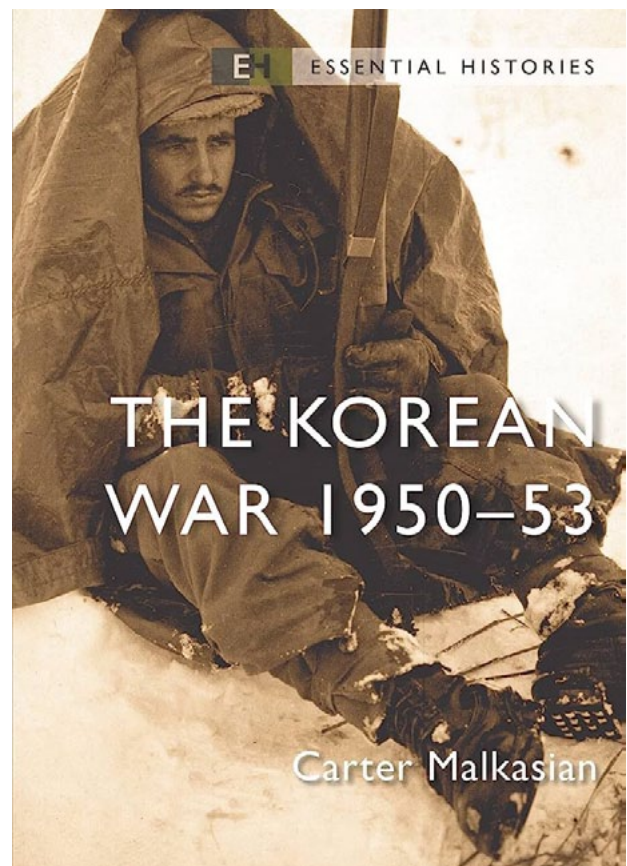
Updated and revised for the new edition, with specially commissioned colour maps and new images throughout, this is a detailed introduction to a significant turning point in the Cold War.

Following the 2nd World War this was the first major crisis that had the potential to break out into a global conflict. It often referred to the forgotten war, mainly because it's never had the pop culture impact with numerous films like later conflicts such as the Vietnam war did.

This was the first major event of the Cold War, that pitted the communists against the capitalists. Though essentially it was a war between China and the USA, East vs West.

The author has provided some excellent background material on the political situation that led up to the war, explaining why those involved become embroiled into the conflict. He provides a detailed accounts of the war and battles, as well as the turning points of the conflict. This is illustrated with very detailed maps of the battles.

Anyone who wants to start a campaign set in Korea, using rules such as Bolt Action would do well to pick up a copy of this book, as it provides a good overview of the war.



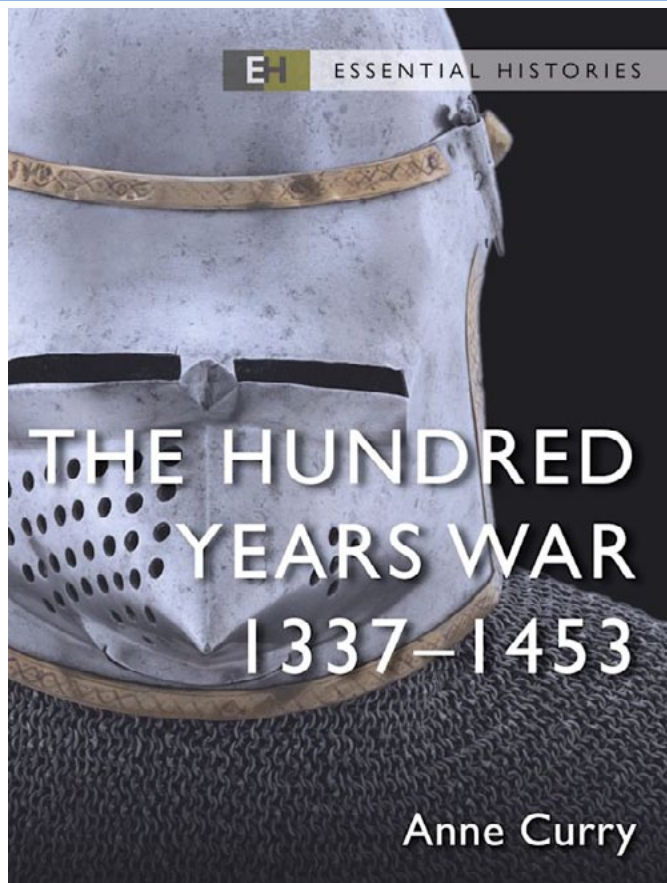
The Hundred Years War 1337-1453

Author: Anne Curry

Publisher: Osprey Publishing

There can be no doubt that military conflict between France and England dominated European history in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. This war is of considerable interest both because of its duration and the number of theatres in which it was fought.

In this book, Hundred Years' War Expert Dr Anne Curry reveals how the war can reveal much about the changing nature of warfare: the rise of infantry and the demise of the knight; the impact of increased use of gunpowder and the



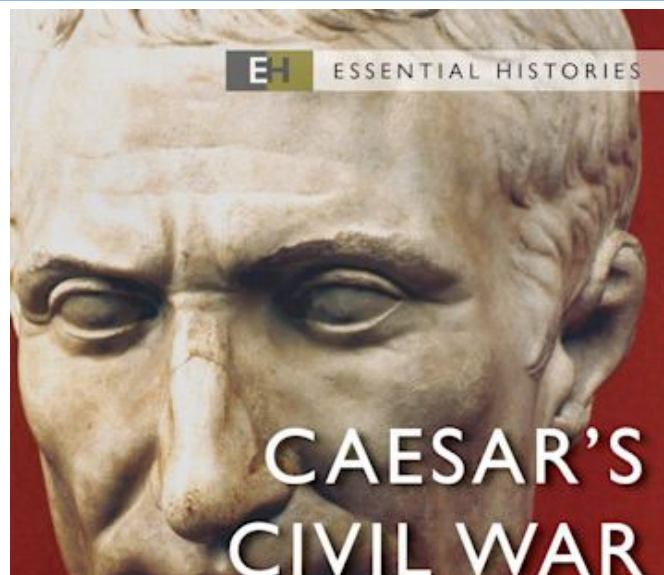
effect of the wars on generations of people around it. This is a great introduction for any wargamer on the exceptionally long conflict between England and France between the 14th to 15th centuries. A war that helped shaped the national identities of both countries. Whilst this isn't a military history of the war, but rather looks at the political background that led to the war breaking out and providing some detailed information regarding the wars and battles. The book also contains some very useful maps that highlight the military activity of the war.

The author also looks at the aftermath of the wars had on both countries, which led to the slow modernisation of France whilst in England a civil war broke out, which led to France being able to remove the English from their holdings in France.

This is a great reference for wargamers and those interested in the history of the 100 years war. It'll provide an excellent introduction to the subject, and those who want to delve deeper can do so after this book.

Caesar's Civil War 49-44 BC
 Author: Adrian Goldsworthy
 Publisher: Osprey Publishing

Fully illustrated with colour maps and images, this is an accessible introduction to Julius Caesar's Civil War. Julius Caesar and Pompey the Great were two of the greatest generals Rome had ever produced.



Together they had brought vast stretches of territory under Roman dominion. In 49 BC they turned against each other and plunged Rome into civil war. In this book, Adrian Goldsworthy relates the gripping story of this desperate power struggle. Drawing on original accounts of the war, he examines how legion was pitched against legion in a vicious battle for political domination of the vast Roman world. The armies were evenly matched, but in the end, Caesar's genius as a commander and his great good luck brought him victory in 45 BC.

Updated and revised for the new edition, with full-colour maps and 40 new images, this is a detailed introduction to one of the last conflicts in the Roman Republic before the establishment of the Roman Empire.

This is an excellent book on the subject of the Roman Civil War. This book consists of 96 pages, which is rough the format for all of the books in this series. The author has provided a clear and concise description of the events surrounding the war, along with the battles and aftermath. The book also contains full detailed maps of the major battles from the war, these will help wargamers to understand the position and evolution of the opposing forces on the battlefield. The author provides a good understanding of the events that lead up to the breakout of the war, those involved, and the political situation in the final days of the Republic.

This series of books offer the reader a great introduction to conflicts from history, providing a great overview before deciding to delve deeper into the subject matter. He then goes on to the military looking at legion composition, the leadership styles of the generals involved and the combat techniques. Adrian then follows this up with a detailed focus on the war itself, providing detailed information from the start until the final battle of the war. He finished off the book with a description of the aftermath following the murder of Caesar.

This series of books are a great introduction to the conflicts and wars they cover, they provide a detailed overview that will be a great resource for wargamers looking to a campaign set in the many conflicts covered by this series of books.

Byzantine Cavalryman vs Vandal Warrior

Author: Murray Dahm

Publisher: Osprey Publishing

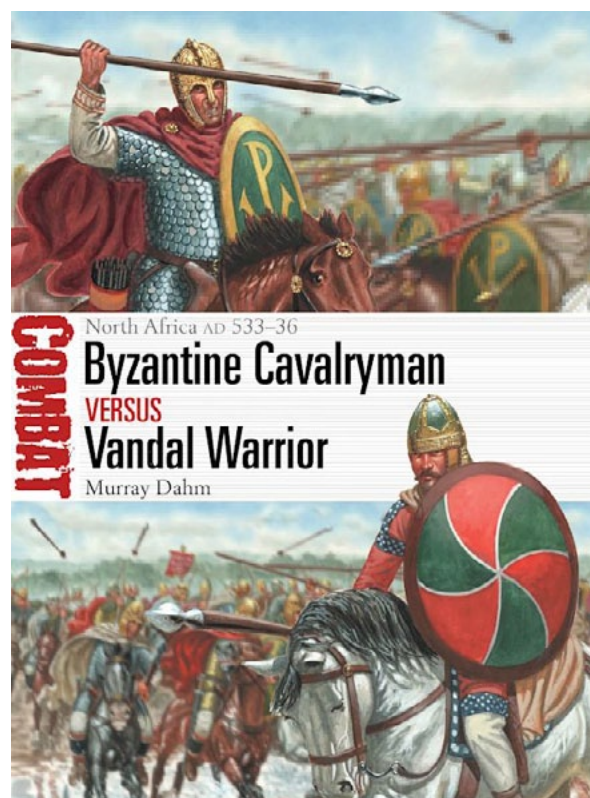
Review by Jason Hubbard

Fully illustrated, this enthralling study explores how the Vandals in North Africa attempted to defend their kingdom against the resurgent Byzantine Empire during 533–36.

In AD 533, the Byzantine Emperor Justinian I launched the first of his campaigns to reconquer the Western Roman Empire. This effort began in North Africa (modern Algeria and Tunisia), targeting the Vandal kingdom established there a century earlier, which also included Sardinia, Corsica and the Balearic Islands. Featuring full-colour artwork and mapping alongside carefully chosen archive illustrations, this book shows how the Byzantine general Belisarius established his formidable reputation in the lightning-fast campaign that ensued, exploring the origins, tactics and reputation of the two sides' forces as they fought for control of North Africa.

The landing of Belisarius' forces took the Vandal king, Gelimer, completely by surprise; in September 533 the two sides met in battle near Carthage in an encounter known to posterity as Ad Decimum, with Gelimer ambitiously attempting to trap Belisarius' forces as they advanced. In December, the two sides fought again in a momentous clash at Tricamarum, where the fate of Gelimer's regime would be determined. A third battle ensued in 536, when the rebel Stotzas' Byzantine and Vandal troops confronted Belisarius' forces, the outcome sealing the Byzantine general's standing as the foremost soldier of his age.

Featuring specially commissioned artwork and mapping alongside archive illustrations and photographs, this vivid account compares and assesses the two sides' fighting men as they vied for supremacy in North Africa. This book looks at two opposing warriors, the professional cavalryman of the Byzantine Army against the Vandal Warrior. These books all follow a similar layout, exceptionally researched and written, providing a very informative look at the two types of fighting men. Alongside the well written text, are numerous illustrations and photographs.



The author investigates how the two fighting forces are recruited, command and organisational structure as well as a dive into the tactics and equipment of both. This is then followed by detailed accounts of some of the battles these two warriors met on the field of combat. Then the authors moves on to focusing on how effective both troop types were as a fighting body. Finally, he provides an aftermath looking at how the battles and war between the two affected both peoples.

These are a great resource for anyone wanting to build an army featuring either of these two troop types, at the same time the book provides an insight into some the battles they fought in and how they operated as a fighting force. A great read that will provide a well balanced and detailed account of the troops and the period in which they fought.



Space Station Zero

A Stellar Journey to Cosmic Adventure

The tabletop gaming realm is an ever-expanding universe of imaginative experiences, and among its brightest stars is Space Station Zero.

Developed by visionary game designer Rachel Patel, this review article delves into the captivating world of Space Station Zero, exploring its unique gameplay mechanics, immersive setting, and overall gaming experience.

Gameplay Mechanics

Space Station Zero is a cooperative strategy game that places players in the shoes of intrepid space explorers. The game revolves around the management and expansion of a space station in the depths of the cosmos. Players must allocate resources, research new technologies, and navigate through various challenges and encounters to ensure the station's survival.

The game's mechanics are elegantly designed, striking a balance between accessibility and strategic depth. Players take turns performing actions, such as gathering resources, constructing modules, and exploring the vast reaches of space. The decision-making process is engaging and rewarding, as each choice carries consequences that impact the station's progress and the crew's well-being.

