



irregular

Autumn Issue 2020

magazine

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in the Dark Ages

Klingon Empire

Blood Bowl
ECW Derbyshire

Virtual UKGE
Gangs of Rome in Derby

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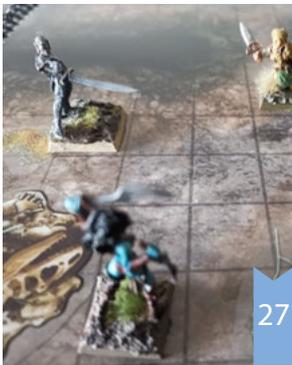
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Autumn Issue 2020

Editorial

Jason Hubbard

Well things seem to be getting back to normal, though very slowly. As yet I've still not had any face to face gaming, and I'm mainly meeting friends via on-line chat software. Though I'm slowly meeting up with some friends out doors. It's been a strange old year so far, what with the pandemic and the cancelling of shows and conventions.

Just recently UKGE hosted a virtual show, which to my pleasant surprise was a very good weekend, and we discuss this in an article in this issue.

I've managed to get a lot of painting done this which has been a welcomed bonus from the situation. I've managed to paint up over 180 items which includes miniatures and terrain since March.

I've also managed to get through several books during this period which is another plus. I read a lot normally but due to be stuck at home I've managed to get a lot more read. So there has been some pluses to being stuck at home.

I have noticed that this year I bought far less games, rules and miniatures. I suspect that may be due to not attending shows this year. As I'd pick up several items at shows like Salute and UKGE, plus a few of the local shows near me like Chillcon Sheffield and the Chillcon Derby.

Another thing I've noticed is that I've become more drawn to RPG games this year, probably because there are a plethora of solo rules out in the market place for RPG's.

There are a few big releases on the horizon, one of those being Blood Bowl from Games Workshop. A game that always been one of favourite board games ever since I was introduced to it when first edition was released.

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

Jason

CURSE OF STRAHD REVAMPED

BOXED ADVENTURE FOR LEVELS 1-10
BY WIZARDS D&D TEAM

BURY YOURSELF IN GOTHIC HORROR

Unearth the terror of Ravenloft in this boxed adventure for the world's greatest roleplaying game. Under raging storm clouds, the vampire Count Strahd von Zarovich stands silhouetted against the ancient walls of Castle Ravenloft. Rumbling thunder pounds the castle spires. The wind's howling increases as he turns his gaze down toward the village of Barovia. Far below, yet not beyond his keen eyesight, a party of adventurers has just entered his domain. Strahd's face forms the barest hint of a smile as his dark plan unfolds. He knew they were coming, and he knows why they came—all according to his plan.



A lightning flash rips through the darkness, but Strahd is gone. Only the howling of the wind fills the midnight air. The master of Castle Ravenloft is having guests for dinner. And you are invited.

COFFIN COMPONENTS

- Curse of Strahd, one of the most popular Dungeons & Dragons roleplaying game products of all time, split into three parts: a 224-page perfect-bound adventure for characters of levels 1–10, a 20-page Creatures of Horror booklet of new monsters that appear in the adventure, and an 8-page Tarokka Deck booklet.



- A cover sheet with Strahd von Zarovich's image on one side and Strahd's monster stat block on the other.
- A sturdy, four-panel Dungeon Master's screen designed for use with the adventure.
- A double-sided poster map showing the domain of Barovia on one side and Castle Ravenloft on the other.
- 54 foil-stamped Tarokka cards, which help determine the heroes' path through the adventure.
- A tuck box to hold the Tarokka deck.
- 12 postcards (3 copies each of 4 different cards), which you can use to invite friends to your game.

Rivers of London RPG: the creative team is assembled!



Chaosium is producing the Rivers of London Roleplaying Game, based on Ben Aaronovitch's best-selling urban fantasy fiction. Reflecting the series' inventive take on the fantastic—from Newtonian magic to the strange powers wielded by the rivers and other supernatural beings that inhabit the popular novels and comics—the game will use Chaosium's Basic Roleplaying system, as well as original, customized rules.

And now the Rivers of London RPG creative team has been assembled! They'll be working closely with Ben Aaronovitch on the game's development and presentation.

Here, in alphabetical order, the team introduces themselves:

PAUL FRICKER: Paul Fricker is a freelance writer and games designer, and is designing and writing the core rules system for the Rivers of London Roleplaying Game. In partnership with Mike Mason, Paul is best known for writing and revising the latest edition of Chaosium's award-winning RPG, Call of Cthulhu. Over the years he has participated in the creation and development of numerous scenarios and campaigns, beginning with Gatsby and the Great Race, back in 2005.



Paul is also one of the hosts of the horror and gaming podcast, The Good Friends of Jackson Elias. He often can be found on Twitter (@paulfricker), where he endeavors to focus on the important topics in life: gaming, music and food

ADAM GAUNTLETT: Hi! I'm Adam, and I'm a nut for crime novels and magic. I've written for The Escapist, Atlas Games, Pelgrane, and of course, Chaosium. My tendrils spread out from the island of Bermuda, where I lie in wait for the end of days. I can be bribed with cheesecake. Or a decent bitter, but cheesecake is more reliable.

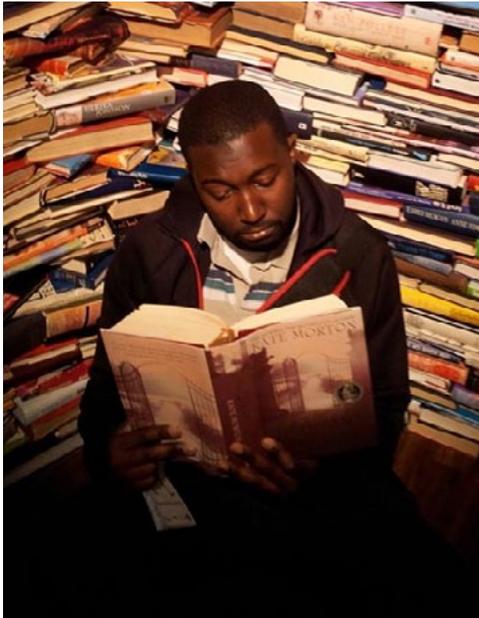


Rivers of London was the first I'd heard of Ben Aaronovitch and I quickly converted to Aaronovitchism, establishing a small shrine of books and graphic collections. My cats regularly sacrifice lizards in front of this sacred fane, though I do my best to stop them as lizards are bad for cats and the sacred fane.

My favorite moment in the Rivers series is when our heroes raid the Garden of Unearthly Delights back in Moon over Soho. I've a soft spot for Hammer Horror, and I can just picture Christopher Lee hamming it up

in the VIP lounge back in the day. Ideally with Vincent Price, Peter Cushing and John Carradine a la House of the Long Shadows—but I've said too much...

LLOYD GYAN: From working with Modiphius Entertainment, to being the cultural liaison on RPGs such as Bastion and Liminal, Lloyd Gyan has come to see all that the RPG community has to offer. His unique take and perspective on the world at large brings a fine nuance to setting books, his specialty coming from his many years as a second-generation Ghanaian living in London.



"Peter Grant's magical life has always vibrated with me, being a West African boy living his best life in London. To be given a chance to work on a project as personal as this is a dream come true. Also, I actually know what Star Beer tastes like!"

LYNNE HARDY: Lynne has been working on and off in the roleplaying industry for almost 30 years, most recently in her capacity as writer and Associate Editor for Chaosium's Call of Cthulhu RPG. Her past credits include work for Modiphius Entertainment, Cubicle 7, Green Ronin, and Pelgrane Press, among others, as writer, editor, or both. She also created her own steampunk pulp adventure game: Cogs, Cakes & Swordsticks. Her latest project, besides her continuing work on Call of Cthulhu, is as Line Editor for the Rivers of London RPG.

"It took me far longer to get round to reading Rivers of London than I care to admit, but once I did, I was hooked. It was immediately obvious that the world was ideal for a roleplaying game and it's a property I've been hoping to develop for years. With Mike Mason's encouragement, I approached Ben at a book signing for Lies Sleeping and, fortunately, Ben agreed!"



"I'm really looking forward to working with my team and sharing their work with all of our fans, new and old."

GAVIN INGLIS: Gavin Inglis is a writer and teacher based in Edinburgh, with a background in tech and music. He writes adventures for Call of Cthulhu, including the introductory solo Alone Against the Flames. Other work includes interactive novels published through Choice of Games, and credits on Zombies, Run! and Fallen London. His fiction has appeared in a magazine for actual conjurers, and his story collection Crap Ghosts is the definitive reference to ineffective apparitions.



Gavin was Language and Cognition Fellow at the Department for Clinical Neuroscience in Edinburgh, during which he produced a graphic novel about Functional Neurological Disorder, and an AI version of H.P. Lovecraft. His interactive web story about mental health, Hana Feels, was nominated for an XYZZY

award. www.gavininglis.com.

"I love exploring London to find its history and hidden ways, so it's a joy to be introducing players to the Rivers of London game and Ben's eerie world."

KERIS MCDONALD: Keris McDonald lives in the north of England, discovered Dungeons & Dragons before it was even considered a threat to one's immortal soul, and has been playing and GMing scenarios for Chaosium's Call of Cthulhu for 35 happy years. Her RPG scenarios have been published by Worlds of Cthulhu and The Cthulhu Hack. With many years involvement in writing live-action roleplaying events, she is currently helping run a Victorian Gothic LARP system.



A writer of supernatural fiction across the horror, fantasy, and erotica genres, Keris has nine novels in print and has seen her short stories published in many magazines and anthologies. Her short story "The Coat Off his Back" was chosen for inclusion in Best Horror of the Year Vol. 7 (ed. E Datlow).

HELENA NASH: Helena has been tabletop roleplaying since 1981 and has died on paper many times at the hands of formless horrors, faerie knights, and at least once by explosive decompression. She has written adventures for Call of Cthulhu, RuneQuest: Roleplaying in Glorantha, Dune: Adventures in the Imperium and Conan: Adventures in an Age Undreamed Of. Helena is one of the original developers of the cult film & television game 7TV, created the official roleplaying game of Robert Rankin's Brentford books, and wrote a

Choose Your Own Dinner Party gamebook combining elements of a Mike Leigh play and an Alfred Hitchcock film.



She lives in Hertfordshire by the River Lea, about 30 miles north of Mama Thames as the duck paddles, with her wife and far too many comic books.

LUCYA SZACHNOWSKI: Lucya Szachnowski has lived in London all her life and loves her city, roleplaying, and all things magical. For Chaosium's Call of Cthulhu RPG, she co-wrote The London Guidebook, "The Garden of Earthly Delights" for Strange Aeons, "Suffer Little Children" and "London Calling" for Day of the Beast, "The Occulted Light" for Before the Fall, and contributed to The Investigator's Companion and Keeper's Compendium. She wrote the introductory scenario for the Sigil & Sign RPG, by Cubicle 7 and Make Believe Games.

After years working on local London newspapers, she did an MA in English literature, specializing in literary London. Under the pen name Lucya Starza, she has written books on practical magic in Moon Books' Pagan Portals series, and writes a London-based blog: A Bad Witch's Blog. She is very excited to be involved in the Rivers of London RPG.



Infinity Mercenaries Sourcebook

Infinity Mercenaries sourcebook in PDF, for freelance warriors looking to make a big impact in Corvus Belli's sci-fi PRG! has been released by Mordiphus

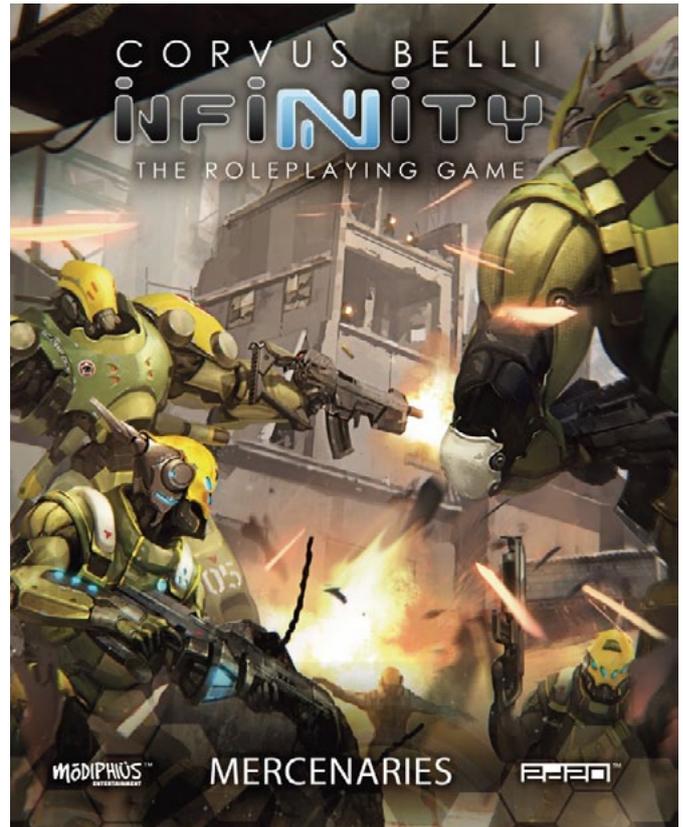
WAR! WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR? CASH, CASH MONEY!

Soldiers of fortune, bodyguards, pirates, cut-throats, and heroes. The worst villains and the greatest heroes of the G5 can all be found in this great melting pot of freelancing warriors. From the flickering bulbs of Novvy Bangkok's fighting pits to the luxuriant skyscrapers of San Pietro, there is always someone willing to pay for their problems to be met with belt-fed subtlety and under-barrel discretion. Lone wolves, invisible techno-pirates, and even squads of murdering reavers, the mercenaries of the Human Sphere follow age-old traditions and work for the highest bidder, adapting and using all the latest technologies. Strangers to the ideals of patriotic love or loyalty, hard cash—or even better, solid quantronic credit accounts!—is the way to their hearts, and even more cash is the key to their loyalty.

From the construction of the first orbital elevator to the ongoing conflict in Paradiso, many factions have turned to mercenaries for cost-effective violence and intimidation. Whether escorting doctors and refugees out of Ghezirah, providing close protection for paranoid executives across Neoterra, or brutally resolving a miner's strike in Human's Edge, the mercenaries of the Human Sphere will take your money and get the job done. Never have mercenaries been in higher demand thanks to the political situation in the various theatres of the Sphere, and both Hypercorps and G5 governments employ the services of these soldiers for hire. Sometimes in the open, sometimes undercover, it seems these lords of war are a necessity in the power games of the future.



But the life of a merc isn't all bullets, venture onto the War Market where the cold and pragmatic business of war has never been so civilized. Meet Free Company Captains and review their units according to their performance both in the battle and in Maya. Your preferred company may be cost effective, but are they giving their extra with the WarCors and livestreams? Because in the Human Sphere, everything is about how good you look to the public!



The 114-page full colour Mercenaries Sourcebook includes:

- Information on six of the major mercenary companies in the Human Sphere plus independent units such as the glamorous Foreign Company, the despicable Ikari, the discreet Spiral Corps, and the formidable Dahshat Company.
- Rules and guidelines to develop your own career in the War Market, plus Lifepaths for Warmongers, Wardrivers, Recruiters, Arms Dealers, and others.
- Weapons, equipment, and vehicles to kit your up-and-coming mercenary troops in order to fulfil their latest contract including antitank weapons, supplies, enhancement drugs, and pulpibeer!
- Detailed rules on how to create your own Free Company and play a campaign focused on mercenaries.



Nordic Horror game VAESEN makes its debut!



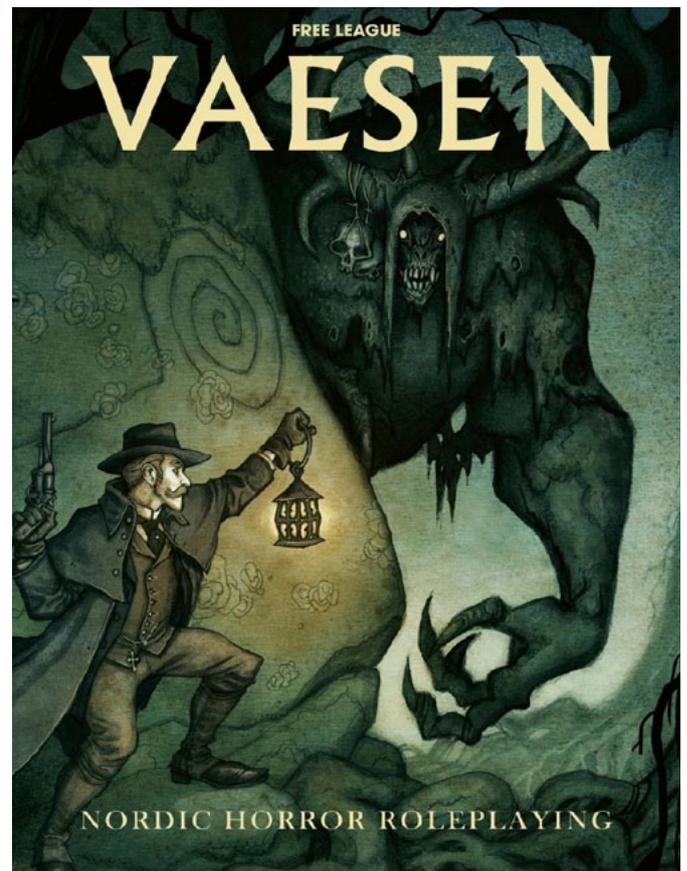
VAESEN – Nordic Horror launches with Core Rulebook in print and PDF, GM Screen & Map, Card Deck and Dice Set, a complete suite of roleplaying tools to compliment this most chilling of RPGs! Here are the details on this fascinating brand new RPG line.

In dark forests, beyond the mountains, by black lakes in hidden groves. At your doorstep. In the shadows, something stirs. Strange beings. Twisted creatures, lurking at the edge of vision. Watching. Waiting. Unseen by most, but not by you. You see them for what they really are. Vaesen.

In dark forests, beyond the mountains, by black lakes in hidden groves. At your doorstep. In the shadows, something stirs. Strange beings. Twisted creatures, lurking at the edge of vision. Watching. Waiting. Unseen by most, but not by you. You see them for what they really are. Vaesen.



Welcome to the Mythic North – northern Europe of the nineteenth century, but not as we know it today. A land where the myths are real. A cold reach covered by vast forests, its few cities lonely beacons of industry and enlightenment – a new civilization dawning. But in the countryside, the old ways still hold sway. There, people know what lurks in the dark.



They know to fear it.

Vaesen – Nordic Horror Roleplaying is written by Nils Hintze and based on the work of Swedish illustrator and author Johan Egerkrans, Vaesen presents a dark Gothic setting steeped in Nordic folklore and old myths of Scandinavia. The game mechanics use an adapted version of the award-winning Year Zero Engine.

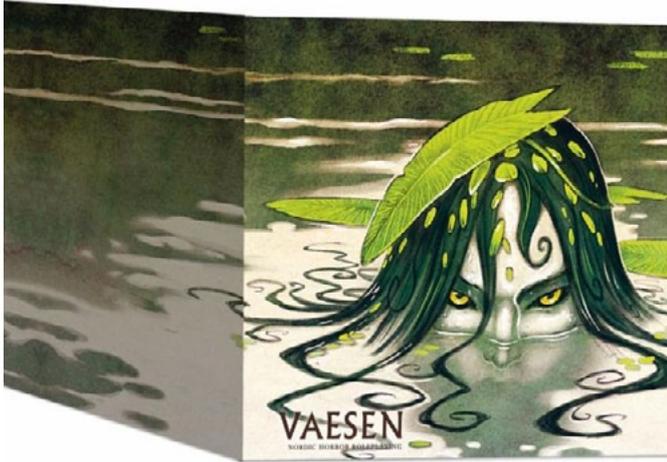
VAESEN - Nordic Horror Core Rulebook
Key features:

- Nine ready to use archetypes lets you create a character in minutes – or use the included life path tables and let the dice decide.
- Quick and flavorful rules for combat, investigations

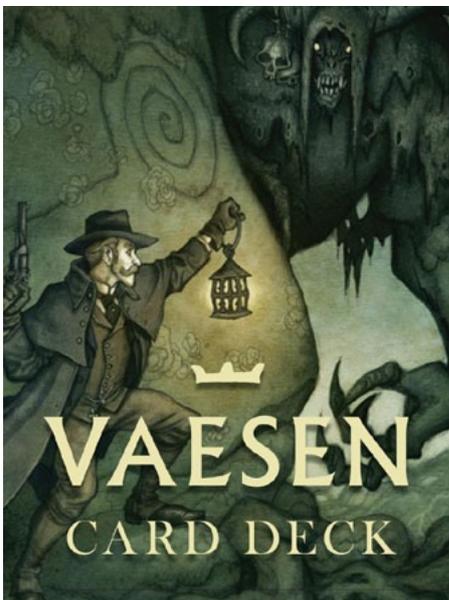
and horror.

- Rules for developing the player characters' mansion in campaign play.
- A detailed gazetteer of the Mythic North setting and the town of Upsala.
- A score of bloodcurdling vaesen to encounter, all beautifully illustrated by Johan Egerkrans.
- An introductory Mystery called The Dance of Dreams.

VAESEN - Nordic Horror GM Screen & Map



A deluxe Gamemaster's screen in landscape format for Vaesen – Nordic Horror Roleplaying. It features Johan Egerkrans's art on the outside and a host of useful tables and important information on the inside, while keeping the GM's plans hidden from the eyes of inquisitive players. Included in the package is also a large double-sided poster featuring a beautiful map of the Mythic North setting on one side and the town of Upsala on the other (size 432x558mm).



VAESEN - Nordic Horror Card Deck

This box contains 33 high quality custom cards designed for Vaesen – Nordic Horror Roleplaying. The beautifully illustrated cards show vaesen that can be encountered in play and cards for keeping track of initiative in combat.

VAESEN – Nordic Horror RPG Dice Set

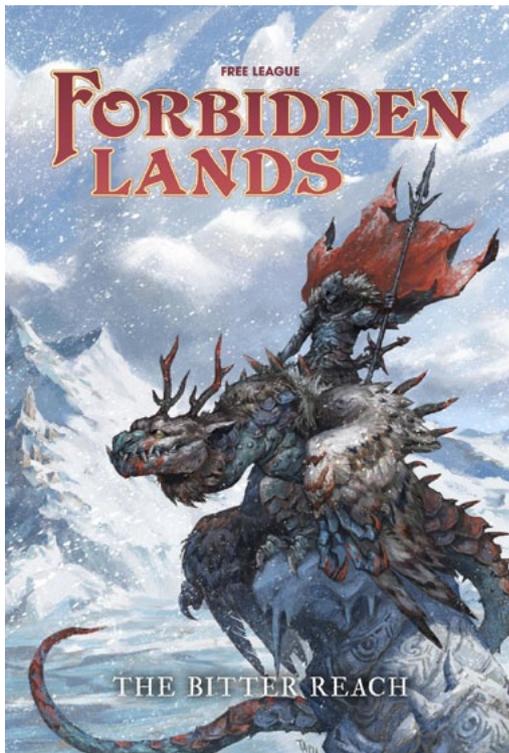
This set of six engraved six-sided dice, are designed specifically for the Vaesen Roleplaying Game. These 16 mm special dice are designed to support the game mechanics but can be used as normal six-sided dice as well.



New Products for Forbidden Lands RPG

Modiphius are delighted to announce the release of two major new products for the acclaimed Forbidden Lands RPG, *The Bitter Reach* and *The Bitter Reach: Map and Card Pack*, both are available in print and PDF as part of the Forbidden Lands Collection on Modiphius.net.

Forbidden Lands is a new take on classic fantasy roleplaying. In this open-world survival roleplaying game, you're not heroes sent on missions dictated by others - instead, you are raiders and rogues bent on making your own mark on a cursed world.



Forbidden Lands: The Bitter Reach

In the southern lands, elders speak of cold storms from the north. Cursed voices borne on the icy winds whisper of secrets from ages past that would plunge realms and kin into ruin if only someone could understand these ancient words. They are the desperate confessions of the lost. They are the legends of the Bitter Reach.

Deep beneath its frozen surface, creatures told of only in the oldest of legends dwell. They guard treasures that can give their owner power beyond their wildest dreams, treasures that could lay waste to the Bitter Reach if they were found.

And the treasures will be found, sooner or later, so why shouldn't they be yours to claim? The Bitter Reach is an epic campaign module for the



Forbidden Lands roleplaying game, describing the icy wastelands north of Ravenland.

This 314 page book with monochrome internal art features:

Two new magic disciplines: Elemental Magic and Ice Affinity.

The new Champion profession, along with new profession talents.

Expanded travel rules for snow, cold, and fuel, including no less than 40 new random encounters.

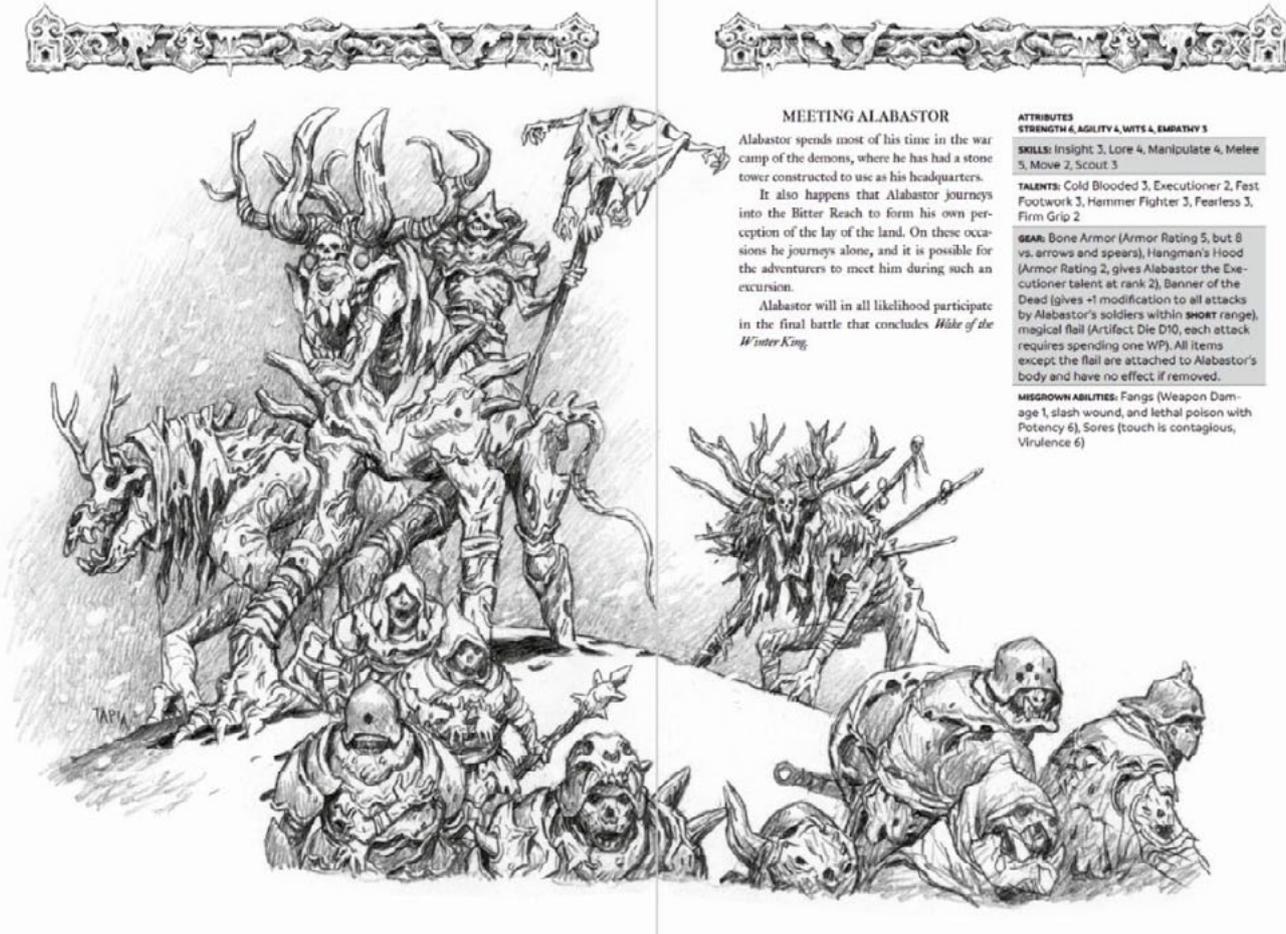
Eight new monsters, including the Frost Dragon, the Ice Giant, and the Wendigo.

The Wake of the Winter King campaign, including eight key players who all seek to dominate the riches hidden under the Bitter Reach.

Ten complete, illustrated adventure sites, playable in almost any order.

An epic campaign finale, giving the adventurers the chance to decide the future of the Bitter Reach.





MEETING ALABASTOR

Alabastor spends most of his time in the war camp of the demons, where he has had a stone tower constructed to use as his headquarters.

It also happens that Alabastor journeys into the Bitter Reach to form his own perception of the lay of the land. On these occasions he journeys alone, and it is possible for the adventurers to meet him during such an excursion.

Alabastor will in all likelihood participate in the final battle that concludes *Wike of the Winter King*.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH 6, AGILITY 4, WITS 4, EMPATHY 3

SKILLS: Insight 3, Lore 4, Manipulate 2, Melee 5, Move 2, Scout 3

TALENTS: Cold Blooded 3, Executioner 2, Fast Footwork 3, Hammer Fighter 3, Fearless 3, Firm Grip 2

GEAR: Bone Armor (Armor Rating 5, but 8 vs. arrows and spears), Hangman's Hood (Armor Rating 2, gives Alabastor the Executioner talent at rank 2), Banner of the Dead (gives +1 modification to all attacks by Alabastor's soldiers within **SHORT** range), magical flail (Artifact: Die D10, each attack requires spending one WP). All items except the flail are attached to Alabastor's body and have no effect if removed.

MISGROWN ABILITIES: Fangs (Weapon Damage 1, slash wound, and lethal poison with Potency 6), Sores (touch is contagious, Virulence 6)

The Bitter Reach Map and Card Deck

This pack for the Forbidden Lands roleplaying game contains player aids designed for use with the Bitter Reach campaign module.

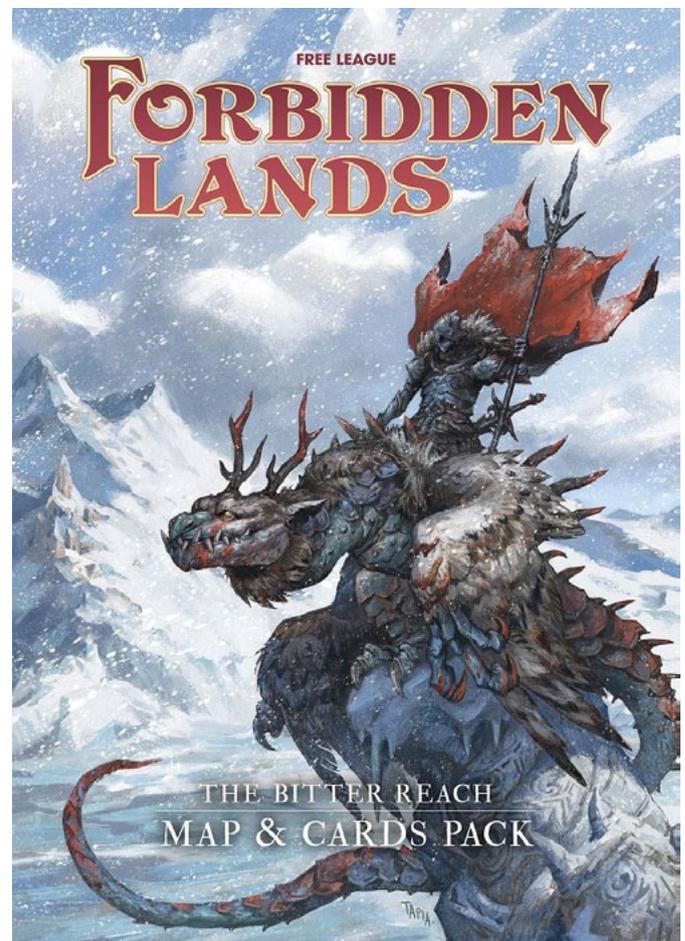
Contents:

A large, double-sided color map of the Bitter Reach (format 720 x 520 mm)

A sheet of stickers for adventure sites and gravestones – transforming the map into a living, permanent chronicle of your adventures

Fourteen custom playing cards for unique mounts and magical artifacts

We hope you'll take the chance to experience this intriguing new Forbidden Lands double and look out for more great Forbidden Lands products coming soon!



Irregular Magazine Podcast Project



This year we've finally bitten the bullet and decided to produce a regular podcast. Both myself and Alex have talked about producing a podcast for some time and decided that as it the magazine's tenth anniversary that we would start it this year.

The first episode is an introduction about me and Alex and how Irregular magazine came about. We talk about some of the changes that the magazine has seen in the hobby over the last ten years and why we still play with toy soldiers.



We plan to cover numerous topics related to the hobby that will include television, film and gaming. We plan to release one episode every week onto our YouTube channel, each episode will be hosted by me and Alex and may also include guests. Most shows will be around 30-60 minutes long, where we chat about the topic of the week.

We are also considering recording a separate podcast during our painting sessions where we discuss a wide variety of subjects, from painting through to modern warfare (well old war stories from me and a couple of other who served in the military).

We may even record some RPG specials of local groups playing a weekly RPG session. All of these will be showcased on our YouTube channel.

youtube.com/irregularmagazine

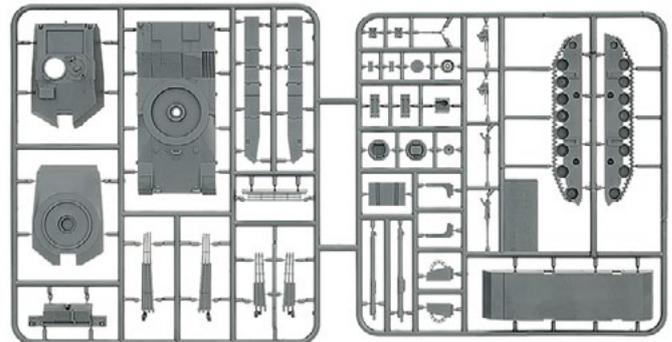
Battlefront Features 2-Player Starter For Team Yankee



Battlefront has released a two player starter set for Team Yankee, featuring two starter armies, USA and Soviet.

Yet again this set is also great value for money, it's another example of how to put together a real value for money starter set.

Both armies feature a plethora of battle tanks and support units. This is another example of great starter set.



They produced for Flames of War probably one of the best starter boxes on the market, a great value set.