The inclusion of modular components adds a layer of variability to each playthrough. The game features different modules and events that can be combined to create a unique experience, enhancing replayability and keeping players invested in uncovering new strategies and outcomes.



Immersive Setting

Space Station Zero immerses players in a rich and expansive cosmic setting. The game's artwork, from the intricate illustrations on the cards to the beautifully designed game board, evokes a sense of wonder and adventure. The attention to detail in the thematic elements, such as futuristic technology, alien encounters, and cosmic phenomena, creates a captivating atmosphere that transports players to the depths of space.



The game master, taking on the role of the game's events and challenges, ensures a dynamic and unpredictable experience. Each encounter feels unique and significant, adding to the narrative depth and overall immersion. From extraterrestrial mysteries to cosmic anomalies, the thematic elements of Space Station Zero keep players engaged throughout their interstellar journey.

Gaming Experience

Space Station Zero offers a challenging and rewarding gaming experience that promotes strategic planning and collaboration. The cooperative nature of the game encourages players to communicate, coordinate their actions, and pool their resources to overcome obstacles and ensure the station's survival.

The game's mechanics foster a sense of shared responsibility, making each decision a group endeavor.



The game's pacing is well-structured, combining moments of tension and excitement with periods of strategic planning and resource management. Each play-through presents new challenges and opportunities, allowing players to refine their strategies and explore different paths to success. The sense of progression and discovery throughout the game keeps players engaged and invested in the outcome of their cosmic adventure.

Moreover, Space Station Zero's rulebook and components are thoughtfully designed, providing clear instructions and intuitive gameplay elements. The learning curve is approachable, making the game accessible to both experienced gamers and newcomers to the hobby. Conclusion: Space Station Zero stands as a stellar addition to the tabletop gaming cosmos.



Its engaging gameplay mechanics, immersive setting, and collaborative experience make it a standout title in the genre. With its elegant design, captivating artwork, and strategic decision-making, Space Station Zero takes players on an unforgettable journey into the depths of space. Whether you're a seasoned space explorer or a tabletop gaming enthusiast looking for a cosmic adventure, Space Station Zero promises hours of thrilling gameplay and strategic exploration.



The Army of the Early Roman Empire

30BC – 180AD

Author: Gabriele Esposito

Publisher: Pen & Sword

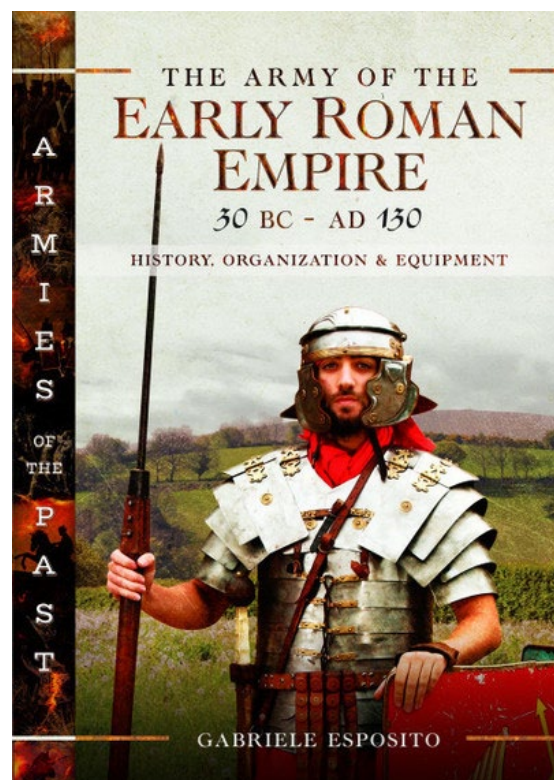
Review by Jason Hubbard

The legionary soldier of the early Empire period, with his distinctive segmented armour, is one of the images most closely associated by popular imagination with ancient Rome. Such soldiers conquered most of Britain, suffered and avenged the terrible disaster of the Teutoburg Forest and vanquished the fearsome Dacians across the Danube, a feat immortalized on Trajan's Column, as well as fighting many other tribes. In the East they overcame the Great Jewish Revolt and repeatedly contended with mixed success against the powerful Parthians. This was the army that enforced the so-called Pax Romana at the point of a gladius and maintained the greatest empire the world had yet seen. Of course, such troops were also employed to bloody effect in the many civil wars such as those of AD69, 'the Year of the Four of the Emperors'.

Gabriele Esposito describes the tactics, organization and equipment of the Roman army at the height of its powers, considered by many to be the most efficient and powerful fighting force of the ancient world. He gives an overview of the most significant campaigns and considers in detail not only the iconic legionaries but also the various auxiliary units, including cavalry. His clear, accessible text is supported by dozens of colour photos of replica weapons, armour and other kit in use.

This is a great series of books, that are superbly illustrated throughout, with great images of re-enactors. This edition and others in the series aren't just a description of the equipment, weapons and the tactics used by the subject matter, in this case Roman Army. The books also provide a good overview of the Roman empire and its history, including the numerous battles, conflicts and campaigns throughout the timeline of the Roman Empire.

This and every other book in the series are an excellent resource for wargamers, and military historians. For the wargamer they provide a good well researched information that they don't need to go any further unless they want to.



The book provides enough background material to help build, paint and provide an insight into the tactics they utilised. For military historians they're a great overview of the subject, and a great jumping off point to dive even further into the subject matter.

I've found the book to be a good read and provided me with some excellent background to nudge me into starting a Roman army (when I say start, like any other hobbyist I've bought some miniatures). The images in the book are a really useful resource for painting up miniatures for an army. The photos are well shot, high resolution, pin sharp in full colour.

Blood, Bilge, and Iron Balls

Naval wargame rules for the age of sail

Author: Alan Abbey

Publisher: Pen & Sword

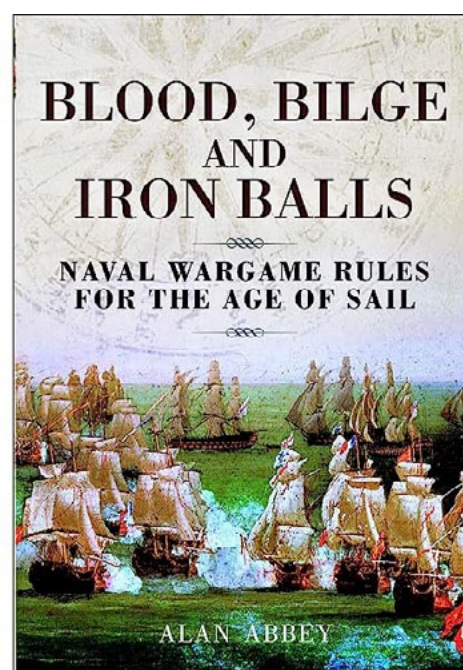
Review by Jason Hubbard

Introduction:

The Age of Sail holds a timeless allure, where mighty warships clashed amidst vast oceans, with cannons roaring and billowing sails guiding them through tumultuous battles. Blood, Bilge, and Iron Balls, a captivating naval wargame, brings this thrilling era to life on the tabletop. Immerse yourself in the strategic intricacies of commanding a fleet of majestic vessels, testing your tactical prowess against friends and foes alike. With its attention to historical accuracy and engaging gameplay mechanics, Blood, Bilge, and Iron Balls offers an unforgettable gaming experience for enthusiasts of naval warfare.

Historical Accuracy:

Blood, Bilge, and Iron Balls stands out for its commitment to historical accuracy. Designed by naval history enthusiasts and meticulously researched, the game captures the essence of naval combat during the Age of Sail. Every aspect, from ship design to weaponry, is faithful to the era, allowing players to recreate famous battles or craft their own thrilling scenarios. Attention to detail in ship characteristics, such as maneuverability, firepower, and crew quality, adds depth and realism to the gameplay.



Engaging Gameplay Mechanics:

The game mechanics of Blood, Bilge, and Iron Balls strike a perfect balance between accessibility and depth. Players take on the role of fleet commanders, making critical decisions that shape the outcome of each battle. The intuitive rules system allows both seasoned wargamers and newcomers to quickly grasp the core concepts and dive into the action.

The game's turn-based nature ensures strategic decision-making as players plan their movements, maneuver their ships, and unleash devastating broadsides upon their opponents. Tactical positioning, wind direction, and timing become crucial factors that players must consider, making each engagement a thrilling and strategic affair.



Ship combat is resolved through a combination of dice rolls, emphasizing the unpredictability of battle. Cannon fire, crew morale, and ship damage are all intricately woven into the game's mechanics, creating a sense of tension and excitement as players witness the ebb and flow of naval warfare. The inclusion of various scenarios, weather conditions, and objectives adds variety and replayability to the game, keeping players engaged for countless hours of maritime adventure.

Community and Customization:

Blood, Bilge, and Iron Balls fosters a strong sense of community among players. Enthusiasts gather both online and offline to share their experiences, discuss strategies, and organize tournaments. The game has a dedicated online platform that allows players to connect with each other, exchange scenarios, and showcase their painted miniatures.

One of the standout features of Blood, Bilge, and Iron Balls is its emphasis on customization. Players have the freedom to create their own fleets, choosing from a wide range of historically accurate ship models. Paint schemes, flags, and modifications allow players to add a personal touch to their



fleet, further immersing themselves in the rich tapestry of naval history.



Conclusion:

Blood, Bilge, and Iron Balls stands tall as a compelling naval wargame that faithfully recreates the captivating era of the Age of Sail.



With its historical accuracy, engaging gameplay mechanics, and strong community support, it offers an immersive and challenging experience for both seasoned wargamers and newcomers alike. Whether you're a history enthusiast, a strategy buff, or a lover of tabletop games, this naval wargame promises countless hours of thrilling maritime adventure. Prepare to set sail, and may the winds favor the bravest captains!



Black Powder Weapons for BECMI D&D

Black powder weapons were first introduced to the world in the 13th century, and quickly became a major factor in warfare. These early firearms were crude and unreliable, but by the time of the Renaissance they had become an essential part of any army's arsenal. In BECMI D&D, black powder weapons can add a new level of complexity and excitement to combat encounters.

Types of Black Powder Weapons The most common black powder weapons in BECMI D&D are muskets, pistols, and cannon. Muskets are long-barrelled guns that are fired from the shoulder, while pistols are smaller and can be held in one hand. Cannon are large artillery pieces that are typically mounted on wheels.

Black Powder Weapon Stats When using black powder weapons in BECMI D&D, the Dungeon Master may choose to create new rules for their use or adapt existing rules to fit the unique nature of these weapons. Here are some potential stats to consider:

Muskets Damage: 1d12 Range: 100 feet Reload time: 1 turn (10 minutes) Notes: Muskets are heavy and unwieldy, requiring two hands to use. They are also slow to reload and cannot be fired multiple times in a single round.

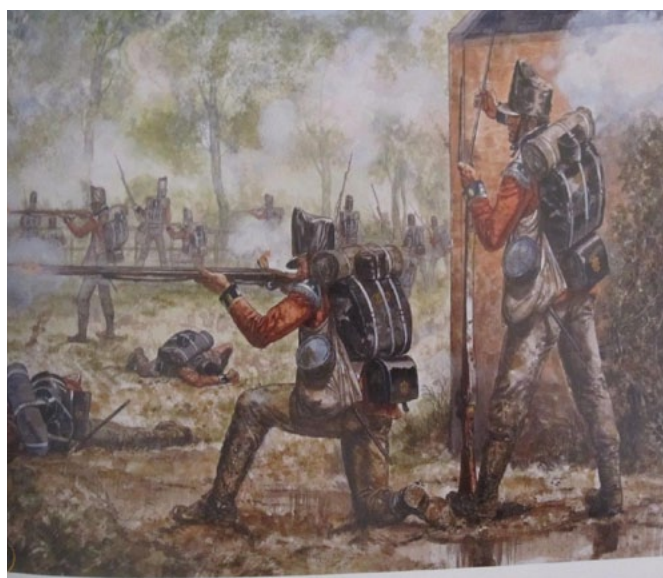


Pistols Damage: 1d8 Range: 50 feet Reload time: 1 round (10 seconds) Notes: Pistols are smaller and lighter than muskets and can be used with one hand. They are faster to reload than muskets, but still require some time to reload.



Cannon Damage: Varies depending on the size of the cannon Range: Varies depending on the size of the cannon Reload time: 10 turns (100 minutes) Notes: Cannon are large and unwieldy and require a team of soldiers to operate. They are slow to reload but can cause massive amounts of damage to enemy formations.

Conclusion Black powder weapons can add a new level of excitement and strategy to combat encounters in BECMi D&D. With the right rules and considerations, these weapons can be a valuable addition to any party's arsenal. However, it's important to remember that black powder weapons are a product of their time, and their use may have consequences that extend beyond the battlefield.



Other Considerations When using black powder weapons in BECMi D&D, it's important to consider their impact on the game world. Black powder weapons may be relatively rare and difficult to obtain, and their use may be heavily regulated by the authorities. Additionally, the loud noise and bright flashes of these weapons may alert nearby enemies, making stealthy operations more difficult.