This World War III- The Complete Starter Set Contains:



- Three Abrams Tanks
- Two Bradley Scouts
- Two M60 Patton Tanks
- Four T-80 Tanks
- Three T-64 Tanks
- Two BMP-3 Scouts
- Four Decal Sheets
- One Complete A5 Rulebook,
- One Quick Start Guide
- Eleven Unit Cards
- Twenty Dice (Two Sets)

We'll be taking a closer look at this set in the next issue as part of our getting started in Team Yankee article.

Hobby World Announces Furnace



Furnace

Game Designer: Ivan Lashin

Artwork: Oleg Yurkov, Sergey Dulin, Vadim Poluboyarov, Maria Ivanova, Egor Zharkov, Ilya Konovalov

30–60 MIN

2–4

12+

BGG PAGE

Game Overview

Furnace is an astounding engine-building euro game where the players take on the roles of 19th-century capitalists building their industrial corporations and aspiring to make as much money as they can by purchasing companies, extracting resources, and processing them in the best combinations possible.



GAMEPLAY

The game is played over 4 rounds. Each round consists of 2 phases: Auction and Production.

AUCTION PHASE

Each player has 4 discs with values 1–4 to bid on the cards in the common row. The players take turns placing 1 of their discs on the cards until they don't have any discs left.

Placement Rules

1. No discs of the same value on one card
2. No discs of the same color on one card

Then, the cards are resolved one by one in order from left to right.

The highest bid receives the card.

All other bids get compensated: the value of the disc multiplies the compensation.



PRODUCTION PHASE

Now, the players manage their own cards in any order they wish. They may gain resources, process them into other resources or money, and upgrade their cards for additional effects.

GAME END

When the 4th round is over, the player with the most money tokens wins.

GAME VARIANTS

Capitalists change the game rules for their owners. Production chains are for true experts!

<https://hwint.ru/portfolio-item/furnace/>

Mordiphus News

Star Trek Adventures Iconic Villains NPCs PDF

we're delighted to announce the release of the Star Trek Adventures Iconic Villains NPCs PDF, making some of the galaxy's most challenging and dangerous foes available for your Star Trek Adventures tabletop games.

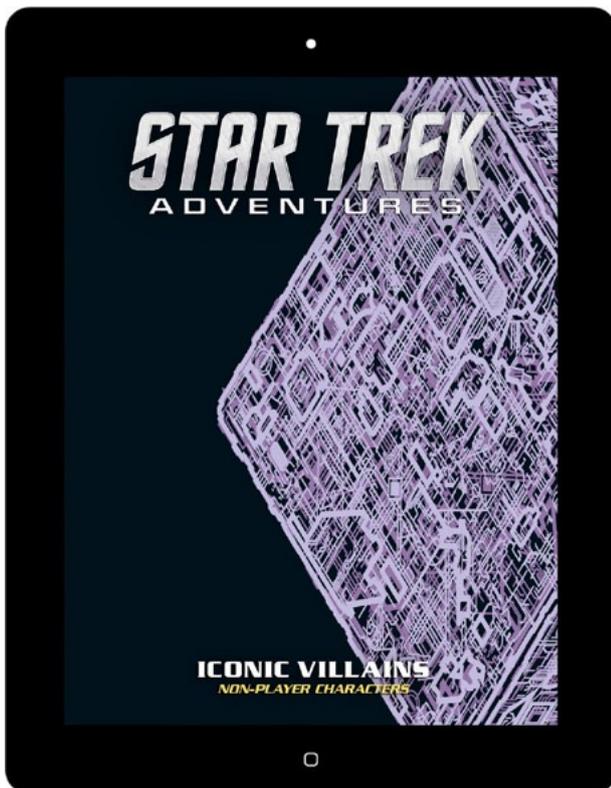
Star Trek Adventures Iconic Villains NPCs is available in PDF only on Modiphius.net as part of the Star Trek Adventures Collection and on DriveThruRPG.com.

This 15-page PDF contains non-player character statistics for eight of the most iconic Star Trek villains the Galaxy has ever seen: the Original Series Gorn Captain, Khan Noonien Singh, General Chang, Q, Locutus, Lore, Gul Dukat, and the Borg Queen.

These characters require the Star Trek Adventures core rulebook to use in play.

They perfectly align with the Star Trek Adventures Iconic Villains miniatures set, which can be used to chart your tabletop adventures or for tabletop battles with the Red Alert Rules.

We hope you enjoy this latest crew pack release which joins the Original Series, the Next Generation, Voyager, Deep Space Nine and Enterprise crew packs, bringing a wealth of heroes, villains, and iconic characters to the Star Trek Adventures RPG.



One Boggart's Rubbish

One Boggart's Rubbish, a brand-new case for the acclaimed Liminal RPG.

One Boggart's Rubbish is available on Modiphius.net as part of the Liminal Collection and also on DriveThruRPG.com.

Here are the details on this intriguing new adventure.

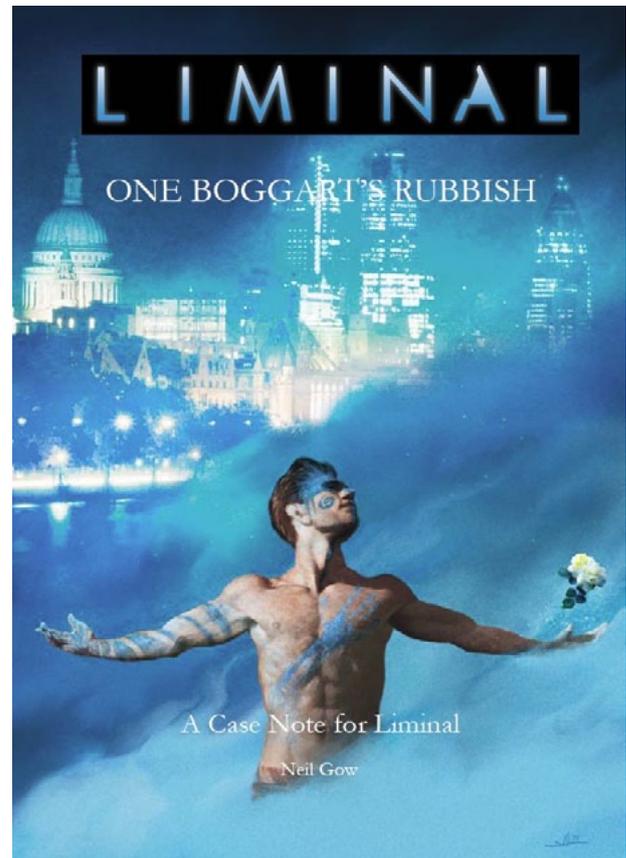
The crew must retrieve a lost token of a fae knight that is... somewhere in London. In the process they come across a number of powerful people and secret places in London's Hidden World.

Here you'll encounter new characters and locations including London's premier purveyor of magical components, ephemera and other arcane detritus, the Boggarts of Aldgate East, and explore the fascinating Rookeries of the Hidden.

This 13-page PDF adventure for the Liminal

RPG, where the magical and mundane worlds collide in the modern day United Kingdom.

This adventure makes use of material in the supplement Pax Londinium.



Star Trek Adventures Enterprise Crew

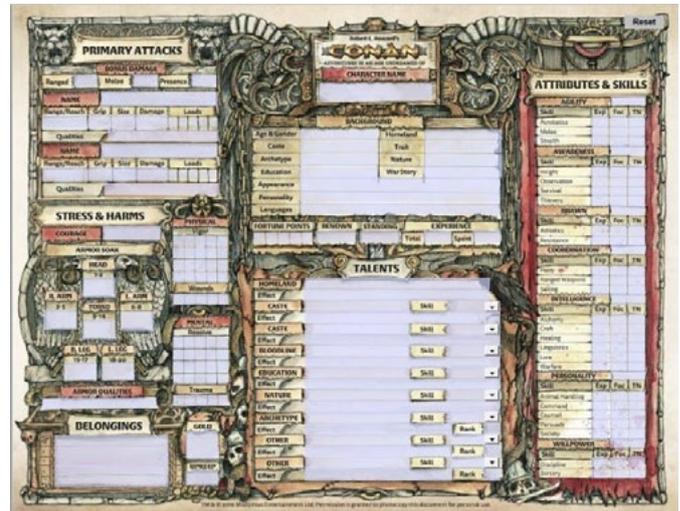
Star Trek Adventures Enterprise Crew PDF, making the characters of the Enterprise NX-01 era available for your tabletop games.

The Star Trek Adventures Enterprise Crew PDF is available on Modiphius.net as part of the Star Trek Adventures Collection and on DriveThruRPG.com.

This 16-page PDF contains player character statistics for the crew of the U.S.S. Enterprise NX-01, including Captain Jonathan Archer, Commander T'Pol, Commander Charles Tucker III, Lieutenant Malcolm Reed, Lieutenant Hoshi Sato, Ensign Travis Mayweather, Doctor Phlox, and Commander Thy'lek Shran.

The pack also contains game statistics for the U.S.S. Enterprise NX-01. These characters require the Star Trek Adventures core rulebook to use in play.

This is a PDF product; upon purchase you will be e-mailed a link to access the regular version and printer-friendly versions in PDF. There is no print version of this product.



Conan Character Sheet pad for the Conan Adventures in an Age Undreamed Of RPG.

The Conan Character Sheet Pad is available exclusively in print on Modiphius.net but you can also enjoy a FREE PDF version as part of the Conan Collection.

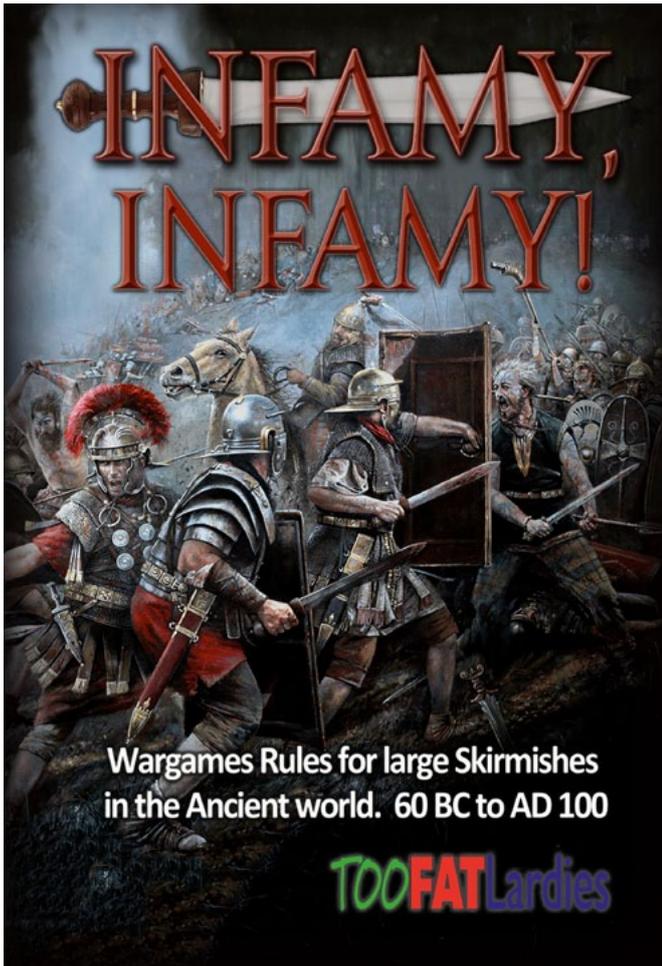
This character sheet pad for the Conan Adventures in an Age Undreamed Of roleplaying game, features an attractive intricate inked design by Francesca Baerald, and space to record your skills and attributes, primary attacks, talents and belongings, forming a truly heroic way to register your character's mighty RPG deeds for posterity!

Designed in full colour US Letter Size, it's ideal for recording key encounters in the Hyborian Age and with 50 double sided sheets in each pad, can accommodate a huge roster of Conan player types.

Also comes with a download for six FREE character PDF sheets for the Conan RPG, featuring basic, inked and extended versions, for your barbaric pleasure!



Infamy, Infamy they've got it Infamy



Infamy, Infamy! will be released in just two weeks time on Monday the 29th of June, That's great news for everyone who has been following the development of these groundbreaking large skirmish rules, but especially so for our customers in the United States where the prompt release means that we will. just beat the new considerable rise in postal charges to the USA for all advanced order.

So, what is available?

Infamy, Infamy! has four component options, as follows:

The main rules: Infamy, Infamy! is a game that will, ultimately, be divided into three parts. This is the first rule book which covers Rome's conflicts with the western barbarian between 60 BC and AD 100. Covered in the rules are lists for Late Republican forces that can be used for Caesar and his campaigns in Gaul and Britannia and against the German tribes raiding across the Rhine.

The Early Imperial Roman lists are perfect for the conquest of Britannia under Claudius and the continuing campaigns through to Agricola's conquest of the

North and beyond. The British lists cover the period from Caesar's invasions through to Mons Graupius, including lists for Boudicca's revolt. Gallic lists cover the classic period of conquest of the Gallic Wars with the Belgea and Aquitani represented and make every effort to reflect the more advanced culture of the Gauls.

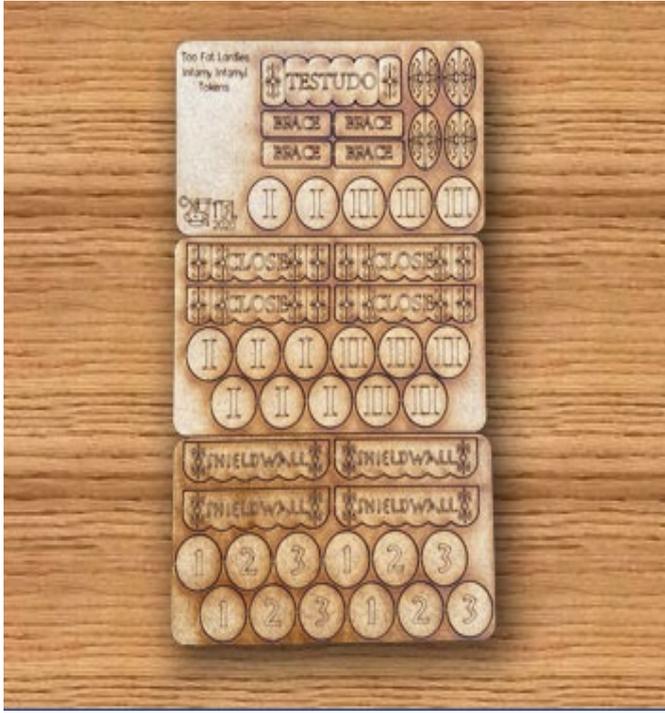
The Germans, on the other hand, are the ultimate Barbarians, with lists for the tribes of the Rhineland and those of the dark forests of Germania Magna and for the Batavian Revolt.



The Infamy Cards: The Infamy Cards are actually two card decks in one. Firstly the Game Deck which is used to determine the run of play in each turn. It includes Leader Cards to indicate which of your forces main characters is activated and also the Signa Cards which determine what reservoir of command is available. Then we have the Infamy Deck. These are the cards that control the political machinations of the period. How will your cause be affected by treachery or by unexpected friends? The Infamy Deck adds much of the period character that makes Infamy, Infamy! feel like an account from the ancient histories.



The Poker Chips: Some (heretical?) players prefer poker chips to Cards, so we have produced a set of MDF poker chips that replace the Game Deck. These are provided in two 'sprues' for easy painting. Spray one set red and the other blue and you're ready to go, or take a bit more time and turn these into a piece of art in their own right. Either way they come shrink wrapped. Please note, these DO NOT replace the Infamy Deck.



Infamy Token Set: The perfect token set to accompany the rules. This provides tokens to show when your Romans are in close order, when they have shields braced or when they are defending against missiles or in Testudo. It shows when the Barbarians are in shield-wall and tracks ammunition usage for those troops who don't have an unlimited supply. Essentially, it's the complete kit for tracking what your troops are doing.

For Advanced Order we are offering three bundles. These are as follows:

The 'They've Got it ALL Infamy' Bundle! This is the Rule Book, free PDF of the rules, Infamy Cards, Poker Chips and Token Set. This is available for £42.00

The 'The Big Infamy' Bundle. This is the Rule Book, free PDF of the rules, Infamy Cards and Token Set. This set is available for £38.50

The 'The Basic Infamy' Bundle. This is the Rule Book, free PDF of the rules and Infamy Cards. This set is available for £34.00

PLEASE BE AWARE. The PDF will be emailed to you on the day the rules are released.

Why can't you buy the rule book on its own or additional token sets? The rule book on its own is not the complete game. You do need the minimum of the Infamy Cards to play, so whilst we will be selling the rules separately after the 1st of July, we are focusing at this stage on the advanced order bundles. The processing of thousands of orders is a laborious one

that is much simplified if we keep it to the key bundles that are available. What's more, these bundles offer superb value for money and are prices that we cannot maintain after the release day.

As for additional token sets and Poker Chips, we honestly don't think you need them. The number of tokens in the set is pretty much double what we used in ANY game at playtest stage, and we played plenty of them. Again with Poker Chips. We never used anywhere near all of the Chips in the set. So the bundles have been designed to provide all that we think is required.

But these great deals aren't all. Too Fat Lardies will be entering everyone who places an order for the Advanced Order Bundles into a raffle for a high quality print of the original cover artwork, a superb oil painting entitled "Breaking the Line AD 73" by internationally renowned military artist Chris Collingwood. It represents a battle as Pettilius Cerialis campaigned in northern Britain against the Brigantes, Parisi or Carveti and was spotted by one of our playtesters who instantly said that it summed up the game completely. We agreed and talks with Chris secured us the image for the rule cover. Valued at over £100, this print is one of a series of TEN commissioned by the artist and signed by him. A truly superb prize to be won.