Vikings in Ireland



The Vikings are often remembered as fearsome raiders who traveled across the seas to pillage and plunder the lands of Europe. However, their history in Ireland is much more complex and multifaceted. For over two centuries, the Vikings had a significant impact on Ireland, influencing its economy, culture, and even its political landscape.

The Viking Age in Ireland began in the late 8th century, when Vikings from Norway first raided the monastic settlement at Rathlin Island off the coast of Ulster. These raids continued throughout the 9th century, with the Vikings targeting other monasteries and wealthy settlements along the coast. By the mid-9th century, the Vikings had established several permanent settlements in Ireland, including Dublin, Waterford, Wexford, and Limerick.

One of the most significant effects of the Viking presence in Ireland was on the island's economy. The Vikings were skilled traders and merchants, and their arrival in Ireland led to an increase in international trade and commerce. They also introduced new technologies, such as the waterwheel and the horizontal loom, which helped to improve the efficiency of Irish industry.



The Vikings also played a significant role in Irish politics. They established their own independent kingdoms in Ireland, such as the Kingdom of Dublin, which was ruled by Norse kings for several centuries. They also formed alliances with local Irish chieftains, which helped to establish their authority in the region.

The Viking influence on Irish culture was also profound. They brought with them their own traditions, language, and religious beliefs, which had a significant impact on Irish society. The Vikings introduced the Old Norse language to Ireland, which had a lasting impact on the development of the Irish language. They also introduced their own pagan religion, which had a significant impact on Irish mythology and folklore.



Despite the Viking influence on Ireland, their presence was not always welcomed by the local population. The Vikings were known for their violent raids and their harsh treatment of the Irish people. They were also seen as a threat to Irish independence and sovereignty. As a result, the Irish people fought back against the Vikings, sometimes successfully driving them out of their settlements.

Viking Raids

The Viking raids in Ireland during the late 8th to the mid-11th centuries were some of the most significant events in Irish history. They marked a period of intense violence, instability, and cultural exchange. The Vikings, who came from Norway, Denmark, and Sweden, were skilled sailors and warriors, and their arrival in Ireland had a profound impact on the island's economy, politics, and culture.

The Vikings first arrived in Ireland in 795 when they raided the monastery at Rathlin Island off the coast of Ulster. This raid was the beginning of a long and violent period of Viking activity in Ireland.



The Vikings were attracted to Ireland's rich monastic settlements and wealthy towns, and they targeted these places for plunder and loot.

The raids were devastating for the Irish people, who were often caught off guard by the Vikings' surprise attacks. The Vikings would arrive in their longships, raid the settlement, and then retreat back to their ships before the Irish could mount an effective defense. The Vikings were also known for their brutality, and they would often kill or enslave those they captured.



Despite the violence, the Viking raids had a significant impact on the Irish economy. The Vikings were skilled traders and merchants, and their arrival in Ireland led to an increase in international trade and commerce. They also introduced new technologies, such as the waterwheel and the horizontal loom, which helped to improve the efficiency of Irish industry.



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The Viking raids in Ireland continued for several centuries, with the Vikings raiding and settling in various parts of the island. The raids eventually led to the establishment of several Viking settlements, including Dublin, Waterford, Wexford, and Limerick. These settlements were significant cultural and economic centers, and they played a major role in the development of Irish society.

Viking battles

The Viking battles in Ireland during the Viking Age were some of the most significant events in Irish history. These battles were marked by intense violence, strategic military maneuvers, and cultural exchange. The Vikings, who came from Norway, Denmark, and Sweden, were skilled warriors and sailors, and their arrival in Ireland had a profound impact on the island's economy, politics, and culture.

One of the most significant Viking battles in Ireland was the Battle of Clontarf in 1014. This battle was fought between the Irish High King Brian Boru and a Viking coalition led by Sitric Silkbeard of Dublin. The battle was fought near Dublin and was one of the largest battles in Irish history. The Vikings had allied with several Irish chieftains who were unhappy with Brian Boru's rule, and the battle was a culmination of years of political and military tension.



The Battle of Clontarf was a fierce and bloody conflict, with both sides suffering heavy casualties. In the end, Brian Boru and his army were victorious, but Brian Boru himself was killed during the battle. The battle marked the end of the Viking Age in Ireland and helped to establish Irish independence and sovereignty.

Another significant Viking battle in Ireland was the Battle of Tara in 980. This battle was fought between the Irish King Maol Sechnaill and a Viking army led by Olaf Cuaran. The battle was fought near the Hill of Tara in County Meath and was one of the most significant battles of the Viking Age in Ireland.



The Battle of Tara was a turning point in the Viking raids in Ireland. It marked the beginning of a period of relative peace between the Irish and the Vikings and helped to establish the power of the Irish High Kings over the Viking settlements in Ireland.

The Battle of Clontarf and the Battle of Tara were just two of the many Viking battles fought in Ireland during the Viking Age. These battles were marked by intense violence, complex military strategies, and cultural exchange. The Vikings had a significant impact on Irish society, introducing new technologies, languages, and religious beliefs.

Today, the legacy of the Viking battles in Ireland can be seen in many aspects of Irish culture and society. The Viking influence on Irish language, mythology, and folklore can still be seen today, and the cities founded by the Vikings, such as Dublin and Waterford, continue to be major cultural and economic centers in Ireland.

Today, the legacy of the Vikings in Ireland can be seen in many aspects of Irish culture and society. The Viking influence on Irish language and folklore can still be seen today, and the cities founded by the Vikings, such as Dublin and Waterford, continue to be major cultural and economic centers in Ireland. The Vikings in Ireland may have been fierce raiders, but they also left a lasting impact on the history and culture of the island.





World of Tanks Board Game

An Immersive Battle Experience



World of Tanks, originally a popular online multiplayer game, has expanded its reach to the tabletop realm with the World of Tanks board game. This strategic board game brings the intense armoured warfare of the digital world to the tabletop, offering players an immersive and tactical battle experience. In this review, we explore the gameplay, components, and overall appeal of the World of Tanks board game.

The World of Tanks board game captures the essence of tank warfare with its engaging gameplay mechanics. Players command their own tanks, manoeuvring across a modular game board and engaging in combat against opponents. The game combines elements of strategy, resource management, and combat tactics.

One of the standout features is the use of action points, which players allocate to perform various actions such as moving, rotating their tanks, or firing their weapons. This adds a layer of decision-making and tactical planning, as players must choose how to best utilize their limited actions each turn.

The combat system is intuitive yet provides depth. It incorporates a clever dice-rolling mechanism that simulates the unpredictability of battle outcomes. Players must carefully consider positioning, line of sight, and tank statistics to gain an advantage over their opponents.



The inclusion of different tank types, each with their unique strengths and weaknesses, adds variety and strategic depth to the gameplay.

The World of Tanks board game features high-quality components that enhance the overall experience. The miniatures representing the tanks are detailed and well-sculpted, capturing the essence of their digital counterparts. The modular game board allows for different scenarios and battlefields, providing replay ability and variety.



The artwork and graphic design of the game are visually appealing, with attention to detail in tank illustrations, terrain features, and game cards. The rulebook is well-written, providing clear instructions and examples to guide players through the gameplay mechanics. The inclusion of historical tank information and background adds a nice touch for enthusiasts of armoured warfare.

The World of Tanks board game will undoubtedly appeal to both fans of the online game and board game enthusiasts seeking a strategic and immersive experience. Its blend of strategic decision-making, tactical combat, and thematic elements captures the intensity and excitement of tank warfare.

The game accommodates two to five players, making it suitable for small groups or larger gaming sessions. While it can be enjoyed by casual gamers, it particularly shines when played with individuals who appreciate strategic depth and interactive gameplay.

The World of Tanks board game also benefits from its relatively quick gameplay. With average playtimes ranging from 45 minutes to an hour, it strikes a good balance between depth and accessibility.



The World of Tanks board game successfully translates the adrenaline-fueled tank battles of the digital world into an engaging tabletop experience. Its strategic gameplay, well-designed components, and attention to detail make it an enjoyable and immersive gaming option for both World of Tanks fans and board game enthusiasts alike.

Whether you're a strategy lover or a history buff, the World of Tanks board game offers an exciting journey into the world of armoured warfare.



Samurai player class for D&D BECMI

Jason Hubbard



The samurai is a formidable warrior from feudal Japan, known for their mastery of the sword and their unwavering loyalty to their lord. In the world of BECMI D&D, a samurai character would be a proud and disciplined fighter with a code of honour and a deep respect for tradition.

The samurai comes from a long line of warriors, trained from a young age in the arts of combat, strategy, and etiquette. They are fiercely loyal to their lord, willing to lay down their life for their master and their honour.

The samurai is trained in the way of the sword, and their fighting style is precise and efficient, focused on one-on-one combat rather than overwhelming numbers.

Stats

Ability Score Minimums/Maximums: Strength 9/18
Intelligence 6/18 Wisdom 7/18 Dexterity 6/18 Constitution 6/18 Charisma 6/18

Races: Samurai can only be human.

Classes: Samurai can only be fighters.

Equipment: Samurai wear a traditional set of armour known as the "do-maru," made from metal plates that cover the chest and abdomen. They also wear a helmet with a faceguard, called a "kabuto," and gauntlets to protect their hands. The samurai's weapon of choice is the katana, a long, curved sword with a single edge, which they carry in a scabbard called a "saya." They may also carry a shorter sword, called a "wakizashi," for close combat.

Special Abilities:

Bushido: The samurai follows a strict code of honour known as "bushido." They gain a +1 bonus to all rolls when fighting one-on-one or when defending their lord's honour.

Katana Mastery: The samurai has trained extensively in the use of the katana. They gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls when wielding a katana.

Loyalty: The samurai is fiercely loyal to their lord. They gain a +1 bonus to all rolls when defending their lord or their lord's property.

Disadvantages

Honourable Combat: The samurai will only engage in honourable combat, and will not attack an enemy who is unarmed or fleeing.

Code of Conduct: The samurai must always act in accordance with their code of honour, even if it puts them at a disadvantage or causes them harm.

Limited Weapon Options: The samurai is trained to use only the katana and wakizashi and may not use any other weapons.



In conclusion, the samurai is a powerful and honourable character in BECMI D&D, with a strict code of honour and a fierce loyalty to their lord. Their mastery of the katana and their one-on-one combat skills make them a formidable opponent, but their strict code of conduct can also be a liability. Playing as a samurai requires a strong sense of honour and discipline, but those who uphold these values will be rewarded with a noble and satisfying gameplay experience.

In BECMI D&D, characters can reach a maximum level of 36. However, the number of levels a samurai character can have depends on the level limits set by the Dungeon Master for that particular campaign.



Here is a possible breakdown of the level progression for a samurai character in BECMI D&D:

1. 1st-3rd level: Samurai Apprentice
2. 4th-6th level: Samurai Soldier
3. 7th-9th level: Samurai Warrior
4. 10th-12th level: Samurai Champion
5. 13th-15th level: Samurai Hero
6. 16th-18th level: Samurai Master
7. 19th-21st level: Samurai Lord
8. 22nd-24th level: Samurai General
9. 25th-27th level: Samurai Warlord
10. 28th-30th level: Samurai Shogun
11. 31st-33rd level: Daimyo
12. 34th-36th level: Emperor

These level titles are based on the traditional hierarchy of the samurai class, with higher levels corresponding to greater authority and power. However, a DM could choose to use different level titles or level caps based on their campaign's unique setting and needs. Use the same experience points scale for a fighter.



The US Marine Corp 1775-1859

Author: Ron Field

Publisher: Osprey Publishing

Review by Jason Hubbard

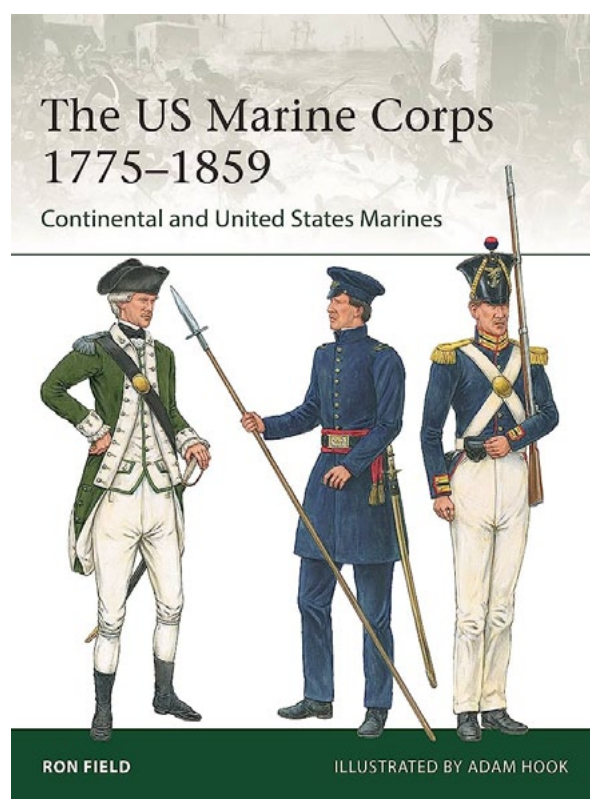
Featuring specially commissioned artwork and archive illustrations, this engrossing study describes the US Marine Corps' early operations and illustrates its evolving uniforms and personal equipment.

The US Marine Corps' uniforms, personal equipment, insignia, and weaponry are all described and illustrated in this book, complemented by a succinct history of the Marines' military record from their beginnings to the eve of the American Civil War, by which time the US Marine Corps had established itself as a small but vitally important part of the United States' armed forces.

Organized in 1775, the first American Marines distinguished themselves throughout the American Revolutionary War, and even raided mainland Britain before being disbanded in 1783. Re-established in 1798, the US Marine Corps fought in the Barbary Wars and the War of 1812, both at sea and on land. The years after 1815 saw the Corps involved in a wide variety of conflicts, from the Seminole Wars to the Mexican American War; Marines even reached China and Japan. As the prospect of civil war began to threaten the United States, a small battalion of Marines was responsible for the capture of abolitionist John Brown at Harper's Ferry on October 18, 1859.

The diverse operations and evolving appearance of the Marines are captured in this absorbing study from an acknowledged authority on US military costume. This was an interesting read, most people know something about more recent history of the Marine Corp, from WW2 right through to more recent modern conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. Yet most people like me probably don't know a lot about the early history of the Marine Corp outside of the US. So, it was an interesting read, especially the information in regard to the American War of Independence.

The book covers quite an interesting period of American history from its birth as a nation to it's first time on the world stage as rising powerbase.



The books cover's all the major conflicts America and the Marine Corp were involved in, that includes the War of 1812, Mexican American War, along with troops being deployed to both China and Japan, both countries would be significant in US future history.

The book is well researched with superb illustrations throughout, this would make a great book for any military history enthusiast looking to find out more about one America's elite fighting units. It would also be an excellent resource for any wargamer considering building a force of US Marines to campaign with during this period of American history.

Exploring the Scales of Wargaming

From Epic Battles to Tactical Encounters



Wargaming is a hobby that allows enthusiasts to immerse themselves in strategic military simulations, recreating historical battles or exploring fictional conflicts. One of the key considerations when engaging in wargaming is choosing the appropriate scale. The scale determines the level of detail, scope, and complexity of the game. In this article, we will delve into the different scales commonly used in wargaming and explore their unique characteristics.

Grand Strategic Scale: At the highest level of abstraction, we find the grand strategic scale. These games encompass large campaigns and cover vast territories. Typically, each unit represents divisions or entire armies, and turns can span days, weeks, or even months. Grand strategic wargames focus on the bigger picture, emphasizing logistics, resource management, and overarching strategic decision-making. Examples of grand strategic wargames include "World in Flames" and "The Campaign for North Africa."



Operational Scale: Operational wargames strike a balance between the grand strategic and tactical levels. They simulate specific military operations or campaigns, often spanning weeks or months. Units in operational games represent battalions, regiments, or brigades, and players must manage the movement, logistics, and coordination of these forces. These games offer a more detailed perspective on the battlefield, including factors such as supply lines, terrain, and command structures. "The Operational Art of War" and "PanzerBlitz" are examples of popular operational wargames.





Tactical Scale: Moving closer to the action, we encounter tactical wargaming. Tactical wargames zoom in on individual battles or engagements, offering a granular level of detail. Units represent squads, platoons, or companies, and players make decisions on a more immediate and localized level. Tactical wargames focus on maneuvering, positioning, and tactical decision-making, often capturing the intricacies of combat in great detail. Games like "Advanced Squad Leader" and "Combat Commander" are renowned for their realistic portrayal of tactical engagements.

Skirmish Scale: At the smallest scale, we have skirmish wargaming. These games zoom in even further, depicting small-scale encounters involving a handful of soldiers or individual characters. Skirmish wargames often prioritize individual actions, cover mechanics, and terrain features. They offer a more personal and intimate experience, enabling players to dive into the details of individual soldiers' abilities and interactions.



Games like "Warhammer 40,000" and "Frostgrave" are popular examples of skirmish wargaming.

Role-Playing Scale: While not strictly a wargaming scale, it is worth mentioning the role-playing scale. Role-playing games (RPGs) allow players to assume the roles of individual characters within a larger narrative.



While combat is often a component of RPGs, the focus is on character development, storytelling, and exploration. RPGs such as "Dungeons & Dragons" and "Shadowrun" provide a different kind of gaming experience, combining elements of strategy, narrative, and cooperative play.



Choosing the Right Scale: When selecting a scale for wargaming, it is essential to consider personal preferences, available time, and the desired level of complexity. Grand strategic games offer a broader perspective but may require significant time investment, while skirmish games provide a more intimate and immediate experience. Operational and tactical scales strike a balance between complexity and detail, catering to players who seek a moderate level of strategic depth.

Ultimately, the scale of a wargame determines the level of immersion, detail, and strategic decision-making it offers. Exploring different scales can provide a diverse range of gaming experiences, each with its own unique appeal. Whether you prefer commanding massive armies or engaging in gritty

The Dutch-Indonesian War 1945-49

Armies of the Indonesian War of Independence

Author: Marc Lohnstein

Publisher: Osprey Publishing

Review by Jason Hubbard

Highly detailed and colourful, this account illustrates the struggle of Indonesian forces in their War of Independence against the Netherlands, following the surrender of occupying Japanese forces in 1945.

Following on from MAA 521 Royal Netherlands East Indies Army 1936-42 and completing the coverage of the post-World War II wars of decolonization, *The Dutch-Indonesian War 1945-49* describes the Japanese surrender in September 1945 which left a power vacuum in the colonial Dutch East Indies (Indonesia). Using vivid colour illustrations and rare photos, this title depicts the various forces involved in the struggle for Indonesia: the British Indian Army troops sent to key areas to disarm Japanese garrisons, the Indonesian nationalists who immediately proclaimed an independent Republic, remaining Japanese troops, and the Dutch forces which arrived in 1946.

The wide dispersion of populations, and their ethnic, religious and political differences ensured that the struggle which followed was complex. Fragmented bands of nationalist pemuda insurgents were slowly brought together under command of a republican army (the BKR, later TKR, and finally the TNI, complete with naval and air elements), but stubborn negotiations alternated with bouts of major fighting.

This book details how the nationalists were defeated by Dutch and Dutch-led local forces in urban areas (e.g. during Operations Product and Crow, 1947 and 1948), but how their guerrillas evaded Dutch troops in the jungle hills and swamps. Illustrating a wide range of uniforms, insignia, personal weapons and equipment, this study showcases the troops and armour involved in the conflict.

This is an interesting account by the author on this largely forgotten conflict, it's well illustrated throughout with photographs from the war, and some great looking illustrated plates of the uniforms worn by those who served. These illustrations are a great resource for wargamers and modellers looking to paint miniatures.

Men-at-Arms

OSPREY
PUBLISHING

The Dutch-Indonesian War 1945-49

Armies of the Indonesian War of Independence



Marc Lohnstein • Illustrated by Adam Hook

This was a complicated conflict that was at the end of a chaotic post WW2 period. It was made worse when the allies were forced to use surrendered Japanese soldiers to help keep order. The book follows the Dutch attempt to restore order to the region, and the military consequences that followed.

This is a good overview of the conflict, that's well written and researched by the author. For anyone looking to start a wargame campaign set in this conflict, then this is a great book to get started for background material. There are several factions involved in this conflict, which means it's not just two sides to choose from.

Battle of Britain on the Big Screen

Author: Dilip Sarkar

Publisher: Air World

Review by Jason Hubbard

During the Second World War, the British movie industry produced a number of films concerning the war, all of which were, by necessity, heavily myth-laden and propagandised. Foremost among these productions was *The First of the Few*, which was the biggest grossing film of 1942.

In the immediate post-war period, to start with there were no British aviation war films. The first to be released was *Angels One Five* in 1952. It was well-received, confirming that the Battle of Britain was a commercial commodity.

Over the next few years, many famous war heroes published their memoirs, or had books written about them, including the legless Group Captain Douglas Bader, whose story, *Reach for the Sky*, told by Paul Brickhill, became a best-seller in 1956. It was followed a year later by the film of the same name, which, starring Kenneth More, dominated that year's box office.

The early Battle of Britain films had tended to focus upon the story of individuals, not the bigger picture. That changed with the release of the star-studded epic *Battle of Britain* in 1969. Using real aircraft, the film, produced in colour and on a far larger scale than had been seen on film before, was notable for its spectacular flying sequences.

Between the release of *Reach for the Sky* and *Battle of Britain*, however, much had changed for modern Britain. For a variety of reasons many felt that the story of the nation's pivotal moment in the Second World War was something best buried and forgotten. Indeed, the overall box office reaction to *Battle of Britain* reinforced this view – all of which might explain why it was the last big screen treatment of this topic for many years.

It was during the Battle of Britain's seventieth anniversary year that the subject returned to the nation's screens when Matthew Whiteman's docudrama *First Light* was first broadcast.

Essentially a serialisation of Spitfire pilot Geoffrey Wellum's best-selling memoir of the same title, Whiteman



cleverly combined clips of Wellum as an old man talking about the past with his new drama footage. The series is, in the opinion of the author, the best portrayal of an individual's Battle of Britain experience to have been made.

If you ever grew up watching old war films, then this is a perfect book for you. The book looks at the myth of the Battle of Britain portrayed on the silver screen. The book challenges our view of what history is and how it's portrayed in the media. The number of films made about this period of the war are actually quite limited, though the perception is there was a plethora of films.

The author starts off with a detailed look at the months leading up to the battle before he starts looking at the world of film. He looks at half a dozen movies, as well as pertaining to several others the author manages to intertwine the factual elements of the battle with the rather less accurate and at times completely invented storylines.

This is a great book for anyone interested in military and film history. Whilst it's not much of a reference for war-gamers it is an interesting read.

SHANGHAI 2050

MAN'S

LAST HOPE

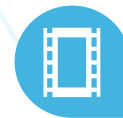
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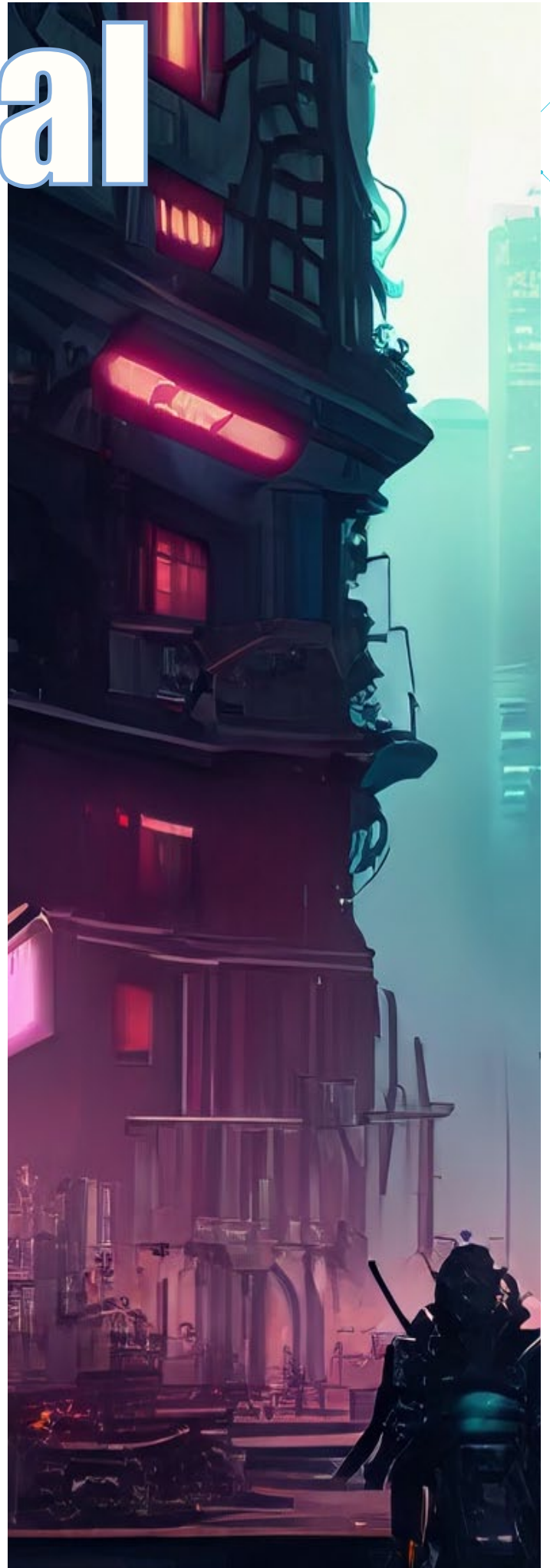
Web Site: Dave Barker

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Editorial

This supplement was created using Ai software for both the background and the art work throughout. This setting can be used for either a skirmish game or an RPG, you'll just have to add your own rules to the game.

At some point in the near future we plan to create a set of rules for a skirmish game set in Shanghai. This is an agnostic setting so you can use any miniatures you want from any other game system.



In the year 2050, Shanghai has transformed into a bustling metropolis controlled by powerful corporations. The city is now divided into corporate districts, each dominated by a different multinational corporation that has established its own governance system.

The skyline is dotted with towering skyscrapers, each displaying the logo of its corporate overlord. The streets are lined with advertisements for the latest products and services offered by these corporations. The entire city is a testament to the power of these corporations and their ability to shape the future of the world.

The corporations have complete control over the city's resources, including the water supply, electricity, and transportation. They also have their own private security forces, which are responsible for maintaining order and



enforcing the laws of their respective corporations. The corporations have established their own courts, which operate outside of the traditional legal system and are staffed by lawyers and judges employed by the corporations.