But that's not all. We will be announcing some more great prizes in the run up to toe launch, so keep an eye on Facebook and Twitter as well as here for announcements.

<http://toofatlardies.co.uk/>



Ed's Challenge

Jason Hubbard



Lockdown Productivity and too much hobby gubbings

I was sent home in late March from work due to the lockdown in the UK and was furloughed, so with nothing to do I decided to catch up on some miniature painting. I normally managed to squeeze an evening in the week for painting and an afternoon during the weekend. This gives me a few good hours painting each week to slowly plough through the grey army or should I say armies.

I like most in the hobby probably have too much squirreled away in cupboards and boxes, we all kind know or at least we tell ourselves we know how much we have, but I suspect thinking we know and actually knowing are two different things.

I was aware I had quite a lot of miniatures, but I wasn't really sure how much I had. The problem is that like most hobbyists they're hidden away in boxes, out of sight out of mind. I didn't really pay attention to how much I had until lockdown.

Now if you're sat there thinking why lockdown, well that's because my productivity in painting miniatures



increased dramatically. I had the spare time to plough through a tone of miniatures between March 23rd and July 31st I managed to get roughly 180 miniatures painted, which also included some terrain built and painted. That's generally a lot more than I'd probably paint in a year, I'd be happy to go through half that in a year.

I placed all the painted miniatures together for a photo shoot, and it dawned on me that even though I'd painted a colossus amount on miniatures I'd hardly put a dent into the grey army. That's when I realized I had way too much stashed away in boxes.

This prompted me to actually get all my unpainted miniatures out and see how much I actually had. I took out all the wargaming miniatures, it was far too many.

I was never going to get all those painted, and all the miniatures in the board games I had. I realized this was ridiculous situation, so I started going through what I had and making some hard decisions about what I should keep and which ones I should get rid of. This also helped me to hone down which projects I wanted to continue and which ones I should stop. It also allowed to narrow down which systems, periods, and games I wanted to actually play and paint minis for. There's no point keeping stuff if you're never likely



to ever get around to painting or playing with it. They're just gathering dust and taking up valuable real estate in my hobby room, so a cull was/is planned.

First, I looked at all the moderns I have, which consists of Chinese PLA, US Special Forces, some Russians, and PMC's. I backed the Empress Miniatures kickstarter to get the PLA, so I have quite a lot of them, but I don't really need that many. I could probably get away with about 12 for most of the games I'll be playing. So that was one chunk to sell, next I looked at all the metal miniatures I had, and a lot were random fantasy minis.

I picked out the few choice ones I liked and will cull the rest, I don't really play a lot of fantasy and most of the games I do play are ones like Frostgrave that don't require a high model count.



The one area I haven't culled yet are my 40K minis, now I don't have a lot, the small amount of Space Marines I have are painted bar a couple. I also have a small amount of Tyranids that are painted apart from one brood lord. I do have a rather large collection of Eldar which are unpainted, but I'm not ready to cull any until I've tried the latest version of the rules. If I like the new rules, then I'll keep what I have if not I'll cull them down, so I have just enough to play Kill Team. Likewise, I decided to cut down on my Age of Sigmar miniatures, I don't play AoS so there's no point in keeping them. I only play Warcry and occasionally Shade-spire/Underworlds, which I have a few warbands for.

I will paint these up, but I won't be purchasing any more in the future. I'll do the same with Blood Bowl,

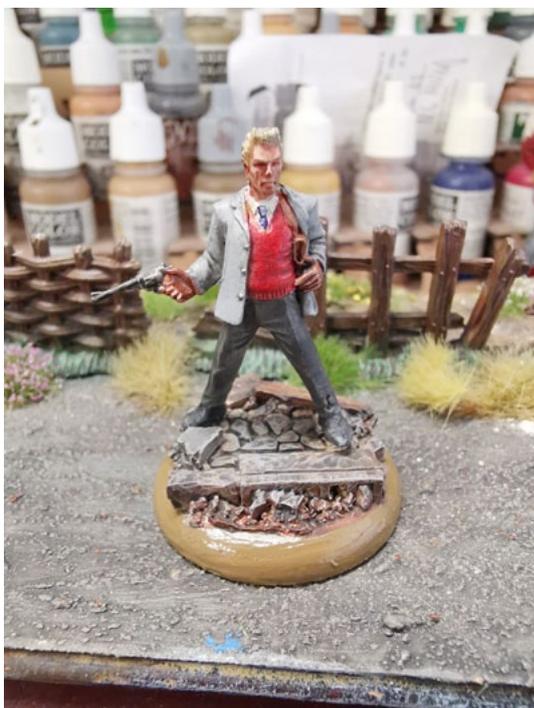


I have a couple of teams waiting to be painted so I'll get those finished and I may buy one other team, along with the new rules when they're released.

My Flames of War armies are nearly finished, the Germans are complete. I managed to get the Germans all painted during Lockdown, so I just have the US to finish. I've added some new units to the US which will need building and painting, but that project will be complete once that's done.

Bolt Action is the sticking point, I have quite a lot that's unpainted and some that also need building.

I currently have enough infantry for the US army, likewise I have enough vehicles for my German force, and enough infantry for my SAS. I just need to pick up a tank for the Americans and a couple of attack jeeps for the Brits. My Chinese need more troops, but I'm not in any rush to get those yet, as I'll try and finish the US infantry first.



Whilst going through this process I began to realize that as a hobbyist we probably have a problem with hoarding, yet don't hoard anywhere else in our lives, well I don't. I don't buy randomly with other items, yet I do with hobby stuff.

I'll see a miniature and think ooo that looks nice and before I even thought about whether I need it or not I've bought the bloody thing. So, going forward I plan to be more conscious about what items I purchase for my hobby.



This should be helped by narrowing down which games I plan to play, because if a miniature can't be used in any of the games I play then there's no need to purchase it.

It's been quite a cathartic experience going through all my hobby bits and bobs and really forcing myself to make decisions on which items I'll actually paint and use.



It was also great for forcing me to make decisions regarding which games and rules I'll actually play, this should also help me to focus more on those games, rather than flitting from one thing to another and never really getting to grips with anything.

I should also have going forward fewer if any half-finished projects, I'm hoping this will help me to actually finish some of the projects I've started.

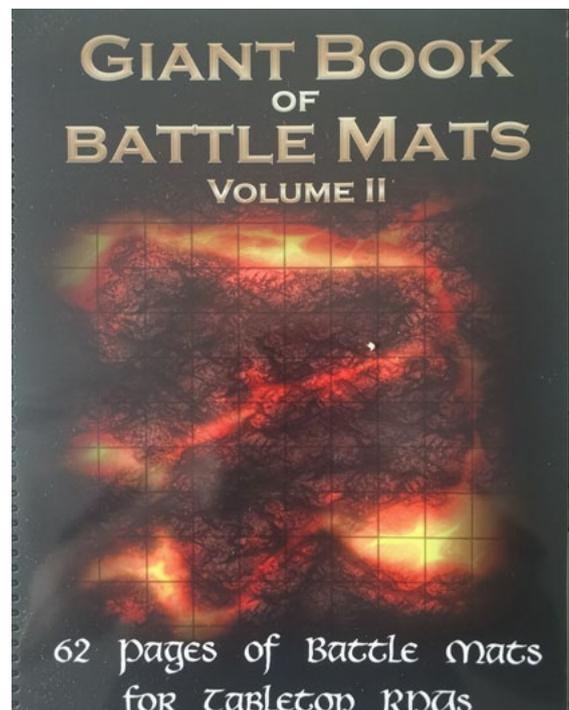
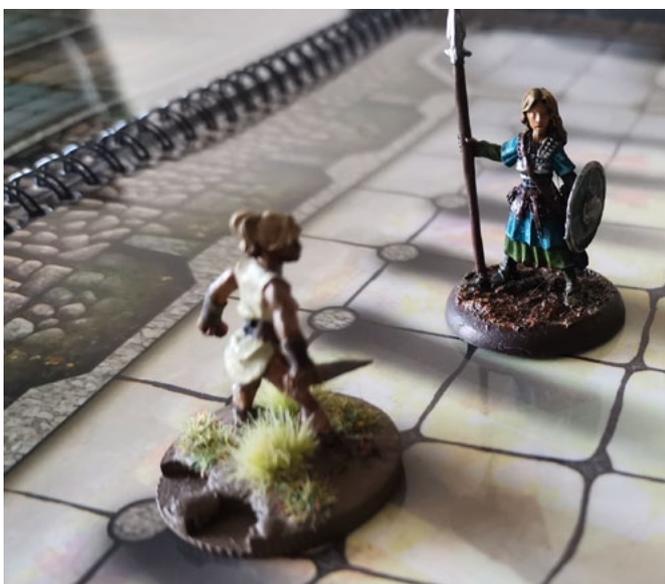
The Giant Book of Battle Mats Volume 2 & Dungeon Decorations



In a previous issue of Irregular we reviewed the Big Book of Battle Mats for RPG encounters, now we have on our desk the Giant Book, and if you thought the Big Book was great then you'll be impressed with the Giant book. Its A3 size book with 62 pages of full colour glossy maps that have been beautifully designed.

As usual there is a plethora of different locations within the book that can be used for numerous encounters. It's 1-inch grid based, that makes it very easy to use for a number of games, not just RPG. We used it in my house for several games of A Song of Blades and Heroes, which for those who don't know is a great little skirmish game.

There are wilderness locations, caverns, building interiors, town layouts, dungeon layouts in the book, which means there's plenty of scope for a wide variety of uses in your game. The book is wire bound which means it'll lie flat,



it's also laminated which means it's wipe clean and can be used with any non-permanent felt tip pen so you can draw all over them. The great feature is it's light and easily portable which makes it a very portable product. We take the big book which is A4 in size on holiday with us so we can play out some encounters if the weather isn't great.

I really like these products, and the Giant Book is exceptional. It's great when you don't have time to set up a gaming, you can place this down open up to any page and you've got a great location to skirmish over. You could also run a quick and dirty RPG game using this product, by selecting various mats and playing through them creating an adventure as you go.



To go alongside this, we have the Dungeon Decorations.

Dungeon Decorations

This is a pack of 100+ reusable static clings for use on any laminated surface, which makes them ideal for use in the battle mat books. These decals can add some scenic elements to your mat and game. It allows you to quickly furnish a location or add some interesting elements for you adventurers to deal with.

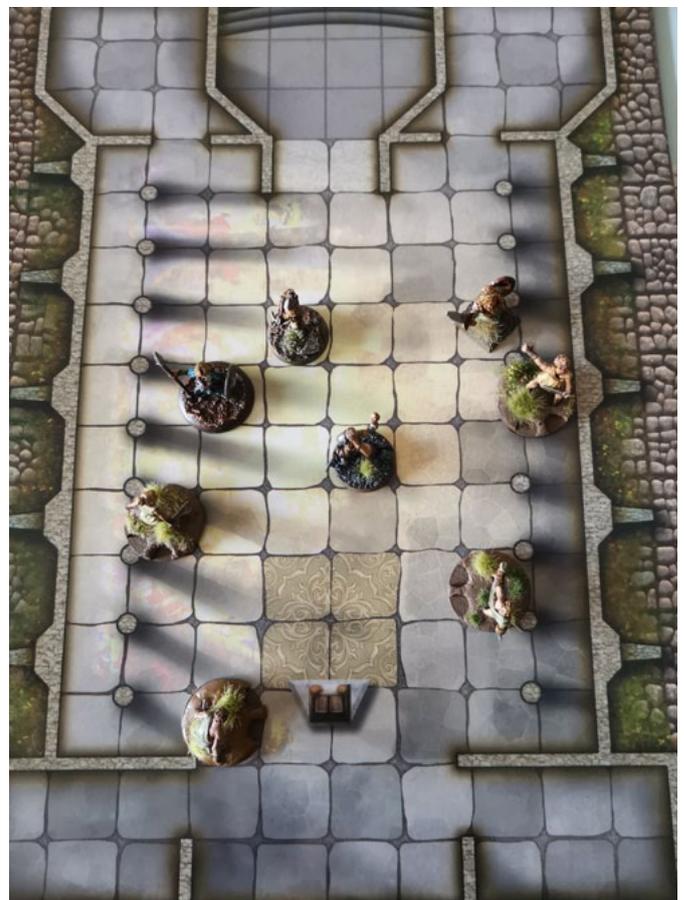
There are five sheets of decals that includes additional walls, stairs, furniture, doors, traps and treasure. This is another great product for travelling with, it allows you to add terrain without the bulk of MDF or plastic pieces. It's an easily transportable product with a plethora of options to furnish a dungeon or add some great elements to a room or building interior.



I would like to see another set produced that focuses of exterior locations, such battlefields, camp sites and market stalls. This is an easy to use set, the decals peel off both the page and laminated surface. They very well illustrated with plenty of bright colour. There is plenty of variety of items for use in the pack and will be a useful addition for any GM or player.



I don't think they're exclusively an RPG accessory as we've used them in conjunction with the Book of Battle Mats for skirmish games, as well as RPGs. My niece used both products to create a simple dungeon for myself and a friend to play through, whilst she DMed the game.





Which was her first game as a DM, she said she wouldn't have tried to DM a game before because she didn't think she could, but this gave her the confidence to create an adventure by herself.

She has since used both the book and the Dungeon Decorations several times to set and create some skirmish scenarios. She really likes the fun of sticking down all the decals and creating a narrative to game around.

Myself I liked the fact that I can quickly set up a game with these two products with much effort when time is of the essence. I can take this to the club or pub and grab a quick skirmish game with friends, and we can easily change locations without any effort. Both are great products that any hobbyist should consider picking up, especially GM/DM's.





A new edition of Blood Bowl hits the tabletop

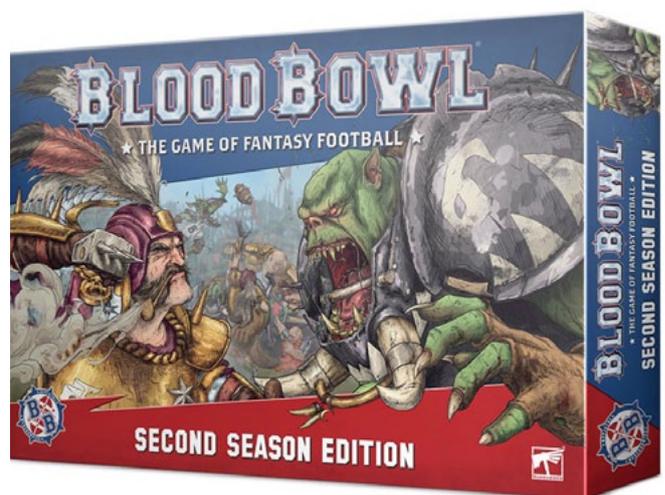
Get ready Sports fans as the gouged eye is back in Blood Bowl. Sports fans have been eager for the new season to start, the sound of crunching bones, and halfings being squished under foot. So, let's get ready for the greatest game on the planet, as the new season finally touches down.

Blood Bowl is a game of Fantasy Football, based loosely on Gridiron or as we call it in the UK American Football. Teams of fantasy races compete for glory, fame and those shiny yellow metal disks called gold. It's a game of mindless violence and yes, they do sometimes play football, with fans who are often just as mindless and violent.

The new boxset is due to hit shelves and are expected to leave at breakneck speed whether in your local Games Workshop or Warhammer store to independent stockist or online retailer.

The new starter set follows the standard format you'd expect with rulebook, gaming board, Dice, player cards and those all-important miniatures cast this time in plastic for Humans and Orcs.

We have new teams coming with this set, the first are the Imperial Bogenhafen Barons. Their team colours look like gold, white, and purple, with a flamboyant flair. Going up against them are bigger, stronger and actually even smarter, if that's possible for an orc, are the Black Orcs. They take the game more seriously than other Orcs, with a more disciplined approach to training.



They play to win, by scoring touchdowns rather than just turn up for a big dust up on the playing field. One on the first features I want to cover is Games workshop choice to use coloured plastic for the different teams. This is a great move by Games Workshop and continues the mentality of designing products for their existing customer base but also making it an attractive product to non-painters/modellers and the boardgame community.