The residents of Shanghai are largely divided into two groups: those who work for the corporations and those who do not. Those who work for the corporations enjoy access to the best healthcare, education, and housing that money can buy. They are also given the opportunity to rise through the ranks of the corporation and attain positions of power and influence.

Those who do not work for the corporations, on the other hand, live in poverty and struggle to make ends meet. They are often forced to work in dangerous and low-paying jobs just to survive. They have little access to basic services such as healthcare and education and are often treated as second-class citizens by the corporations.

Despite the stark differences between these two groups, the corporations have managed to maintain a semblance of order and stability in the city. They have created a society that is highly efficient and productive, but at the cost of individual freedoms and the well-being of those who are not a part of the corporate system.

As Shanghai continues to thrive under the control of these powerful corporations, it remains to be seen whether this model of corporate governance will be replicated in other cities around the world.



In the year 2095, Shanghai is a city under corporate control, where the wealthy and powerful corporations dominate every aspect of life. The world is in chaos due to the ongoing global conflicts and economic collapse.

Europe has been at war for three years, with Russia invading Ukraine and occupying the country. Europe responds with sanctions, but a small conflict breaks out, with Russia slowly taking territory in Ukraine. A deal is eventually agreed upon, but a year later, Russia turns off the gas supply to Europe and begins a full-scale invasion, causing NATO to respond.

In the midst of this chaos, China sees an opportunity to take advantage of the global crisis and attempts a beach assault on Taiwan. Japan comes to the aid of Taiwan, and a small conflict continues in the country.

China becomes distracted by events happening in the Korean peninsula, and forces Taiwan to accept the situation with an occupying force on the island.

Meanwhile, in Shanghai, the corporations have taken advantage of the global crisis to increase their power and control over the city. They have implemented strict laws and regulations, controlling every aspect of people's lives, from what they eat to where they work. The corporations have their own private armies, which are used to enforce their rules and crush any dissent.

The rest of Asia is suffering from internal issues related to the loss of the global economy. Many countries are working closely with Australia and New Zealand to try to mitigate the economic effects.

India made a small incursion into China in 2037, and after initial successes, was forced to retreat when fighting broke out in the Kashmiri region with Pakistan. The region is still quite tense, but a tense ceasefire has held out so far.

In North America, there have been border clashes with the cartels that have taken control of Mexico, creating a wave of refugees trying to escape the violence. The US has a growing movement of far-right groups causing internal conflict that has escalated into domestic terrorism. Canada has declared itself neutral, fearing a civil war could break out south of the border in the US.





South America has managed to avoid most of the violence seen in the rest of the world, but Argentina invaded and occupied the Falkland Islands after a bloody conflict with the British forces stationed there.

The UK has not responded to the invasion due to being embroiled in the ongoing conflict in Europe. The US sent a division to Venezuela to take control of the oil fields in the country and prop up a pro-US puppet regime.

Overall, Shanghai is a city controlled by corporations, where the rest of the world is in chaos due to ongoing conflicts and economic collapse. The corporations have taken advantage of the situation to increase their power and control, while the rest of Asia and the world suffer from internal issues related to the loss of the global economy.

The wasteland outside of Shanghai was once a thriving region filled with lush greenery and bustling towns. However, years of conflict and destruction have left the area barren and desolate. The cause of the conflict is still debated among historians, but many believe it was sparked by disputes over natural resources and political power.

As the conflict escalated, the once-beautiful region became a battleground. Bombings, gunfire, and other destructive tactics were used to gain an advantage, leaving the area scarred and devastated. The local population was forced to flee or risk becoming casualties of war.

As the fighting continued, Shanghai became a beacon of technological advancement and economic prosperity.

The city's leaders invested heavily in infrastructure, technology, and innovation, turning it into a futuristic cyber city that attracted businesses, investors, and tourists from around the world.

Despite the progress made in Shanghai, the wasteland outside the city remained a stark reminder of the cost of conflict. The land was polluted, and the water and air were contaminated, making it uninhabitable for humans and wildlife. The few who ventured into the wasteland did so at great risk to their health and safety.

Efforts to reclaim and rehabilitate the wasteland have been ongoing, but progress has been slow.

Some environmentalists and activists have called for more resources to be dedicated to the cleanup and restoration efforts, arguing that it is a moral imperative to heal the wounds of the past and restore the region to its former glory.

However, others argue that the focus should be on the future, and that the resources would be better spent on innovation and development.

Regardless of the debate, the wasteland outside of Shanghai serves as a stark reminder of the devastating consequences of conflict, and the urgent need for peace and cooperation to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future.





DOWNTOWN SHANGHAI is a bustling metropolis and a hub for international trade and finance. It is a modern and futuristic cityscape that combines traditional Chinese architecture with modern skyscrapers and high-tech infrastructure. The area is home to a diverse population of locals and expatriates, with many businesses and tourist attractions.

One of the most iconic landmarks in downtown Shanghai is the Oriental Pearl Tower, a towering structure with a distinctive design featuring spherical shapes and a large observation deck. The Bund is another famous area, located along the Huangpu River and known for its colonial-era architecture and scenic views of the city skyline. Nanjing Road, a major shopping district, is also located in downtown Shanghai and is a popular destination for tourists and locals alike.

The streets of downtown Shanghai are crowded with people, cars, and bicycles, and there is a constant buzz of activity. Neon signs and bright lights illuminate the streets at night, creating a lively atmosphere. There are also many restaurants and street vendors selling a variety of foods, from traditional Chinese dishes to international cuisine.

While the downtown area is generally considered safe and well-policed, there are still pockets of crime and areas that are less developed.

As with any large city, visitors and locals alike should exercise caution and be aware of their surroundings.

The market sector of Shanghai is a bustling, crowded and chaotic place. The streets are lined with neon lights and towering holographic advertisements that compete for attention. The air is thick with the smell of food, spices, and exhaust fumes from the countless vehicles that crowd the narrow streets.

The market is a place of constant movement and energy, with vendors hawking their wares from street stalls and storefronts. Here you can find everything from the latest cybernetic enhancements to exotic animals, rare spices, and illegal weapons. The market is also home to countless bars and clubs, where people come to unwind after a long day in the city.

Despite the bright lights and the constant activity, the market can also be a dangerous place. Pickpockets and thieves are common, and the area is known for its connection to the criminal underworld. The police presence is minimal, and many vendors and patrons alike are willing to turn a blind eye to illegal activities in exchange for a cut of the profits.

Overall, the market sector of Shanghai is a place where the line between legal and illegal is often blurred, and where anything can be bought for the right price. It is a place where people come to chase their dreams and make a quick buck, but also a place where danger lurks around every corner.



LOCATIONS AROUND THE CITY OF SHANGHAI:

The Bund: This waterfront area is located along the Huangpu River and is home to some of Shanghai's most famous landmarks, including the Oriental Pearl Tower and the Shanghai World Financial Center. It's a popular spot for tourists and locals alike to take a stroll, dine at one of the many restaurants, or catch a boat ride.

Yu Garden: This traditional Chinese garden is located in the heart of Shanghai and dates back to the Ming Dynasty. It's known for its beautiful architecture, serene ponds, and intricate rock formations. Visitors can also explore the nearby marketplace for souvenirs and snacks.

Nanjing Road: This pedestrian-only street is one of the busiest shopping districts in the world. It's home to both international and local brands, as well as restaurants, theaters, and other attractions.

Jing'an Temple: This Buddhist temple is located in the Jing'an District and dates back over 780 years. It's known for its striking architecture and serene atmosphere, making it a popular spot for tourists and locals alike to meditate and reflect.



People's Square: This large public square is located in the heart of Shanghai and is surrounded by several cultural institutions, including the Shanghai Museum, the Shanghai Grand Theatre, and the Shanghai Urban Planning Exhibition Center. It's a popular spot for locals to relax and enjoy the scenery.

Xintiandi: This pedestrian-only area is located in the heart of Shanghai's former French Concession and is known for its picturesque architecture, trendy restaurants and bars, and high-end shopping. It's a popular spot for tourists and locals alike to enjoy a night out on the town.

Zhujiajiao Water Town: This picturesque water town is located on the outskirts of Shanghai and is known for its winding canals, traditional architecture, and scenic bridges. Visitors can explore the narrow alleys and admire the ancient buildings, or take a boat ride through the canals.

TRANSPORTATION

In the bustling metropolis of Shanghai, futuristic transportation is the norm. The streets are filled with a variety of vehicles, ranging from sleek flying cars to nimble hoverbikes. The following are some of the most common modes of transportation in the city

Flying Cars: The skies of Shanghai are filled with flying cars that zip between towering skyscrapers. These vehicles are capable of vertical takeoff and landing and are equipped with advanced navigation systems to help drivers avoid collisions.



Maglev Trains: Shanghai is home to one of the fastest and most advanced maglev train systems in the world. These trains travel at speeds of up to 430 km/h, allowing passengers to quickly move between different areas of the city.

Hoverbikes: For those looking for a more nimble and agile form of transportation, hoverbikes are a popular option. These sleek vehicles hover a few feet off the ground and can weave through traffic with ease.



Personal Drones: Personal drones are becoming increasingly popular in Shanghai, especially for those who live and work in the city's many high-rise buildings. These small drones are capable of carrying people and cargo, allowing for quick and easy transportation between different parts of the city.

Automated Taxis: Autonomous taxis are becoming more common in Shanghai, offering a convenient and efficient way to get around the city. These vehicles are equipped with advanced sensors and navigation systems, allowing them to navigate the city's busy streets without a driver.





POLITICS

In Shanghai, there are various political factions that hold some degree of power, but ultimately, the corporations hold the most influence and dictate the city's direction. These factions include

The Shanghai Municipal Government - This is the official governing body of the city, but it is widely believed to be corrupt and under the control of the corporations. Its primary role is to enforce the laws and regulations set forth by the corporations.



The Triads - As mentioned earlier, the Triads are a powerful criminal organization in Shanghai. They have their own hierarchy and operate in their own territories, but they also have dealings with the corporations and are known to provide them with muscle and other services.

The Yakuza - Similarly, the Yakuza have a strong presence in Shanghai and are also known to work with the corporations. They have their own code of honor and a hierarchical structure, with the most powerful members holding significant sway over the city's criminal underworld.

The Student Movement - This faction is made up of young people who are dissatisfied with the current state of affairs in Shanghai. They are politically active and often protest against the corporations and the government, but they are not powerful enough to effect any real change.

The corporations, on the other hand, are the true power brokers in Shanghai. They hold the majority of the city's wealth and resources, and they use this to influence and control the political factions. They have their own private security forces and are not afraid to use them to enforce their will. They also have a hand in many of the city's major infrastructure projects, which further solidifies their hold on the city. Overall, the corporations have a stranglehold on Shanghai's political landscape, and it will take a significant upheaval to change this dynamic.

POPULATION OF \ SHANGHAI

Shanghai is a diverse city with a population made up of people from all over the world. Here are some examples of inhabitants that could be found in the city:

Expats: Shanghai is a popular destination for expatriates who come to work in various industries. They can come from anywhere in the world and often live in expat communities or areas with high-end housing.



Chinese businesspeople: As a major economic hub, Shanghai attracts many Chinese businesspeople who come to the city to conduct trade and do business. They can be found in the city's financial district and other business areas.

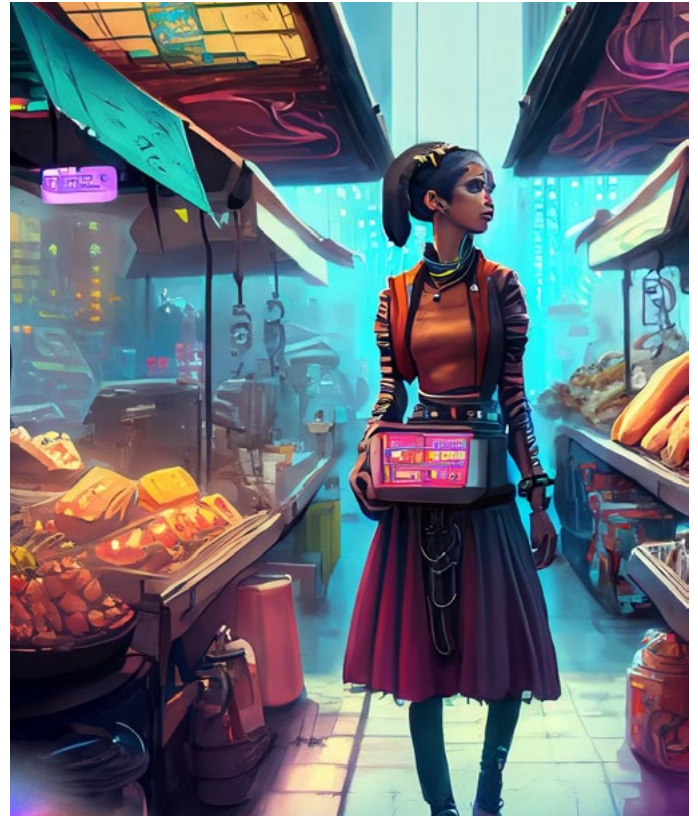


Tourists: Shanghai is also a popular tourist destination, attracting visitors from all over the world. They come to see the city's many attractions, such as the Bund and the Oriental Pearl Tower.

Students: Shanghai is home to many universities, including some of China's most prestigious. As a result, the city has a large student population, many of whom come from other parts of China.

Migrant workers: Many people from rural areas of China come to Shanghai to work in factories and construction sites. They often live in crowded, low-income housing.

Artists: Shanghai has a thriving arts scene, with many artists and creatives making the city their home. They can be found in areas such as the M50 art district and other creative hubs.



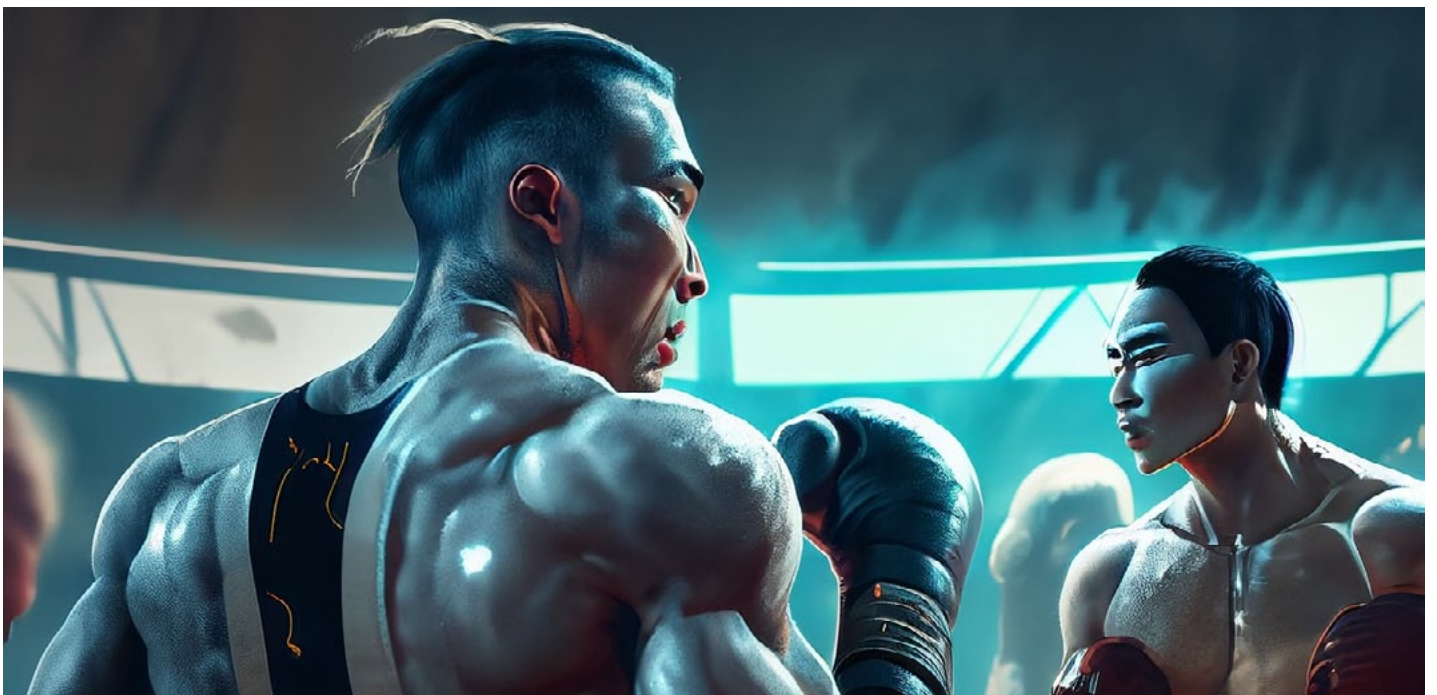
Street vendors: Shanghai's streets are home to many vendors selling food, clothes, and other goods. They often operate in crowded areas, such as near popular tourist attractions.

Homeless people: Like many big cities, Shanghai has a significant homeless population. These people often live on the streets and rely on charity and government assistance to survive.

Elderly people: Shanghai has a rapidly aging population, with many elderly people living in the city. They can be found in nursing homes, senior centers, and other facilities.

Criminals: Shanghai is home to many criminal organizations, such as the Yakuza and Triads. These criminals can be found operating in various parts of the city, engaging in illegal activities such as drug trafficking and extortion.

MARTIALS ARTS FIGHTGT NETWORK



The Martial Arts Fight Network (MAFN) is the most popular spectator sport in Shanghai, drawing huge crowds from all over the city. The MAFN is a mix of different martial arts styles, including karate, kung fu, and muay thai, and the fights are held in a specially designed arena in the heart of downtown Shanghai.

The MAFN is highly competitive, with fighters from all over the world coming to compete for the grand prize. The fights are brutal, and the rules are minimal, allowing for a wide range of fighting techniques and strategies. Fans love the excitement and unpredictability of the matches, and the fighters are treated like rock stars.

However, the MAFN is also heavily involved in criminal activity. Many of the fighters are recruited by criminal organizations, such as the Triads and Yakuza, to compete in illegal underground matches where huge sums of money are bet on the outcome. The MAFN is also a front for various criminal enterprises, including drug trafficking, money laundering, and arms dealing.

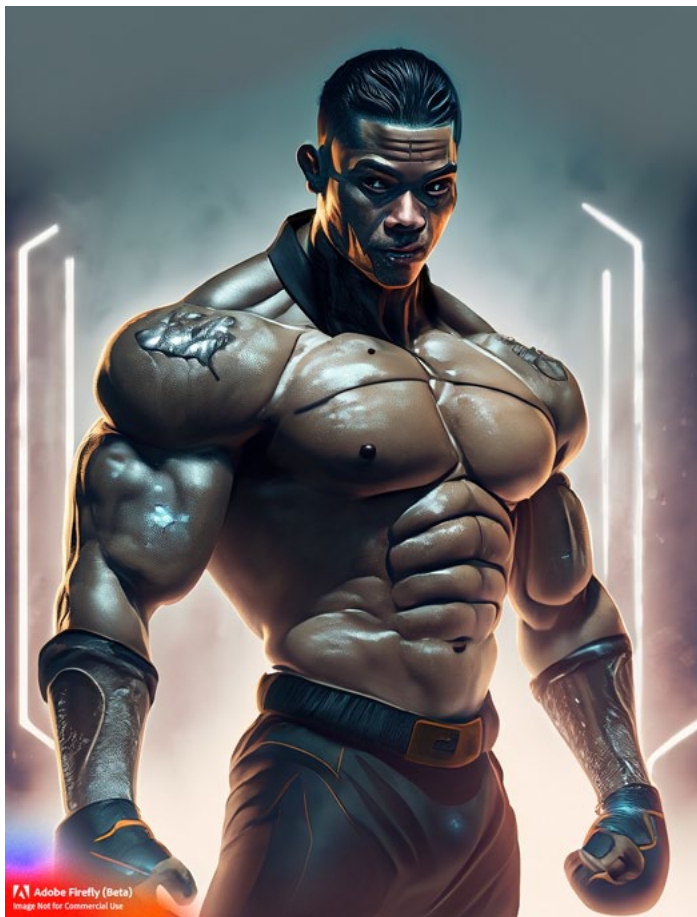
Despite the illegal activity, the MAFN is tolerated by the authorities, who see it as a way to keep the population entertained and distracted from other issues. The corporations also have a vested interest in the MAFN, as they provide sponsorship and advertising, which brings in significant revenue.

The criminal involvement in the MAFN adds an extra layer of danger and excitement for fans, but also puts the fighters at risk of being exploited or targeted by rival organizations. It's a high-stakes world where the line between sport and crime is blurred, and everyone is fighting to come out on top.

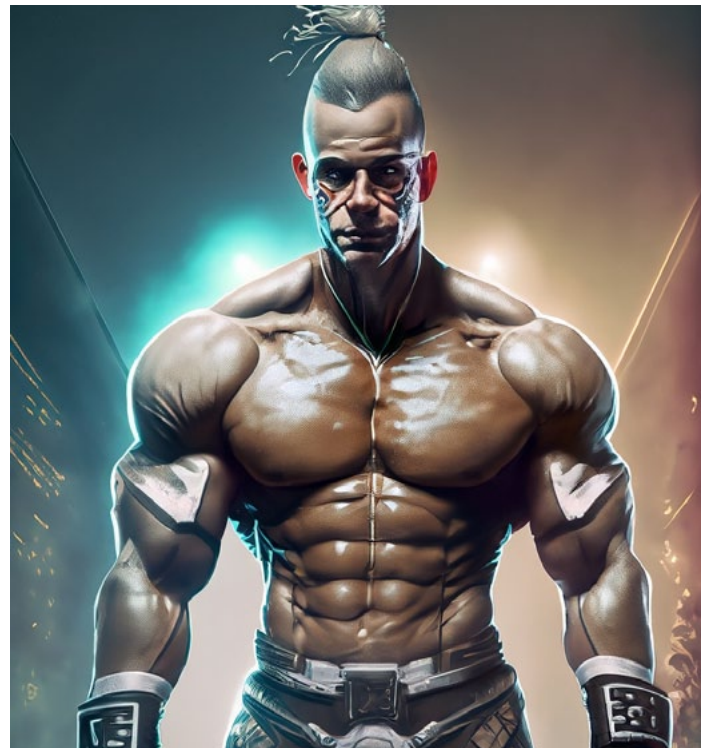


Here are some descriptions of some of the top male and female fighters in the Martial Arts Fight Network in Shanghai

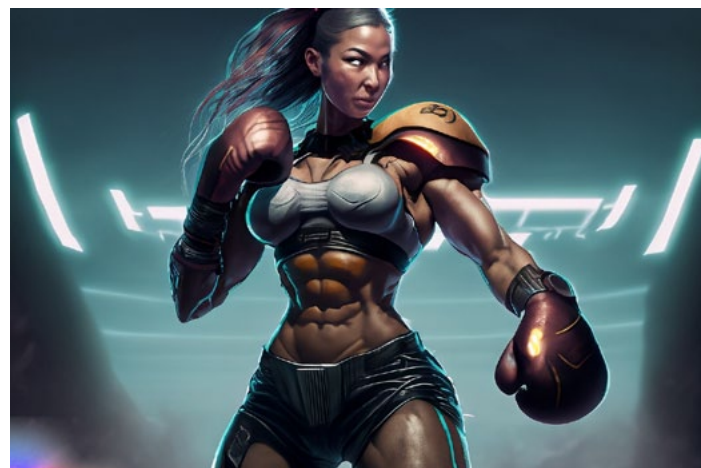
Dragon Zhang Wei: Known for his incredible speed and agility, Zhang Wei is a top-ranked fighter in the network. His fighting style is heavily influenced by Wing Chun, and he's famous for his lightning-fast punches and kicks.



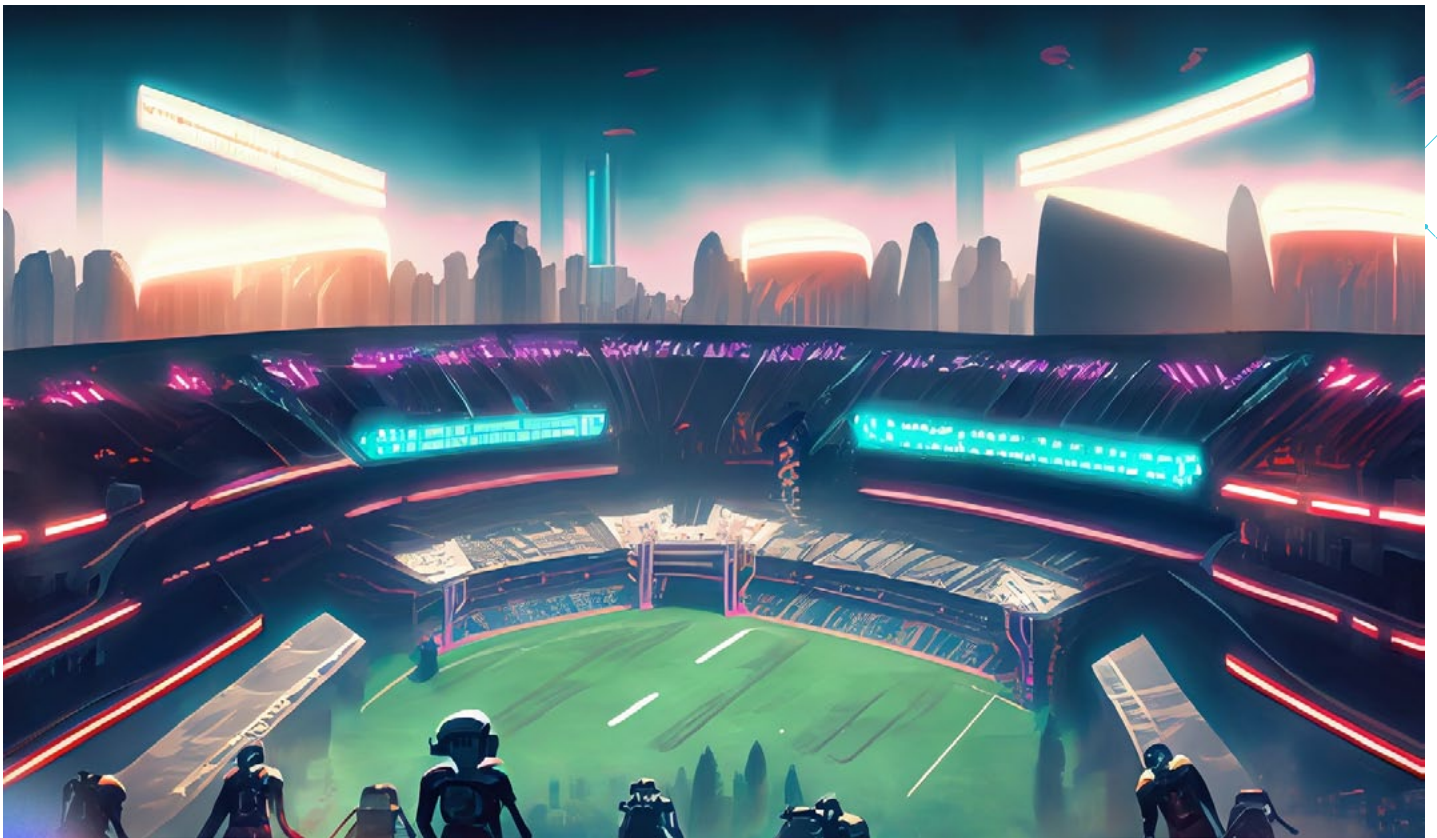
The Iron Fist Li Wei: Li Wei is a powerhouse fighter, known for his incredible strength and endurance. He's been fighting in the network for years and has earned a reputation for his devastating knockout blows. His fighting style is heavily influenced by Shaolin Kung Fu.