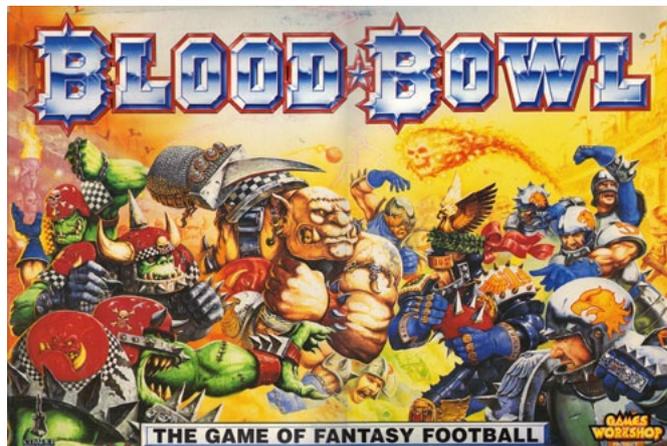
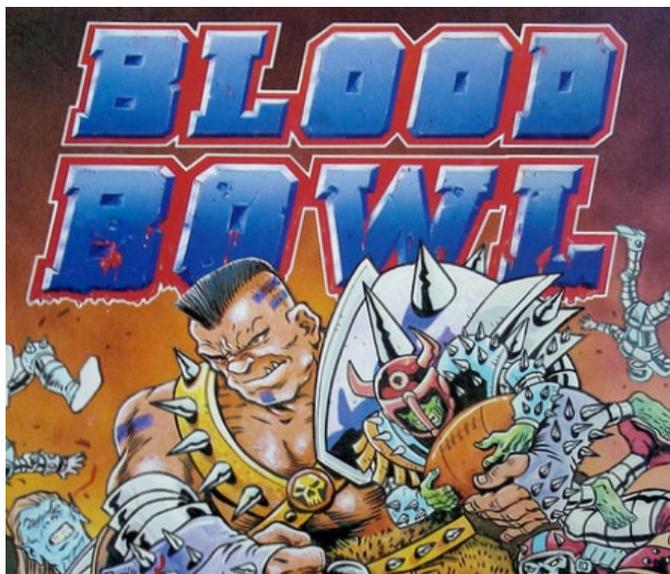
The miniatures in the box are also new designs and feature several unique poses for each player type in the game so it's easier to identify the models on the gaming board which work in conjunction with the



from the epic tombs of the past to a slimmer version enabling a quicker pick up of the game for new players but enabling older players still to use the older rules should they wish with the new models. The book is lavishly illustrated throughout, and it harks back to the comical feel of the original game.

Blood Bowl is by far my favourite tabletop board game. I first laid my hands on a copy back in the 80's, with the 1st edition. Originally conceived by Jervis Johnson in 1986, though it's not the first fantasy football game produced, Monsters Medway by TSR came before Blood Bowl.

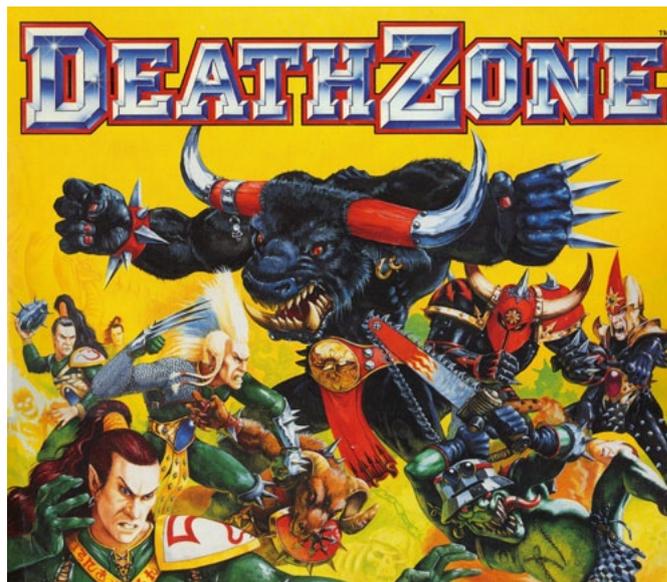
First Edition was originally published in 1986, the box contained a heavy duty multi part card pitch with over 100 cardboard miniatures.



Citadel miniatures went on to produce 13 metal figures during the early run the game. They also released an expansion called Death Zone; it would become the mainstay board game for Games Workshop for the next 15 years.

Second edition came out two years later in 1988, this featured a nice styrene pitch with hard on piece plastic miniatures, a team of Orcs and a human team. It was this edition that we were introduced to Dungeon Bowl. The ability to play game underground, which featured Dwarf and Elf teams. Along with further expansions in the form of Star Players book and a greater line of miniatures were produced for this edition of the game.

1994 saw a third edition developed and many view this as the beginnings of the modern Blood Bowl game. The rules were streamlined allowing the game to be played in 1-2 hours.



The box contained two teams in plastic, as with the previous edition these were Human and Orc. Though this time the miniatures were much better sculpted in a variety of dynamic poses.



Following the third edition came, quite obviously edition 4 in 2001. This release introduced the concept of the living rule book, which would be revised and updated constantly over a period of eight years. This now serves as the basic rulebook for the latest version of the game, with some minor changes.

Blood bowl has one of the most dedicated player base in the hobby, above and beyond of any other game on the market. Blood Bowl is a quick and easy game to pick up and play, though it takes a lot of experience to master the game. It's a game of strategy, and mindless violence that is great fun to play. With hard work and plenty of practice you may one day lead your team to a championship or to the bottom of the league.

like the halflings that are for fun as you're never going to be a championship winning team.

This latest incarnation of the game will be on my wish list, as it's probably one of my all-time favourite Games Workshop games. It was the first game I purchased myself as a teenager with pocket money I had saved up.



Over the years I've enjoyed playing the game, and I've always regularly played with a human team called the Lundrinian Annihilators, these were the very first team I created and played. I've played various other teams over the years, but I've always kept a human team and they've always carried the name Lundrinian Annihilators.

If you're looking for a new fun team to play and don't mind losing, then you could pick up the Snotlings. You're unlikely to win a game unless you go up against the halfling team, but you do get a Snotling pump wagon with the team. This one of those teams, just

Does Love Forgive?



Does Love Forgive? is a collection of two special scenarios for *Call of Cthulhu* for one Keeper and one player. Great for a fun evening of gaming for two people. And perfect if you're currently in lockdown or socially isolating with a friend or loved one.

Does Love Forgive? is a collection of two special scenarios for *Call of Cthulhu* originally released in Poland by Black Monk Games on February 14th, 2020. Usually, *Call of Cthulhu* is played with one Keeper and between four to six investigators. Sometimes, for any number of reasons, it can be hard to get such a large group of players together, so the scenarios in this collection have been specifically designed for just two people: one Keeper and one player.

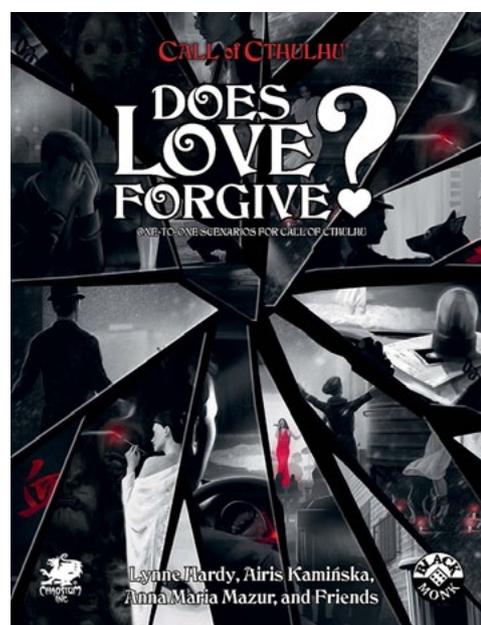
Each of the standalone scenarios—*Love You to Death* and *Mask of Desire*—can be played over the course of one session and are suitable for all levels of Keeper and player experience. Advice is provided on how to support one-to-one play, as well as on how to create a bespoke investigator for each scenario or incorporate an existing investigator, if desired.

CONTENTS

Introduction
Advice on running one-to-one scenarios
Using Luck

Love You to Death

Chicago: February 15th, 1929. It's a cold winter's day when the investigator's good friend Hattie May appears in their office at the detective agency. Her beloved pet dog, Highball, is currently scheduled to be destroyed later today and she needs the investigator's help getting him back from the Chicago PD. It doesn't sound like too difficult task, does it—so how hard could it be?



Mask of Desire

New York: September, 1932. The investigator, together with their two close friends Anna Konrad and Lucas Reston, has been invited to a party at wealthy—and notorious—socialite Madame de Tisson's swanky apartment on the Upper West Side. But both Anna and Lucas are distracted by Anna's audition tomorrow for Nancy Turner, the famous jazz orchestra conductor. What is the link between that and the mysterious parcel that arrives the next day at the investigator's apartment? And why do so many people seem to be interested in the contents of that box?

OPERATION COLOSSUS (THE FIRST AIRBORNE RAID OF WW2)

Author: Lawrence Paterson

Publisher: Greenhill Books

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

Lawrence has written a detailed examination of the before and after of the Operation Colossus, which was the first airborne raid of the second world war. He draws on interviews with relatives of the soldiers of the attack force, where he unearths previously unknown facts and information. He manages to trace the fate of every soldier who landed at the Tragino Aqueduct on the 10th February 1941.

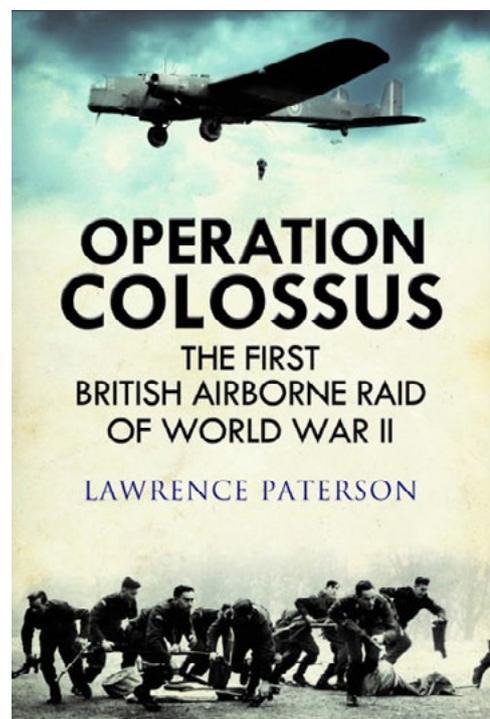
This is a groundbreaking book that provides a detailed account of the legendary raid, which was the first of its type for the British Army. Britain didn't start forming airborne forces until the summer of 1940, originally known as the Special Air Service, the paratroopers developed new tactics and equipment before they were selected for this operation.

The book covers the early development of the UK's elite infantry forces, and their first mission into war torn Europe. The author has written a well-paced and expertly weaves together firsthand accounts to convey an account of the recruitment, training and deployment of the soldiers which includes an accurate account of their first mission.

What I really liked about this account was the lack of Gung-Ho writing. It was a very enjoyable read. Anyone who is interested in the early development of the SAS regiment and airborne forces, World War 2 missions by elite soldiers or wargamers looking for a historical research for an airborne army their building will find this a fascinating read.

On the wargame front this is an excellent resource for anyone considering creating an airborne campaign or recreating this particular mission.

This is an often-overlooked part in British Military history, yet the author manages to bring this episode to light, by drawing first-hand accounts, and investigating previous accounts.



He starts from the formation of the unit, the training and deployment on Operation Colossus, including the aftermath, to its ongoing legacy as a part of military history. This is truly fascinating account in the early development of the SAS and Parachute regiment.

It's definitely one of those books people should read if they're interested in elite forces and the Second World War. As a wargamer I found this to be a really interesting read, and a possible jumping off point for an airborne campaign.

10 REASONS ESPOORTS IS THE FUTURE

We explore why professional gaming is becoming a huge global player.

eSports is on the rise, year on year becoming an increasing global player. We take a look at why eSports is the future...

1. Popularity

Market research figures suggest that the global audience for eSports will hit the 600 million mark come 2020. Now in 2017, it is just over half that mark at about 320m while last year it is estimated a total of 6 billion hours globally were spent watching eSports – a 17% rise from the year before.

2. Money

Money talks and it's a growing market in that regard. It is estimated that in three years time it will generate a staggering £1 billion in global revenue. Last year alone, it generated an estimated £400m.

3. Job prospects

Following on from that, the leading players can earn an impressive salary at the top of their game.

There was a total of £76m in prize money last year with



the prize for winning the de facto world championships £810,000, which was watched by seven million people in the US alone. A top player earns over £1m a year now.

4. Big business getting involved

Amazon entered the eSports frame in 2014 when it paid nearly \$1 billion to buy the gaming video platform Twitch, and to effectively bring its 55 million unique users on board. Also, big sponsors are now getting involved, Gillette having this month announced it would be sponsoring the team EDward Gaming. Reports suggest come 2021, there will be a \$1 billion ad spend in the global ESports industry.



5. Sports teams getting involved

French football side Paris St-Germain, backed by Qatari billions, has earned a reputation for bigname signings but has entered the eSports world with a team in the high-profile League of Legends. But the likes of Premier League clubs Manchester City and West Ham have also signed individual eSports specialists solely for playing Fifa.



6. Keeping fit

The old stereotype of gamers being couch potatoes has long since passed, the leading eSports players following a tight fitness regimen to put themselves in the best possible condition to compete. Plus, gone for top gamers is the notion of a diet of junk food and barely sleeping playing games hours through the night.

7. An Olympic bow?

There is much conjecture about whether eSports counts as a sport in the traditional definition of the word but tellingly it has already appeared at the Winter X Games and in 2022 will be an official medal sport at the Asian Games. And there is even talk it could feature in some format at the Olympic Games in due course.



8. Team ethic

Gone is the premise that gaming is something done alone from the comfort of your home. The top players usually get to the top because of the teams with which they are involved, most notably in the League of Legends.

9. A new breed of athletes

It's not the typical regimen of an elite sportsman or women but top eSports professionals will, on the whole, follow a strict daily routine. Roughly speaking that would entail warming up alone for an hour, three hours of practice in the afternoon and another three in the evening before a warm down at home playing for another hour. Their reaction times are incredible – more than 300 actions per minute while multi-tasking with strategy.

10. The internet

eSports is incredibly accessible with a newer, younger audience – aged between 20 and 35 on the whole - generally doing away with mainstream television. The internet has opened the way for eSports from live gaming to the litany of eSports clips watched by millions.



Getting started in the Dark Ages

Jason Hubbard

If you're considering jumping into the Dark ages, then you may find this article useful. The period in history known as the Dark Ages stretches from the end of the Roman Empire through to the Norman invasion in Britain.

This covers a period of roughly 500 years, with a wide variety of factions/peoples during that time. So, this period for the sake of this article we'll say starts in 415 AD through to 1066 AD.

So, during this period of change from Romano Britain through to the Norman England, there were several new groups who invaded the UK, either through military means or economic, which included the Saxons and Vikings. It was a period of upheaval and dramatic change, that included invasions, famine and plague which helped to change the political landscape, as well as the urban and rural landscape. The Roman towns and cities slowly fell into disuse as the skills required to maintain the buildings and structures disappeared.

It was also a period that was littered with military activity, that included skirmishes, battles and coastal raids. Without the safety net of Roman protection Britain became a country for the taking. Rich in resources and farmland it appealed to several groups of people that included the Saxons, Danes, Vikings and lastly the Normans.

So where do you start, well that depends which period of those 500 plus years you want to jump into.



Do you want to build a Late Romano British army or a Viking army, deciding which army appeals to you will narrow down those years?

For instance, building a Romano British army, will limit you a period of around a 100 years from around 415 AD to say 550 AD. Vikings didn't appear in Britain until officially 793 AD with the raid on Lindisfarne though there may have been smaller raids prior to that but weren't recorded. This will give you a period from 793 right up to 1066 AD when Harold defeated the last Viking invasion at Stamford Bridge.

So now we've decided on which army and period to get our teeth into, what are the miniature options out there. I'm going to concentrate on the 28mm scale, though there are options in 15mm and 20mm for anyone interested in those scales.

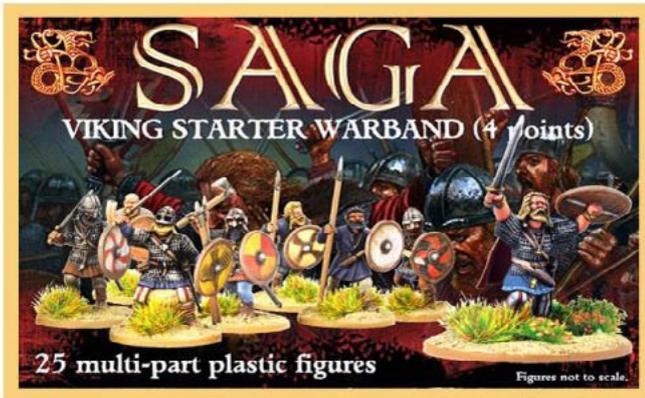
Plastic in 28mm

There are a few producers on the market that produce plastic ranges for the Dark Ages, most of whom are very good and great value for money.

Gripping Beast

Gripping Beast produces the games Saga and Sword Point, so it's not surprising they also produce a range of miniatures to field when playing these rule sets. Which is why they produce starting warbands/armies for both of the games. Along side the plastic boxes they also produce a range of metal miniatures for this period in history. They have several ranges for this period in European history, that starts with the late Roman period and goes right up to the First Crusade.

https://www.grippingbeast.co.uk/Gripping_Beast_Miniatures.html



Wargames Atlantic

Wargames Atlantic currently only have one plastic box in their Dark Age range currently, and these are the Irish Warriors. The box contains 40 multi-part plastic miniatures that includes 10 Irish Wolf Hounds to go alongside the 30 warriors. You could probably use this box to fill out Welsh ranks and the Scotti. During the 5th and 7th Century AD, Scotland was invaded by Gaels, who originated from Ireland, who settled on the west coast of Scotland and were called the Scotti.

<https://wargamesatlantic.com>



Warlord Games

Warlord produces a range of metal miniatures for the Dark Age period that starts with the Age of Arthur and goes up to the Norman invasion of Britain. They include Vikings, Saxons, Normans and Early Saxons. This range is really aimed at those planning to game the period set in Britain, its still possible to use the Saxons, Vikings and Normans in Europe, but its more British centric.