The Black Widow Wu Jing: Wu Jing is a highly skilled female fighter, known for her speed and agility. Her fighting style is heavily influenced by Wushu, and she's famous for her acrobatic moves and lightning-fast strikes.



The Red Phoenix Zhang Mei: Zhang Mei is another top-ranked female fighter in the network. Her fighting style is heavily influenced by Tai Chi, and she's famous for her fluid movements and graceful strikes. Despite her delicate appearance, she's a fierce opponent and has earned a reputation for taking down much larger opponents.



CYBER FOOTBALL LEAGUE

In the futuristic cyberpunk city of Shanghai, a new and dangerous sport has emerged: the Cyberpunk American Football League. This is not your typical game of football. Instead, it is a brutal, high-stakes game where players risk their lives in every match.

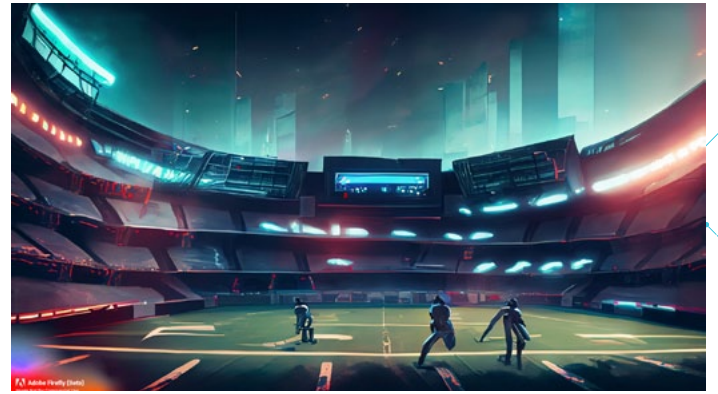


The players in this league are not just athletes; they are mercenaries, hackers, and criminals. They come from all walks of life, united by a love of the game and the thrill of the danger it provides. They wear armor and carry weapons, and they are heavily augmented with cybernetic enhancements that give them an edge on the field.

The rules of the game are loose, with violence and rule-breaking encouraged. In fact, anything goes in this league, and players are willing to do whatever it takes to win. The games are played in dark and gritty arenas, with neon lights flickering in the background and crowds of fans cheering on their favorite teams.

The league is run by powerful and wealthy individuals who control everything from the teams to the game outcomes.





The teams in the league are as varied as the players themselves. Some are sponsored by corporations, while others are made up of street gangs or un-derground organizations. The teams have their own unique playstyles and strategies, making each game an unpredictable and exciting experience.

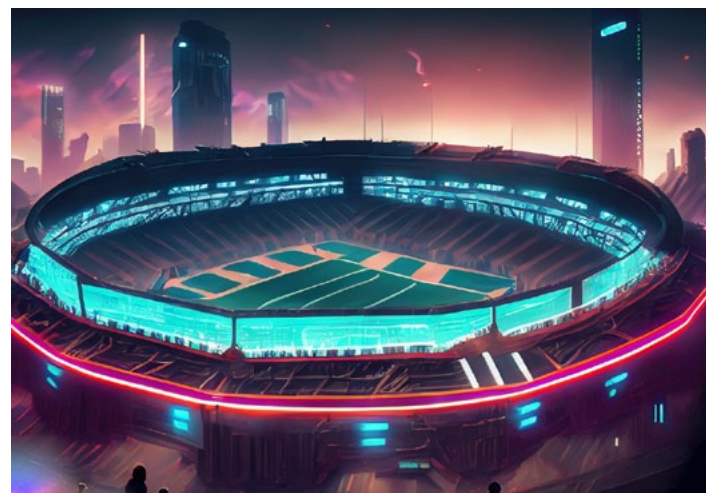


Betting on games is a popular pas-time, with huge sums of money exchanging hands every week. The players are not just playing for the love of the game; they are also playing for their lives and the lives of their loved ones.

The games themselves are intense and bloody. The ball is made of reinforced steel and players use everything from guns to grenades to get it down the field. Injuries are common, and players often leave the field battered and bruised, if they leave at all.

Despite the danger and violence of the game, fans flock to see their favorite teams play. The Cyberpunk American Football League has become a staple of the city's night-life, with bars and clubs offering specials and promotions for game nights.

In a city where the line between law and crime is blurred, the Cyberpunk American Football League is just another example of the extreme and dan-gerous world that the citizens of Shanghai inhabit. But for those willing to take the risk, it offers a thrilling and unforgettable experience.





THE WASTELANDS

The wasteland outside of Shanghai was once a thriving region filled with lush greenery and bustling towns. However, years of conflict and destruction have left the area barren and desolate. The cause of the conflict is still debated among historians, but many believe it was sparked by disputes over natural resources and political power.

As the conflict escalated, the once-beautiful region became a battleground. Bombings, gunfire, and other destructive tactics were used to gain an advantage, leaving the area scarred and devastated. The local population was forced to flee or risk becoming casualties of war.

As the fighting continued, Shanghai became a beacon of technological advancement and economic prosperity. The city's leaders invested heavily in infrastructure, technology, and innovation, turning it into a futuristic cyber city that attracted businesses, investors, and tourists from around the world.

Despite the progress made in Shanghai, the wasteland outside the city remained a stark reminder of the cost of conflict. The land was polluted, and the water and air were contaminated, making it uninhabitable for humans and wildlife. The few who ventured into the wasteland did so at great risk to their health and safety.

Efforts to reclaim and rehabilitate the wasteland have been ongoing, but progress has been slow. Some environmentalists and activists have called for more resources to be dedicated to the cleanup and restoration efforts, arguing that it is a moral imperative to heal the wounds of the past and restore the region to its former glory. However, others argue that the focus should be on the future, and that the resources would be better spent on innovation and development.

Regardless of the debate, the wasteland outside of Shanghai serves as a stark reminder of the devastating consequences of conflict, and the urgent need for peace and cooperation to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future.



The people living in the wastelands outside of Shanghai are a diverse and rugged group, including those who have been forced out of the city due to poverty or persecution, as well as those who have chosen to live off the grid. Many of these individuals are survivors of the conflict that devastated the area, and have had to adapt to the harsh conditions of the wasteland in order to survive. Some of the inhabitants of the wastelands have undergone mutations as a result of exposure to radiation and other hazardous materials. These mutations can range from minor physical abnormalities, such as extra fingers or toes, to more extreme changes, such as enhanced strength or unusual sensory abilities.



Despite their difficult circumstances, many of the people living in the wastelands have formed tight-knit communities, relying on each other for protection and support. Some of these communities have even developed their own unique cultures and traditions, drawing on a mix of pre- and post-apocalyptic influences.

However, life in the wastelands is not without its dangers. In addition to the harsh environmental conditions, inhabitants must also contend with raiders and other criminal elements who prey on the vulnerable. Some groups have banded together to form makeshift militias, while others rely on the protection of powerful allies, such as the yakuza or the Triads.



Overall, the people living in the wastelands outside of Shanghai are a resilient and resourceful group, capable of adapting to even the most challenging circumstances. While their lives may be difficult, they are not without hope, and many continue to dream of a better future, both for themselves and for the world at large.

Small towns in the wastelands outside of Shanghai are scattered and isolated, often consisting of only a few dozen people who have banded together for survival. These towns are often located in the ruins of old cities, repurposing the remaining infrastructure for their own purposes.

One such town is called “New Phoenix”, named after the mythical bird that rose from the ashes. It was founded by a group of survivors who stumbled upon an abandoned industrial area, and they quickly realized the potential for the rusting factories and warehouses to provide shelter and resources. The town has grown slowly over the years, but still remains small and self-sufficient, with most residents engaging in farming or scavenging to sustain themselves.



Another town is called “Ironhaven”, built around an old military base that was abandoned after the war. The town’s leader, a grizzled former soldier named Captain Lee, saw the potential in the base’s sturdy walls and infrastructure and set about fortifying it into a safe haven for survivors. Despite facing constant threats from raiders and mutated creatures, Ironhaven has managed to remain standing thanks to the bravery of its inhabitants and the Captain’s leadership.

Lastly, there is a town called “Mutant’s End”, named after the high number of mutated residents who call it home. The town is built around a large crater where a massive explosion occurred during the war, and the resulting radiation has caused many of its residents to develop strange abilities and mutations. Despite the prejudices of the outside world, the residents of Mutant’s End have banded together to form a tight-knit community that embraces their differences and works together to survive in the harsh wasteland.





FACTIONS IN SHANGHAI

YAKUZA

In the year 2077, Shanghai had transformed into a gleaming metropolis of towering skyscrapers, advanced technology, and neon lights. The city was dominated by powerful corporations that controlled almost every aspect of life. The most powerful of these corporations was the Tokyo-based Yakuza, which had expanded its operations to Shanghai in pursuit of new markets and opportunities.

As the Yakuza established a foothold in Shanghai, they encountered fierce resistance from local criminal organizations and gangs. This sparked a brutal conflict that ravaged the city's streets and left entire neighbourhoods in ruins. The Yakuza responded with ruthless force, employing cyber-enhanced samurai warriors to crush their enemies and establish dominance over the city's criminal underworld.

Over time, the Yakuza's influence grew, and they began to take over legitimate businesses, corrupting politicians, and even infiltrating the police force. They became the de facto rulers of Shanghai's criminal underworld, using their immense wealth and power to shape the city in their image.



The Yakuza's cyber-samurai warriors were the backbone of their organization, feared and respected by all who crossed their path. These warriors were enhanced with the latest cybernetic technology, giving them superhuman strength, speed, and agility. They were armed with high-tech weapons, ranging from razor-sharp katanas to energy weapons that could tear through concrete walls. Despite their power and influence, the Yakuza remained embroiled in an ongoing conflict with rival criminal organizations and rogue hackers who sought to challenge their authority. In this world of corporate cyberpunk, the Yakuza's cyber-samurai stood at the forefront of their battles, fighting to protect their interests and maintain their dominance over the city of Shanghai.



TRIADS

The yakuza have long-standing rivalries with various criminal organizations across the world, and one of their biggest competitors are the notorious Triad gangs based in Shanghai and Hong Kong. These two criminal organizations have a long history of animosity and have been locked in a bitter battle for power and influence in the lucrative East Asian criminal underworld.

The Triads are known for their brutal tactics and willingness to use extreme violence to eliminate their enemies, while the yakuza are infamous for their code of honor and strict organizational hierarchy.



Despite their different approaches, both groups are equally ruthless and have vast resources at their disposal, including networks of informants, smuggling routes, and access to cutting-edge technology.

Shanghai, in particular, has become a hotbed of corporate cyberpunk activity, with powerful multinational corporations vying for dominance in the city's hyper-competitive business landscape. The yakuza have established a powerful presence in the city, using their connections with local criminal networks and corrupt officials to maintain their influence.

As a result, Shanghai has become a dangerous and unpredictable place, with rival criminal factions constantly battling for control of its streets. The yakuza and Triads are at the forefront of this conflict, each seeking to outmaneuver and outgun the other in a never-ending struggle for supremacy. Those who live in this futuristic cyber city know all too well the dangers of crossing either of these powerful criminal organizations.



POLICE

The police force operating in Shanghai is a complex mixture of corruption, honor, and limited resources. The city has grown at an incredible rate in recent years, with the rapid development of technology and business attracting a vast array of people from all over the world. This has resulted in a diverse and rapidly expanding population that has stretched the resources of the city's law enforcement agencies to their limits.

Many of the police officers in Shanghai are deeply committed to upholding the law and ensuring the safety of the city's residents. They are hardworking and dedicated, often risking their lives to maintain order in the face of significant challenges. However, there are also many corrupt officers who have become involved in criminal activities themselves, either through bribery or coercion from powerful criminal organizations.

One of the primary reasons for this corruption is the lack of resources available to the police force. With such a large and rapidly growing population, the police simply do not have enough officers or equipment to keep up with the demands of the city. This has led to officers taking bribes or engaging in other forms of corruption to supplement their meager salaries.

Despite these challenges, many officers in Shanghai continue to strive to uphold the law and maintain order in the city. They are often caught in the middle of conflicts between powerful criminal organizations, such as the yakuza and the Triads, and must navigate these dangerous waters with limited resources and support.

Overall, the police force in Shanghai is a reflection of the city itself: complex, diverse, and constantly evolving. While corruption remains a significant problem, there are still many dedicated officers working to make the city a safer and more secure place for all its inhabitants.



MERCS

In Shanghai's cyberpunk underworld, mercenaries are a common sight. They are often hired by corporations, gangs, and even the police to perform various tasks, ranging from protection to assassinations. Many of these mercenaries are former soldiers, trained in the art of combat and well-versed in the latest technology.



Some of the most well-known mercenary groups in Shanghai include the Black Lotus, the Crimson Blades, and the Iron Wolves. These groups are highly organized and operate with military precision, each with its own unique style and methods. The Black Lotus, for example, is known for its use of stealth and sabotage, while the Crimson Blades are feared for their brutal and uncompromising tactics.

The mercenaries in Shanghai often find themselves caught in the crossfire of the city's various factions, as they are hired by both sides of conflicts. This has led to a culture of neutrality among many of these groups, with mercenaries refusing to take sides and only working for the highest bidder. However, there are still those who have chosen to align themselves with specific factions, often for personal or ideological reasons.

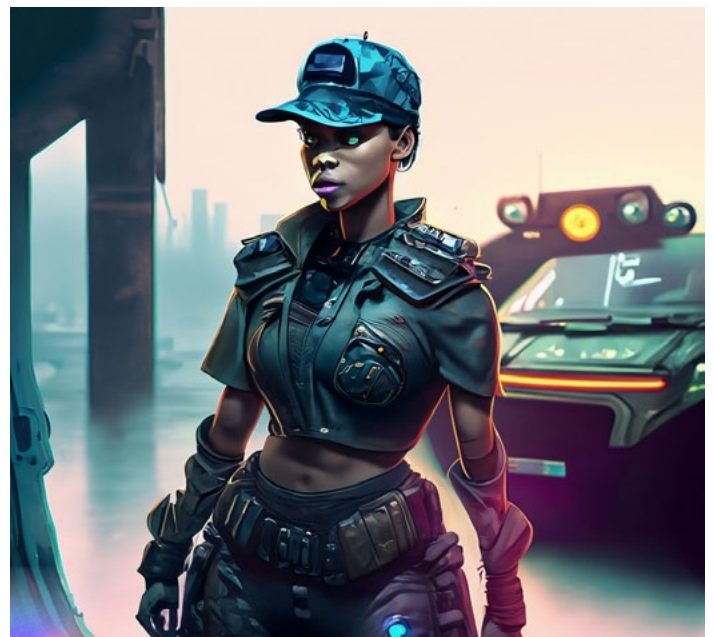
Despite their reputation for violence and greed, many mercenaries in Shanghai adhere to a strict code of honor.

They often have a strong sense of loyalty to their fellow mercenaries and will risk their lives to protect them. This sense of camaraderie has led to the formation of tight-knit mercenary communities in the city, where warriors from all over the world can come together and share their experiences.

CORP SECURITY

In Shanghai, the corporate sector wields immense power and influence, with some of the largest multinational corporations in the world having their headquarters located in the city. To protect their interests, these corporations employ their own private security forces, consisting of highly trained operatives who are equipped with the latest technology and weaponry.

These security forces are recruited from a variety of sources, including former military personnel, law enforcement officers, and even skilled mercenaries. The selection process is rigorous, with only the most skilled and experienced individuals being chosen to become corporate security operatives.



Once selected, these operatives undergo an extensive training program that includes advanced combat tactics, weapons training, and cyber security measures. They are also trained to operate in a variety of environments, ranging from urban areas to wilderness terrain.

Corporate security operatives are often given access to cutting-edge technology, such as drones, surveillance equipment, and advanced weaponry. They are also supported by a vast network of intelligence agents who provide them with real-time information on potential threats.



Despite their extensive resources and training, corporate security operatives face a number of challenges in Shanghai. These include corruption within the local law enforcement agencies, as well as the threat of rival criminal organizations, such as the Triad and Yakuza gangs.

However, with their vast resources and access to advanced technology, corporate security operatives remain a formidable force in Shanghai's complex and dangerous underworld. Shanghai, being a bustling metropolis, is also home to a number of criminal operations that operate in the shadows of its towering skyscrapers and bustling streets. From organized crime syndicates to small-time street gangs, Shanghai has it all.



One of the most prominent criminal organizations in Shanghai is the Triad, a notorious Chinese organized crime syndicate that operates not only in Shanghai but also in other parts of China, as well as in Hong Kong and Taiwan. The Triad is involved in a wide range of criminal activities, including extortion, drug trafficking, human trafficking, and prostitution.

Another criminal operation that is gaining notoriety in Shanghai is the Black Market, which is made up of various small-time criminal groups. These groups operate in the city's underground markets and are involved in the sale of illegal goods and services such as counterfeit goods, pirated media, and stolen electronics.

There are also a number of street gangs that operate in Shanghai's urban areas. These gangs are typically made up of young people and are involved in activities such as theft, vandalism, and drug dealing.

Finally, there are a number of cybercriminal organizations that operate in Shanghai, taking advantage of the city's reputation as a high-tech hub. These groups are involved in activities such as hacking, identity theft, and financial fraud.

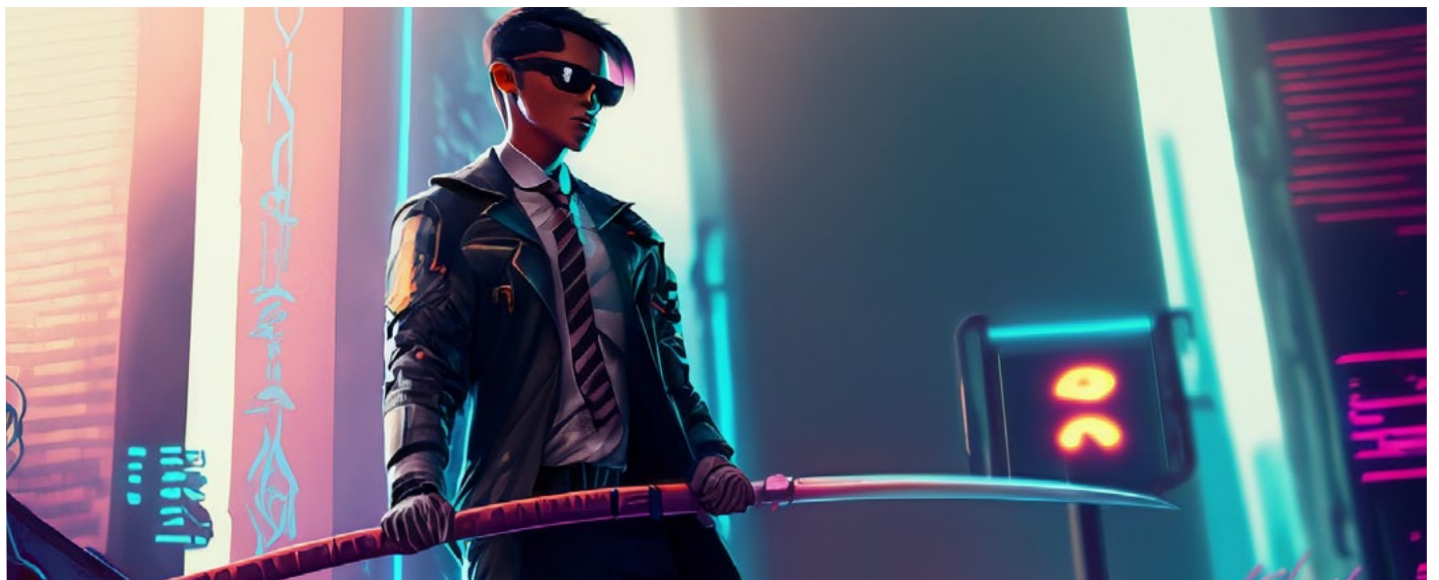
Despite the efforts of law enforcement to crack down on these criminal operations, they continue to thrive in the city's underworld, making Shanghai a hub for organized crime in Asia.

ASSASSINS

In the bustling and dangerous city of Shanghai, assassins come in all shapes and sizes. Some work for the yakuza or the Triad gangs, others are hired guns by the corporations, and some are independent operators seeking to make a name for themselves.



One of the most infamous assassins in Shanghai is known only as “The Ghost.” No one knows their true identity, but their reputation precedes them. The Ghost is a master of stealth and is said to be able to blend into the shadows like a ghost. They are known for using a variety of weapons, including knives, guns, and even poison.



Another well-known assassin in Shanghai is “The Whisper.” This individual is a master of disguise and infiltration. They are able to seamlessly blend into any situation and gather information or complete their mission without anyone suspecting a thing. The Whisper is also known for using unique and unconventional weapons, such as throwing cards and hidden blades.

The corporations in Shanghai have their own roster of elite assassins, trained in the arts of combat and espionage. These operatives are often sent on missions to take out key targets or gather valuable information for their employers.



They are well-equipped with advanced technology and weaponry, making them formidable opponents.

Despite the danger posed by these skilled killers, there are also those in Shanghai who specialize in taking down assassins.

These individuals, known as “hunters,” are often hired by targets or by rival factions seeking to neutralize a threat.

Hunters are experts in tracking and counter-espionage, using their skills to stay one step ahead of their prey.



MILITARY

After the devastating conflict that left much of the wasteland outside of Shanghai uninhabitable, the military force that once operated in the city was greatly weakened. Many soldiers were killed or injured in the fighting, and the military's resources were drained.

Now, the military force in Shanghai is a shell of its former self. The soldiers who remain are poorly trained and equipped, and morale is low. They struggle to maintain order in the city and protect the roads through the wasteland, which are essential for transporting goods and supplies to the city.



Despite their weaknesses, the military force is still a formidable presence in Shanghai. They are well-armed and well-trained compared to the average citizen, and they maintain a strict sense of discipline and order. However, their lack of resources and support means that they are often overwhelmed by the various criminal factions and corporate security forces operating in the city.

The military force in Shanghai is also plagued by corruption, with many soldiers accepting bribes from the various criminal factions in exchange for looking the other way or providing protection. This has further weakened their position and made them less effective at maintaining law and order.



ROBOTS

In the city of Shanghai, robots can be found everywhere, serving a variety of functions from manual labor to security and entertainment. Some of the most common types of robots in the city include:

Service robots: These are humanoid robots designed to perform various service tasks such as cleaning, cooking, and serving food in restaurants. They are typically programmed with basic social skills to interact with customers.



Security robots: These are autonomous or remote-controlled robots used for surveillance and patrolling. They are equipped with cameras, sensors, and sometimes even weapons to deter or subdue intruders.

Construction robots: These are large, heavy-duty robots designed to assist in construction and repair work. They can lift heavy objects, operate heavy machinery, and perform dangerous tasks in hazardous environments.

Entertainment robots: These are humanoid or animal-like robots designed to entertain people. They can perform various acts such as dancing, singing, and storytelling, and are often used in theme parks, hotels, and other public places.

Medical robots: These are specialized robots designed to assist medical professionals in performing surgeries, administering medication, and providing patient care. They are typically equipped with sensors and advanced imaging technology to help doctors make precise diagnoses and treatment plans.

Each type of robot has its own unique features and abilities, and their stats and abilities can be customized to fit the needs of the game.

here are a few examples of robots with unique features and abilities:

RiotBot

Features: Built for crowd control and urban warfare, this robot is heavily armored and equipped with non-lethal weaponry such as tear gas and rubber bullets. Its body is also equipped with shields to protect it from attacks.

Stats: High toughness and defense, moderate attack, low speed.

Abilities: "Shield Wall" - can deploy its shields in front of it to provide cover for other units; "Riot Control" - can release a cloud of tear gas to disperse crowds or incapacitate enemies.

ScoutBot

Features: A small, agile robot designed for reconnaissance and stealth operations. It is equipped with advanced sensors for detecting enemies and navigating complex environments.

Stats: High speed and agility, low toughness and defense, low attack.

Abilities: "Stealth" - can move silently and remain hidden from enemies; "Sensor Suite" - can detect enemies and environmental hazards at a long range.



ConstructionBot

Features: A large, sturdy robot designed for building and repair tasks. It is equipped with powerful hydraulic arms and tools for construction and demolition.

Stats: High toughness and defense, low attack and speed.

Abilities: "Build" - can construct buildings and fortifications quickly and efficiently; "Demolition" - can destroy structures and obstacles blocking the way.



Assassin Bot

Features: A sleek, deadly robot designed for stealthy assassinations. It is equipped with advanced targeting systems and deadly weaponry such as poison needles and blades.

Stats: High attack and speed, low toughness and defence.

Abilities: "Stealth Kill" - can instantly kill a target while hidden; "Poison" - can inject targets with a deadly toxin that slowly kills them over time.

MediBot

Features: A small, agile robot designed for emergency medical care. It is equipped with advanced diagnostic tools and medical equipment such as syringes and defibrillators.

Stats: Low attack and defence, moderate speed and toughness.

Abilities: "Heal" - can restore health to injured units; "Revive" - can revive fallen units back to full health.





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