<https://store.warlordgames.com/>



Victrix limited

Victrix currently produces three sets of miniatures for this period, Vikings, Late Saxons (Anglo Danes) and Late Saxon/Anglo Danish Huscarls. Each of the Vikings and Late Saxons compromises of 60 hard plastic multi-part miniatures, whilst the Late Saxon/Anglo Danish set has 36 multi-part miniatures. In all three sets there is a plethora of options to choose from to build a wide variety of figures.

<https://www.victrixlimited.com/>



Rules

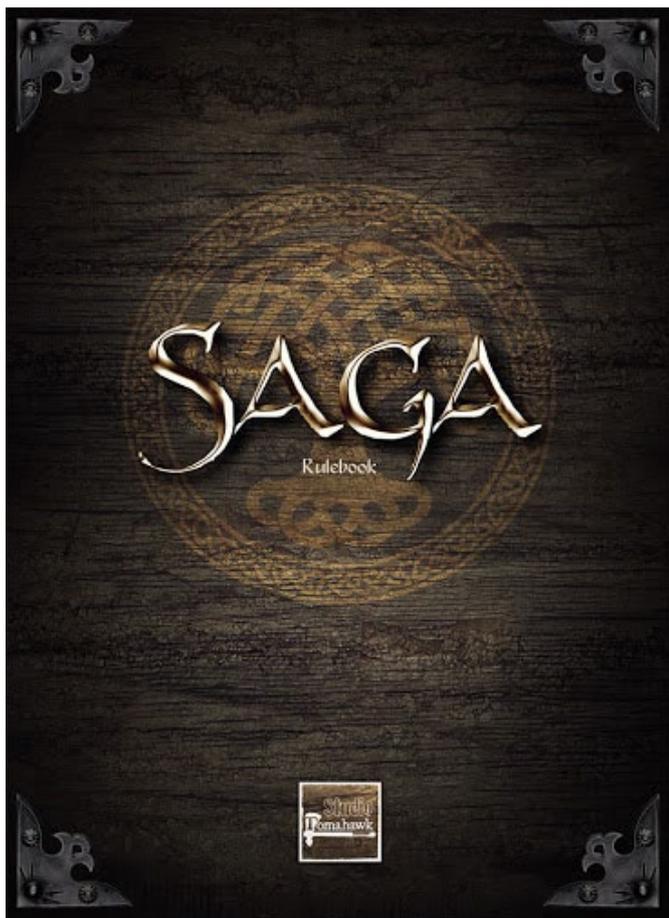
Now we're going to look at some of the rules out there for this period, these can range from skirmish level right through to large scale battles. A lot of people

unfamiliar with this period are often surprised to hear there were some large battles with thousands of warriors on both sides. They've been under the assumption that most battles were small scale affairs. I suspect this is because the majority of peoples knowledge of this period consists of Viking raids and the Battle of Hastings, with the impression that the Hastings dust up was an unusual event, and was only a large battle because the Normans had invaded England.

SAGA (Dark Age Skirmishes)

This rulebook contains all the necessary information you need to discover the innovative SAGA gaming system and within these pages you will find not only all the games rules but also a selection of scenarios to get you started plus descriptions of four of the factions involved in the wars of the Age of Vikings (Anglo-Danish, Vikings, Welsh and Normans. There are several expansions for this rule set which includes the first crusade.

<http://www.studio-tomahawk.com/en/saga/>

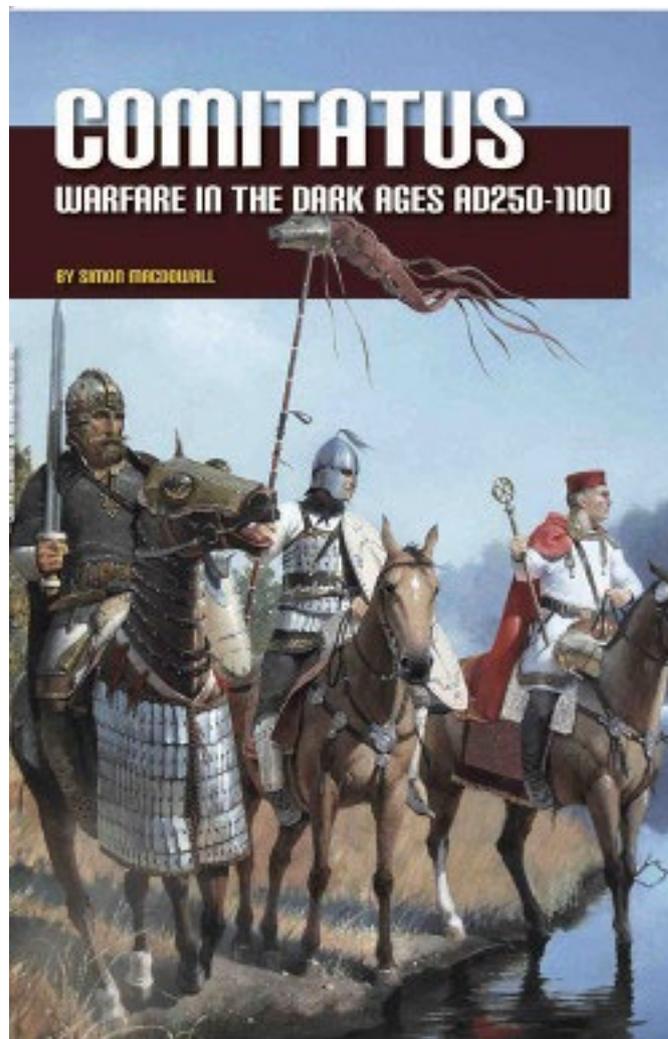


Comitatus (War fare in the Dark Ages 250-1100 AD)

Comitatus is a complete set of wargames rules designed to simulate warfare in Europe and the

Mediterranean from about AD 250 to 1100. They have been primarily designed with Barbarian Migrations period in mind, but the scope of the rules covers Dark Age warfare through to the period of the First Crusade.

<http://legio-wargames.com/comitatus-dark-ages/4537030456>



Dux Bel brum

This set of wargames rules, players can take on the role of these warlords and command their own armies on the tabletop. Written by the author of the popular Glutter of Ravens rules set, Dux Bellorum is an element-based system, where each base of figures represents 50 fighting men.

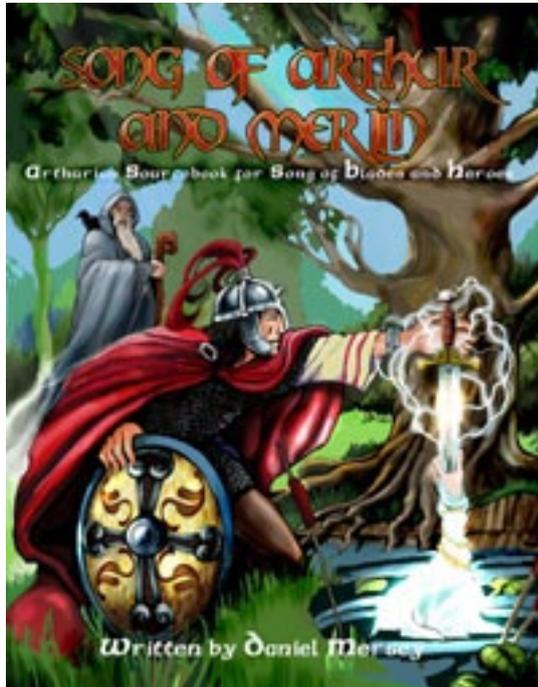
<https://ospreypublishing.com/dux-bellorum-arthurian-wargaming-rules>

Song of Arthur and Merlin

Song of Arthur and Merlin is a set of stand-alone miniatures rules based on the award-winning Song of Blades and Heroes mechanics. Three versions of the

Arthurian story: Hollywood's knights in shining armor, the gritty hero of Welsh legend, and a historical world stripped of all magic and monsters. These are a great set of rules which I enjoy playing and it gives me the ability to play both historical dark age and the Arthurian legend version as well. It's an easy set of rules to get to grips with and are fun to play.

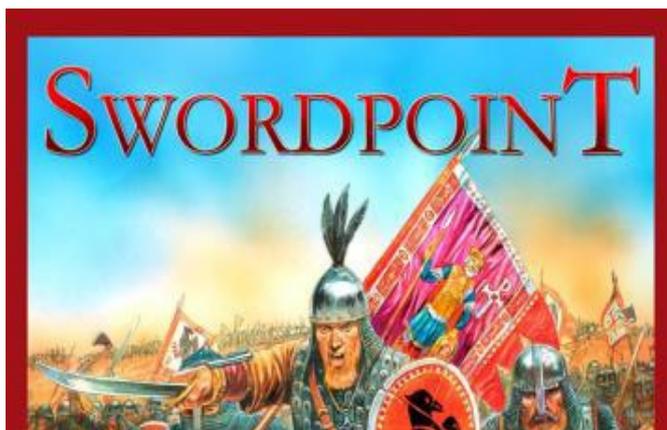
https://www.ganeshagames.net/product_info.php?cPath=1_6&products_id=11



Sword Point

SWORDDPOINT is a set of "big battle" game rules for fighting actions in the ancient and medieval periods. It has been developed over a two-and-a-half-year period by the Gripping Beast team and an enthusiastic play-test group. It was developed with 28mm figures but, as it employs multi-figure bases, various sizes of figures can be used. Just like SAGA this rule set has numerous supplements which includes periods from the classical period right through to the medieval period.

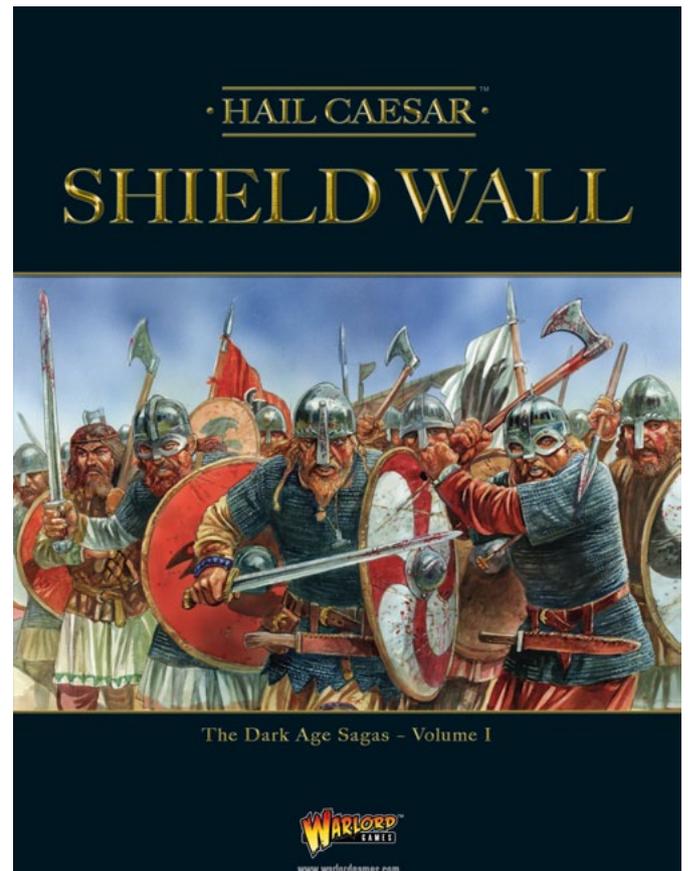
<https://www.grippingbeast.co.uk/SWORDDPOINT.html>



Hail Caesar

From the Early Bronze Age, Spartans and Greeks, the Roman Empire and their many foes, through to Medieval Knights, Hail Caesar is the game of ancient battles. There are several supplements for Hail Caesar, though the one that covers this period in history is Shield Wall. Shield Wall is a supplement for Hail Caesar which introduces the main battles, armies and personalities of the Dark Ages in the British Isles from around 400AD up to 1000AD.

<https://store.warlordgames.com/collections/hail-caesar/products/shieldwall-pdf>



Next, we need to look at possible terrain pieces to decorate our gaming table. There are several options out there in the marketplace that includes both plastic and MDF kits. I'll concentrate on buildings as you can use any trees, hills and rock type terrain pieces.

Renedra

Renedra have two pieces of terrain which are suitable for this period, and both are only £5 each. They both come on two plastic sprues and are quite easy to put together, Wattle & Daub Outbuilding and Stone/Thatched Outbuilding are both excellent kits and really cheap to pick up.

<https://www.renedra.co.uk/index.php>



Sarissa Precision

Sarissa does quite a good range of quality MDF buildings for the period in 28mm. These are easy to build and paint and being made from MDF they are quite light. The range includes a Dark Age Fort, Norman Manor house and a Viking Long ship, along with a Medieval Cog sailing ship.

Both the ships are reasonably priced at £17 for the Viking and £20 for the Medieval Ship.

<https://sarissa-precision.com/collections/dark-ages-28mm>



This should give you a good starting point if you're considering jumping into this period of historical gaming. It's quite an interesting period to game, as there is a lot of scope within the timeline for all sorts of possibilities, that includes Late Roman through to Viking raiding parties.

It's a period that's was considered quite violent, with large groups of migrating people that came into to conflict with one another. With the collapse of Rome it allowed the barbarians on the fringes to become the new masters of Europe.



4Ground

These guys produce some terrain for this period in both 28 and 15mm scales, though the range isn't extensive there are some good pieces amongst the selection. What 4Ground has over the other manufacturers is all the terrain pieces comes pre coloured which means you can plonk tyhem down straight on to the table once built.

<https://www.4groundpublishing.co.uk/>



UKGE VIRTUAL WEEKEND

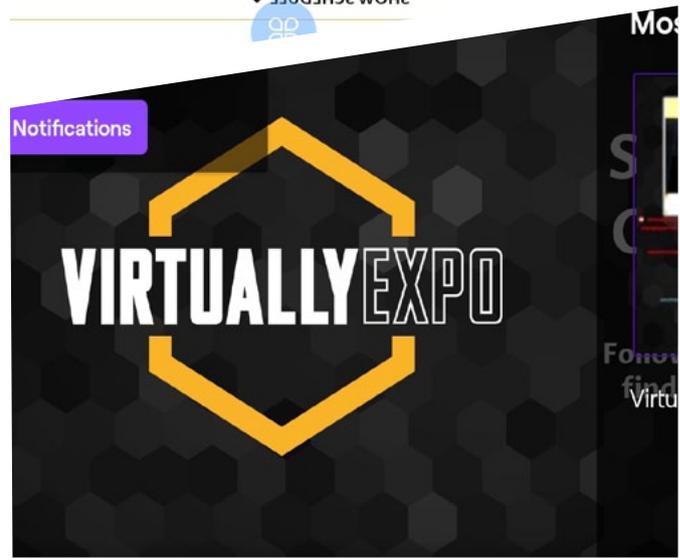
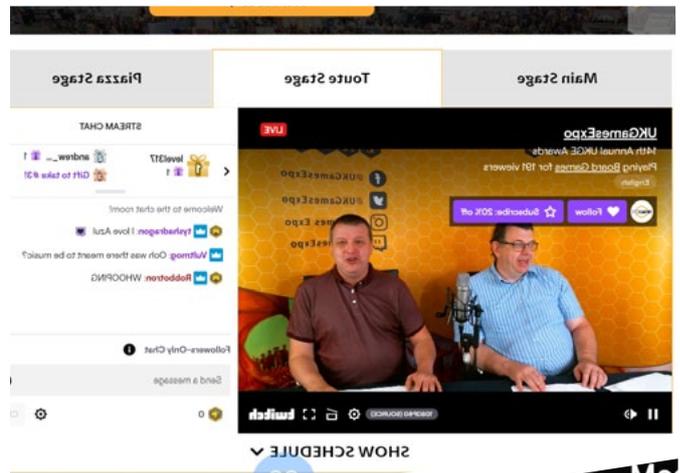
JASON HUBBARD



This year due to the Pandemic UKGE had to cancel its live show at the Birmingham NEC, like many other conventions and gaming shows. So, the UKGE organizers decided to host a virtual weekend, the question was on everyone's lips, mine included will it work.

Normally I attend a convention or show with friends, we'd wander around and chat with vendors, maybe have a game demo and generally interact. The likelihood that this would be still possible with a virtual show was very unlikely. I had attended a couple of online smaller shows and was disappointed by them. So, going into this weekend I was skeptical.

So, I joined in on the Friday, firstly by watching some of the On Tabletop stream on Twitch, this was quite good and very interesting to watch and listen to whilst painting. Later on, I decided to give Tabletopia a go, as everyone was talking about as a great way to play a board game virtually. I wasn't sure I'd enjoy the experience but once I started playing one of the board games I did enjoy the experience. It wasn't the same type of experience as laying around the table with friends. It lacked the social interaction that I enjoyed when gaming with friends, but it was an OK way to play a game on your own.



"Vote ME! made its UK Games Expo debut in 2018 and was considered to be "Play it?: Yes" by Tabletop Gaming magazine (issue 42).

Six Gun Showdown

For our other game, Six Gun Showdown, your actions do all the talking. Play as one of six different Wild West characters in a fast playing card game that combines strategy and memory game play elements along with a "snap-like" mechanic that serves to replicate the tension of a real shootout.

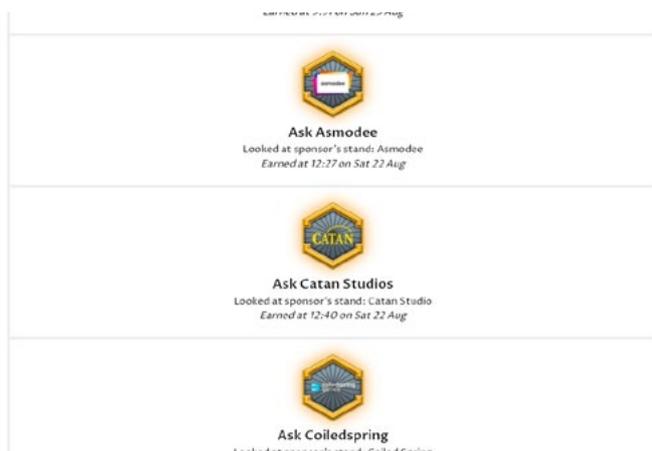


One element of the virtual weekend was the stalls, now at the live show you can interact with the people behind the games. There was a virtual stand hall, which was a mix bag, some stalls/pages had plenty of information and content regarding new and existing games, whereas others had a lack of information. This wasn't a fault of the organisers, but a fault of those companies for not providing better content.

The one aspect of the weekend that was a success were the live streams, that range of entertainment shows through to interviews and seminars with designers and game companies. I particularly like the

seminar with Mandi on the subject of game reviews. I liked the ability to partake in the discussion through the chat which made the experience more interactive. One of the videos I enjoyed passively watching was the D&D Lost Odyssey Heroes, it was fun to watch the group playing through an RPG adventure, it was like watching a radio drama.

The weekend had a lot of content that attendees could consume, and I think that regardless of your interest as a consumer/attendee there was plethora of choice within that content. There were other outlets for content and interaction through apps such as Discord.



I already used Discord before this weekend as a member of OTT community, and I've found it a great to interact with other community members. This was a great app to utilize over the weekend to create and develop interaction, and the organizers had made great use of this.

Overall, the guys behind UKGE produced a great weekend and proved that when done right a virtual convention can work. I believe there are plenty of ideas to take going forward to incorporate into virtual and live shows.



I enjoyed attending the weekend, and I had a lot fun watching some of the live streams in the background whilst painting. I found there was plenty of interaction during the weekend but I would still prefer attending a live show and interacting in person,



but if the Pandemic is with us still next year in June and there has to be another virtual show I won't be to disappointed. Though I'd prefer to attend the UKGE at the Birmingham NEC with friends.



ON OPERATIONS WITH C SQUADRON SAS (TERRORIST PURSUIT & REBEL ATTACKS IN COLD WAR AFRICA)

Author: Michael Graham
Publisher: Pen and Sword

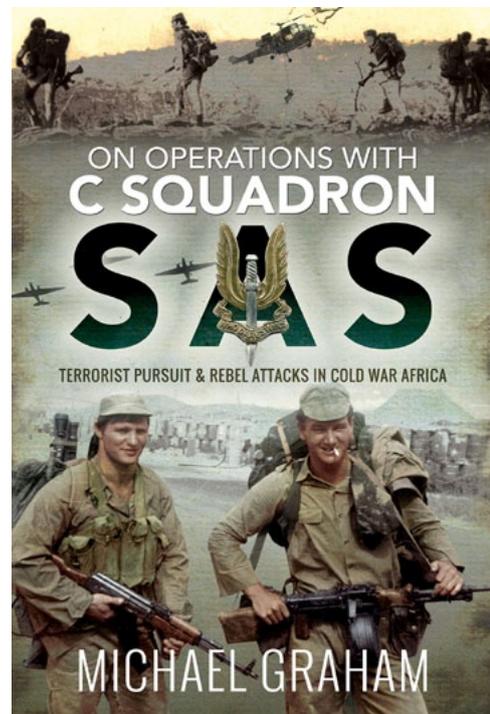
REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

This is the third volume and the second book I've read by Michael. This volume focuses on countering the spread of communism in African continent. The author draws on his firsthand experiences as he describes the operations carried out by C Squadron against communist backed terrorist factions. This time in conjunction with the Portuguese forces operating within Angola and Mozambique targeting the forces of FRELIMO and RENAMO.

Although C Squadron was disbanded in 1980 many members joined the South African special forces. Operations undertaken included unsuccessful and costly destabilisation attempts against Mugabe and missions into Mozambique including the assassination of Samora Machel. By 1986 deteriorating relationships with the South African authorities resulted in the break-up of the SAS teams who dispersed worldwide. Had Mike Graham not written his three action-packed books, C Squadron SAS's superb fighting record might never have been revealed.

As with his other book this is a great read, and anyone who enjoys reading first-hand accounts then this is one not to miss. As I wrote in my review of his second book, Michael has a great talent of making you feel that you're right there in the thick of the action. This is another great book on the operations carried out in Africa during a period of chaotic upheaval and proxy wars/conflicts

between the Western and Eastern superpowers. As with the previous book by Michael it was hard to put this one down as well, and both will definitely be in my top ten reads for this year. I think this book will appeal to anyone with an interest in special forces, modern military operations, and African history. Anyone with an avid interest in the SAS won't be disappointed with this book especially as the operations in Africa are largely ignored. Any wargamer who is considering starting a project or campaign set in Africa either during this period or more modern setting would do well from reading this book for some inspiration, especially for scenario ideas.



This is a great first-hand account of modern military operations at the height of the cold war seen through the eyes of one of the UK's elite soldiers.

Mike Graham was born in Burnley, Lancashire but brought up in Rhodesia. He was called up for National Service in the Rhodesian Army. After being commissioned as an officer he transferred to the Regular Army and joined the Rhodesian SAS (C Squadron), rising to be Second-in-Command. He left the Army as a Major and emigrated to New Zealand in 1990.

Had the author not penned these three volumes describing his time with C Squadron, then the record of this outstanding unit may have been lost to history. This was the last book to be authored by Michael as he sadly passed away in 2019 from cancer.

STAR TREK ADVENTURES: KLINGON EMPIRE

REVIEW BY ALEX FENNER

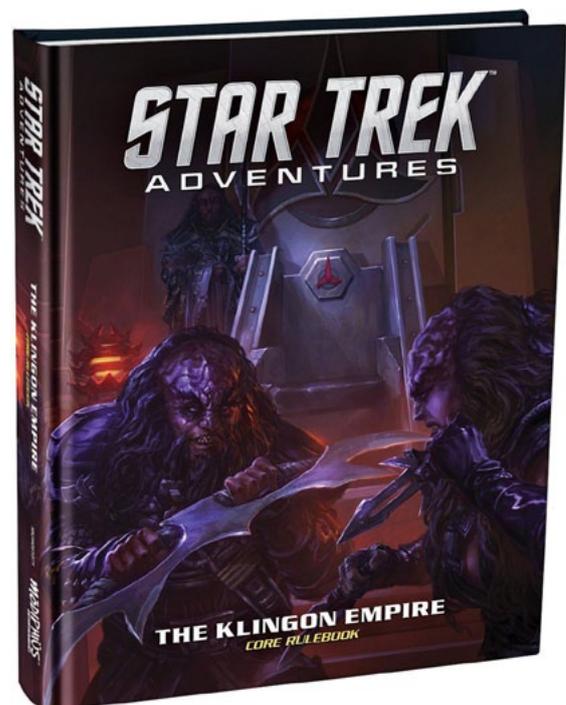
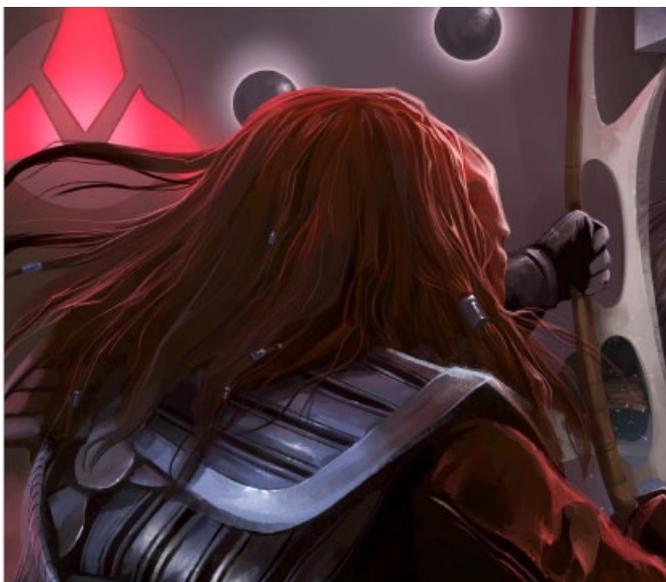


"Glory to you...and your House!" – Gowron, leader of the Klingon Empire

The Klingon Empire is the newest book in the Star trek Adventures RPG range by Modiphius. Hailed as a standalone book focused on Star Treks most iconic alien warrior race it gives us something that I have secretly craved for so long... the chance to swap the Synthanol for Blood Wine, break out the Bat'leth and bring glory to my house and the Klingon Empire!

Star trek Adventures is a very characterful roleplay game powered by the Modiphius 2D20 system and beautifully adapted to fit the look, feel, themes and concepts of the Star Trek universe. The system and game is story driven, yet rules light and focused giving a high level of narrative control to players.

As previously covered, the game was released in 2017 and is now well established in the market and supported by a full range of supplements including; dice, Games



Master (GM) screen, mission books, players guides (the Command, Operation and Science division books) and settings (Alpha, Beta, Delta and Gamma quadrant books) all provide the GM and players plenty of content for games and missions.

The game has proved popular for its narrative focus and high level of narrative control by players, but for some time fans have been asking what next with the hoping for sourcebooks allowing play as part of one of the alien polities within the setting rather than the default of the Federation's Star Fleet.



The Klingon Empire book takes that idea and extends it. Rather than being a source book, it is a Klingon focused version of the STA core rule book. It provides an extensive deep dive into the history of the empire, Klingon culture and is themed strongly towards the kind of adventures and conflicts a Klingon is more likely to encounter.

In doing this the book presents different opportunities for play than you get in a Star Fleet game with war, conquest and scheming of great houses ever more present

for a culture that does not have the hypertechnology or 'treknological' solutions at its fingertips.

Like all Modiphius and the previous Star Trek Adventures the book is again beautiful and laid out well with the text and art work placed to make you feel the evocative setting of life within the Klingon Empire and covered with small details like Klingon proverbs, fresh artwork, examples of play and even a brief Klingon language guide as an appendix to really help player and GMs get the feel for the game – 'Maq-cha!'

Modiphius have cleverly also used this as an opportunity to refresh how they present their core rules from the original Rulebook. The rules are clearer in this presentation and considerably easier to read. The addition of flow charts demonstrating how certain rules are resolved is particularly welcome. Modiphius have also revised the advancement system for characters presented here.

The milestone system has been streamlined and reworded to present players with more control over this process. Reputation has been reframed as glory and shame to better fit Klingon characters. I find this presents players

with more of a sense of tangible reward and options to spend both glory and shame to narrative effect in game.

Another notable addition is a very complete section with full stat blocks for notable Klingon characters from TV episodes and films who can easily be dropped into any Star Trek Adventures game.

While this new content goes far beyond that of previous treatments of Klingons in the Star Trek Adventures line, the book does however contain a lot of duplicated content including rules mechanics and adversaries. While a collector or someone coming to the game with this as a new point of entry, may be less concerned about this, those wanting to add the Klingon Empire to their existing game may find themselves paying a core book price for some additional content.

My thoughts are that Klingon Empire is both an excellent sourcebook and revision of the core Star Trek Adventures RPG. It provides opportunity to explore a beloved setting through the eyes of an alien warrior culture and lays the ground work for different types of stories focused more on action and a thirst for glory which I think many players will find appealing. Although the additions and changes may only be very slight, they make a Klingon focused game ever more compelling and provide extra tools that even a Star Fleet game may benefit from.

Star Trek Adventures Klingon Empire is available for pre order with physical copies expected to ship in October 2020 from Modiphius. Preorders made through www.modiphius.net include instant access to the PDF. 'Qapla!'

COLD WAR SERIES 1945-1991

JASON HUBBARD

Publisher; Pen and Sword

Suez Crisis 1956

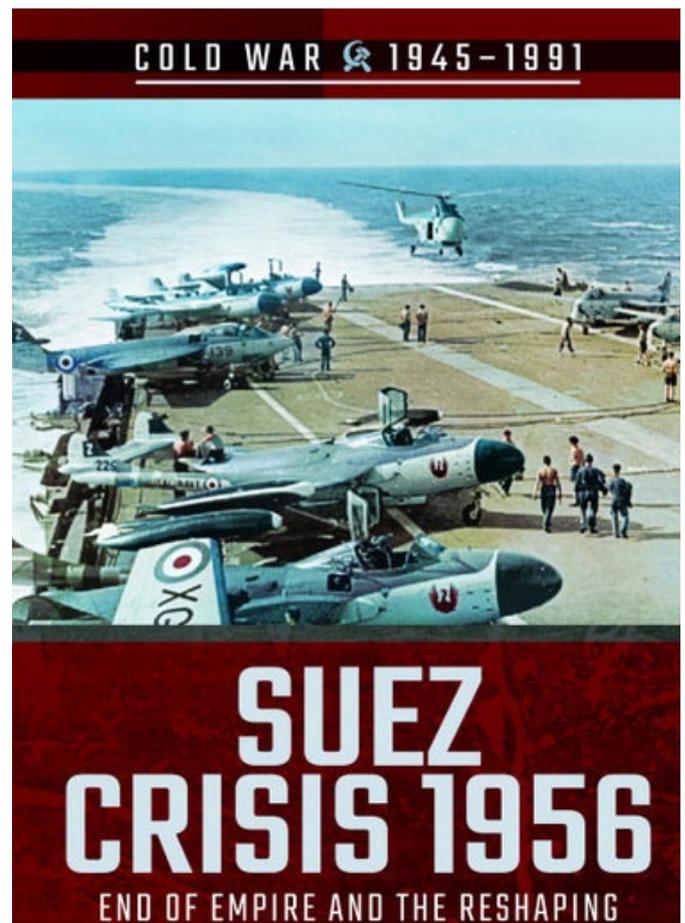
Author: David Charlwood

Publisher: Pen & Sword

In 1956 Egyptian president Gamal Abdul Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal, ending nearly a century of British and French control over the crucial waterway. Ignoring U.S. diplomatic efforts and fears of a looming Cold War conflict, British Prime Minister Anthony Eden misled Parliament and the press to take Britain to war alongside France and Israel. In response to a secretly pre-planned Israeli attack in the Sinai, France and Britain intervened as peacemakers.

The invasion of Egypt was supposed to restore British and French control of the canal and reaffirm Britain's flagging prestige. Instead, the operation spectacularly backfired, setting Britain and the United States on a collision course that would change the balance of power in the Middle East. The combined air, sea and land battle witnessed the first helicopter-borne deployment of assault troops and the last large-scale parachute drop into a conflict zone by British forces.

French and British soldiers fought together against the Soviet-equipped Egyptian military in a short



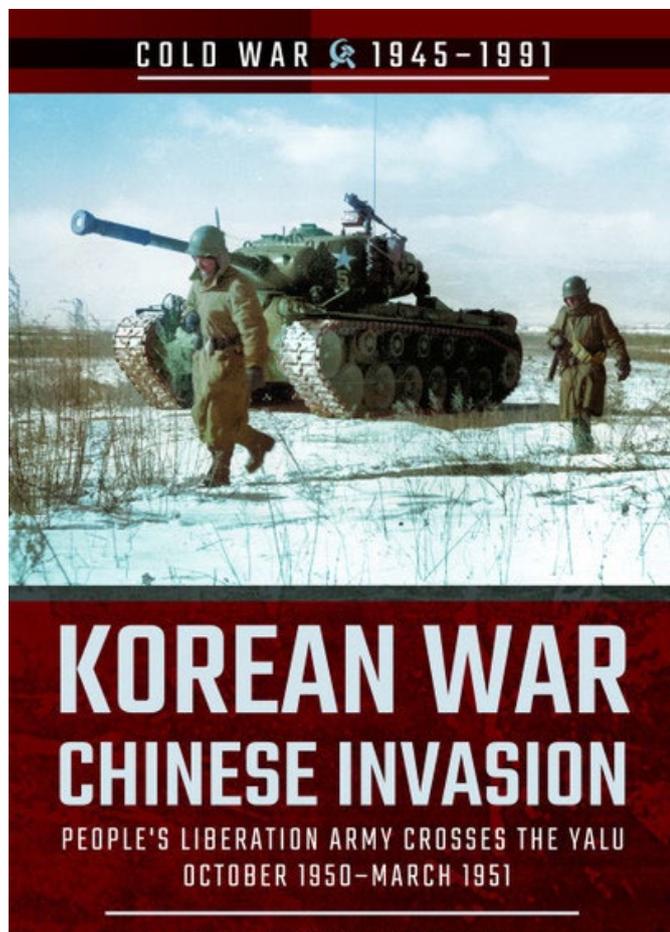
campaign that cost the lives of thousands of soldiers, along with innocent civilians.

This is a quick-fire concise overview of the crisis that was one of the events that helped to end the British Empire post WW2. It was also a political event that helped to bring down the British PM Anthony Eden. These books are a really fast read, they provide just enough information to give you a solid overview of the situation, event or conflict. The author of this book examines the behind the scenes political goings on, between the UK, France, US and Israel. It examines the dodgy deal between the UK, France and Israel to invade Egypt to recapture the Suez Canal.

The Suez crisis was one of those events early in the Cold War, that are considered by many experts to have triggered more conflicts like the 6 Day War in 67, due to the increasing tensions between Egypt and Israel. What makes this conflict quite significant is that dashed hopes of a continuing global peace post world war 2. It was also the start of the US becoming entangled ever deeper into the Middle East, that eventually led to the current mess in that region of the world. I was not prior to reading this book that knowledgeable about the incident, I was aware of the UK's part in the crisis, and I was aware it caused a scandal politically here in the UK, yet I didn't know much beyond the surface.

This book gave me a greater understanding especially the political dealings that went on behind the scenes. The author has made this information quite easy to read, normally I find political information quite dry to read, but this was far more interesting.

Anyone looking to game this crisis, then I would say this gives you an overview but there's not much information regarding the military involvement. This is a great read for a historian or someone with an interest in political and military history. It's an easy digestible overview that's great to get you started, and it's a good read for any one just wanting more information. I found I quite enjoyed reading this, and I think this was due to the authors style of writing.



Korean War Chinese Invasion (People's Liberation Army crosses the Yalu October 1950-March 1951)
Author: Gerry Van Tonder
Publisher: Pen & Sword

In his first four volumes on the Korean War, the author traces the war's progress from the North Korean invasion of June 1950, the desperate American defence of the Pusan Perimeter, General Douglas MacArthur's daring and highly successful amphibious offensive at Inch'ön, and his subsequent advance across the 38th Parallel to the Yalu River on the Chinese Manchurian border

Communist Chinese forces, that have been secretly infiltrating North Korean territory by slipping across the Yalu from mid-October 1950, ambush a South Korean regiment in the mountains of central North Korea. This is the first of several Chinese victories over unsuspecting and overstretched South Korean and American units in the winter of 1950/1.

On 27 November 1950, Chinese leader Mao Zedong, ostensibly fearful of the consequences of hostile American forces on his country's border along the Yalu River, orders 250,000 troops into Korea, with express orders to annihilate the UN forces. In the western half of the theatre, US General Walton H. Walker's Eighth Army front along the Ch'öngch'ön axis is breached, while to the east, the US X Corps suffers a series of crushing defeats, including at the Chosin Reservoir, precipitating a massive evacuation from the North Korean port of Hungnam.

The author has littered throughout the book sources and extracts from British press, which I found quite interesting as they're essentially primary sources, as well as being interesting to see what the establishment and main stream media thought at the time regarding the conflict.

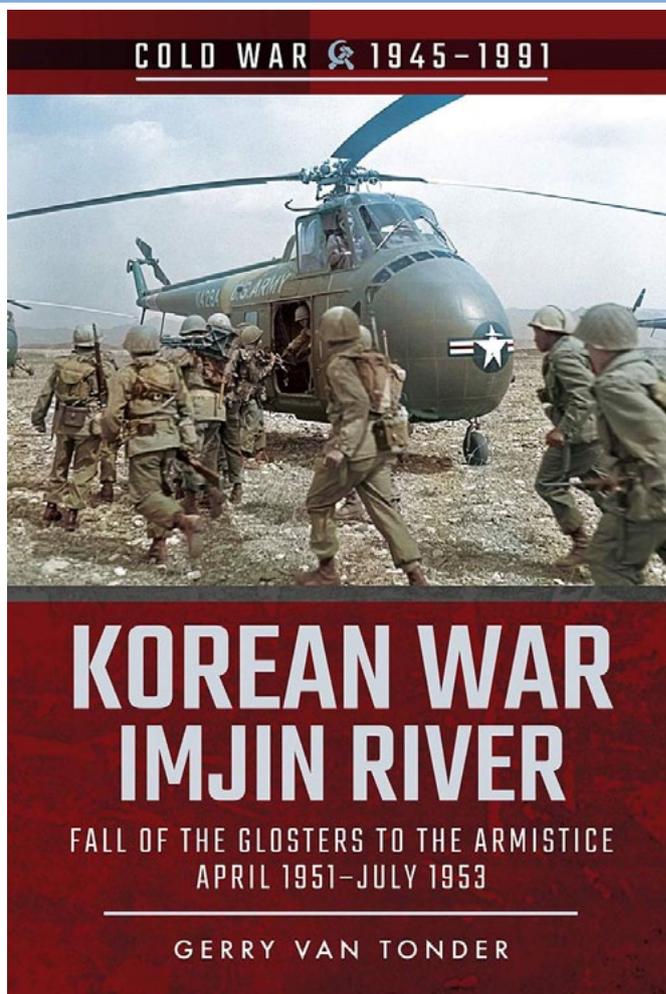


I found it an interesting read especially in regard to how close the US and her allies to being overrun by Chinese forces. The author talks about the allied intelligence assumed the Chinese wouldn't become embroiled in the Korean War, so they didn't consider them a threat. This was partly because at the time in question Mao and Chinese military were preparing for an invasion of Taiwan. Mao had also refused to get dragged into the conflict unless the US went beyond the 38th Parallel. So, when Western forces pushed Korean forces all the way to the Chinese border, they changed plans and became involved.

My one complaint with the book is at times the author slips from the larger history to highlight different aspects of the fighting, and at times skips back and forth along the chronology to do this. Which can make for some confusing reading at time, but apart from this one complaint, I found this a very useful read.

I've recently started planning and building forces for the Bolt Action Korea supplement, and I have found this book and the Korean War Imjin River every useful for research about the conflict. This was one of those wars which I knew occurred but beyond that I wasn't well informed on the war. This is mainly because its largely been forgotten and thus its often referred to as the forgotten war. So, this was a great way to quickly get an overview of a particular aspect of the war. I never knew how close the allies came to being defeated by the Chinese, it was mainly prevented due to air superiority the US had achieved. The author covers the air war and MIG alley in this book, he talks about the issues faced by both Korea and China as they had to effectively build an air force from scratch during this war.

It's definitely a book I'd recommend for anyone interested in gaming this conflict, and historian will find it equally interesting to read, before delving into more indepth books.



Korean War Imjin River (Fall of the Glosters to the Armistice April 1951-July 1953)

Author: Gery Von Tonder

Publisher: Pen & Sword

Hitler's Wehrmacht and SS units will bAs of October 1950, a quarter of a million Communist Chinese troops, in twenty-seven divisions, had poured across the Yalu River into North Korea, with the singular objective of forcing General Douglas MacArthur's United Nations troops back across the 38th Parallel and into the Sea of Japan.

Shortly before midnight on 22 April 1951, to the west of the US Eighth Army's defensive front, the Chinese Sixty-third Army fell on the British 29th Brigade. On the left flank, the 1st Battalion, Gloucester Regiment ('Glosters') held a tenuous position at a ford on the Imjin River. Despite a gallant defence, the battalion was pushed back to make a desperate but futile stand on Hill 235. On what became known as 'Glosters' Hill', the battalion ceased to exist. It was subsequently estimated that the attacking force of 27,000 Chinese troops suffered 10,000 casualties, forcing the Chinese army to be withdrawn from the front.

From August 1951 to the summer of 1952, the USAF conducted Operation Strangle in a futile and costly attempt to disrupt Chinese supply routes. In the last two years of fighting, Communist Chinese and UN forces faced each other from well-entrenched positions in hilly terrain, where mapped hill numbers were contested. From June 1952 to March 1953, a series of five hard-fought engagements took place in central Korea as the antagonists sought ownership of Hill 266, commonly referred to as 'Old Baldy'. This was followed during April–July 1953 by two tactically pointless battles over Pork Chop Hill, in which the UN forces won the first battle and the Chinese the second, with both sides sustaining major casualties. On 27 July 1953, the two belligerents signed an armistice agreement, implementing a ceasefire that stands to this day. De facto, the Korean War has never ended.



The author manages to highlight the stalemate that finally occurred on the front lines between the two forces, and it how it became bogged down into a war of attrition. The alarming number of casualties on both sides for not very much ground. This war became very reminiscent of the First World War, where soldiers fought over scraps of land with high casualties and not much in the way of advancement.



The author also takes a look at the aftermath of the war all the way up to the current situation. He discusses the current political situation, and North Korea's advancement in rocket technology including it's nuclear expansion.

As I had stated in my review of the author's other Korean War book this was a conflict, I knew occurred but didn't really know much in relation to the events and the fighting that took place. This book is again a great place to start, at 128 pages it's not an in-depth volume on the subject but provides enough information to give you a good grounding in the subject matter. The book has been illustrated throughout with photographs and maps.

Overall, it's a nice easy read, it's not too in-depth but it's not so flimsy that it's a pointless read. I'd definitely say it's worth reading for anyone looking to game this particular conflict. The Korea War was one of those Cold War conflicts that could have escalated into a wider war. So as a wargamer looking for an alternative history project, you could take the Korean War and escalate it further across Asia.



As a book for someone interested in the conflict from an historical aspect then I would say both these books by the author are a good first read to give you a solid grounding before more in-depth research.

THE FRENCH AT WATERLOO (EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS)

Author: Andrew W Field

Publisher: Pen & Sword

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

This, the first of two volumes of the French accounts, features Napoleon's own description of the battle, those of his immediate household and the Imperial headquarters, and those of members of 1st Corps. Napoleon's own version of events, one of the first to be published in France, was used as the basis of many subsequent histories that ignore or gloss over his many dubious claims. His account of his actions and his view of what happened on that decisive day, and those of his close associates, make fascinating reading.

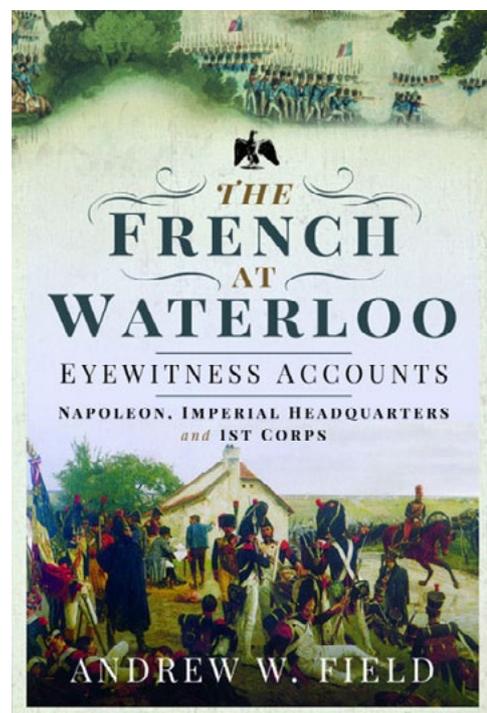
By using eyewitness accounts from a wide plethora of French soldiers which haven't been published previously in English, has added an extra layer of detail to how we understand and interpret what occurred on the battlefield on that fateful day.

This will allow the reader to make their own comparisons with accounts from soldiers serving in the ranks of Wellington's army. This will also provide a better insight into the trauma that French soldiers suffered, and they attempt to explain why the French army under the command of Napoleon and winning could lose.

This was a fascinating read, because as someone from the UK I've only read ever read about Waterloo from a British perspective as the victors. This book gives you the opportunity to see the battle and its consequences from a French perspective. It's definitely an eye opener for the reader and will give them a new perspective on the battle.

One aspect I truly found interesting were the first-hand accounts of what it was like to be a member of the Old Guard fighting in the columns whilst being raked with cannister, musket fire and canon as well as facing down the attacks by the British cavalry, scary stuff.

The most interesting accounts were from the ordinary soldiers because these felt more real and accurate, whereas the accounts from some of the senior officers



felt like they were trying to over play their role in the battle, trying to make themselves look glorious and not accepting responsibility for some of the mistakes made. If you're interested in this period or battle then I'd definitely recommend this book, as it does provide a new interesting perspective on the event. It's one of those books that will appeal to both the war gamer and historian, for different reasons.

For the war gamer it allows them to get a better understanding of the battlefield for recreation. Whilst the historian it gives them a perspective from the losing side, that isn't normally seen. It's definitely one you'll want on your shelf as it's not only a fascinating read, it's also great reference material.



Trends Shaping The Future Of Esports

For all its success and growth, esports ultimately remains in its adolescence. The future of professional competitive gaming is hard to predict, but numerous trends are already shaping tomorrow.

From the rise of artificially intelligent players to the emergence of disciplines that blend traditional and virtual sports, esports isn't just growing; it's evolving, and diversifying. Give your readers – and a new generation of competitive players – everything they need to know to understand the future of esports.

We all know esports is growing, but where is it going? Today a relatively small number of games dominate esports tournaments. But esports is only getting started. As more games, players, fans and technologies become involved in esports, there's plenty of reason to be excited about the future of competitive gaming.

But which trends are really going to be part of the future, and which are just hype? In this story a range



of Red Bull gaming pros have helped hand-pick the future esports trends that they find most exciting. Players like Polish StarCraft II pro Artur Bloch and the terrifying French icon that is Corentin 'Gotaga' Houssein, also share their expert opinion on what they think the impact of various trends will be, and how esports in general is evolving.

The key trends are:

Artificial intelligence and esports

In January this year Google's DeepMind AI entity AlphaStar beat some of the best StarCraft II esports pros on Earth. According to the DeepMind team, esports provides a greater challenge to AI than go or chess (both of which DeepMind has mastered). Meanwhile a partnership between tech outfits Tencent, Vivo and Qualcomm is seeing the development of an AI-powered esports team. But what does this actually mean for esports? Will we see new training tools emerge, or even tournaments that pit humans against robots? Might the esports games of tomorrow be designed by AI? Expert/talent: Artur Bloch, Polish StarCraft II player that is one of Europe's great hopes when it comes to interrupting Korean players' dominance of the game.



A shift to embrace Battle Royale?

Battle Royale games like Fortnite and Apex Legends might be the most popular competitive video games on the planet. But they have been divisive within esports, because the structure of Battle Royale games doesn't always fit the structure of esports tournaments. Is Fortnite already an esports? How much will esports have to change to embrace Battle Royale? What might the broader impact on esports be? Expert/talent: Corentin 'Gotaga' Houssein, the 25-year-old Frenchman and social media hit, known for terrifying the opposition at Fortnite.

Athletic esports, VR and the shooter

While the hype around virtual reality has arguably come and gone, it may still have a role to play in emerging forms of esports. 'Athletic esports' demand that players demonstrate both physical and virtual skill, playing as teams in large 'pitches', moving around while wearing VR or AR headsets. VR also has the potential to change the esports shooter scene. But are these trends meaningful, or likely to pass by without much impact? Expert/talent: Ricardo Pacheco, Portuguese Counter-Strike: Global Offensive player and team captain used to the pressure of making big decisions in tournaments.

4. The million-dollar winner

As esports grows, so do the prize pools at major competitions. Experts predicted that by 2021 a single player would for the first time win \$1 million from a single event. But those predictions were too conservative. In July 2019 the 16-year-old winner of the first Fortnite World Cup's 'Solos' division took home \$3 million for his victory. And that might just be the beginning of esports finals rewards that rival those seen in major athletics tournaments. But how do players feel about the growing presence of business in esports? Can the grass roots culture of esports survive as the big bucks roll in? How important are cash prizes to the players that pursue the esports dream? Expert/talent: Kanamori 'Gachikun' Tsunehori

5. Mobile esports fills a stadium

Mobile esports is already a legitimate form of competitive gaming, and its growth is accelerating, perhaps unlike any other part of esports. For now, though, it lags behind other forms of competitive gaming. However, many predict that in the coming years we will see the first mobile competitive gaming event fill a full-sized stadium. Will we begin to see mobile catch up with PC? Are there enough esports-ready mobile titles to support that growth? How does it feel to think about performing in front of a stadium-sized crowd? Expert/talent: Berin Bjelak, Clash Royale specialist who also brings a wealth of generalist esports knowledge, thanks to his diverse experience.

6. Esports grows up: Rules and regulation

As esports grows, so does its global presence and reputation. More people, brands and sponsors are paying attention to esports than ever before. As such, esports needs to be infallible and fair, becoming more like traditional sports. That will mean a rise in rule structuring, anti-cheat measures, anti-doping and more. Is that really all that necessary? Can the authentic culture of esports survive the move to make competitive gaming more strictly regulated? Is cheating and doping really a problem?

WITH THE SAS ACROSS THE RHINE

(INTO THE HEART OF HITLER'S THIRD REICH)

Author: Ian Wellsted

Publisher: Pen and Sword

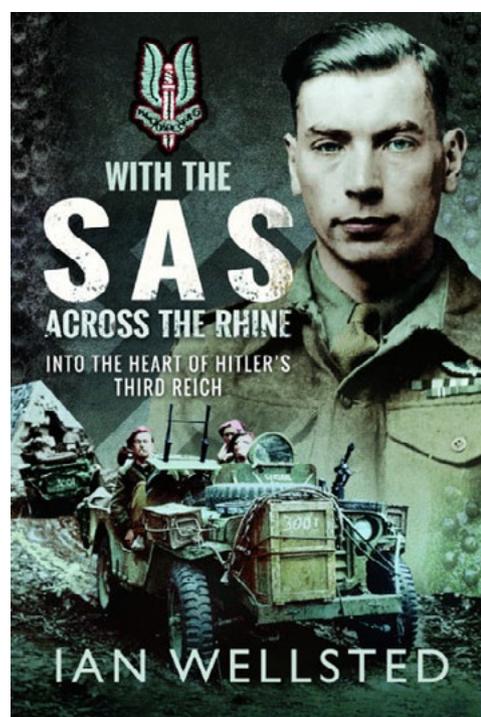
REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

SAS: Across the Rhine is the story of Captain Ian Wellsted's military career with the Special Air Service, the first part of which was detailed in his well-received SAS: With the Maquis. This is a very personal account, revealing the many emotional as well as physical strains placed upon men in the fighting line. The author takes us back to his time employed with the 79th Armoured Division (the famous 'Hobart's Funnies') preparing for D-Day and his desire for more exciting action, which led first to the Parachute Regiment and then the SAS. Whilst we learn a little of his time with the maquis, the focus of the story is his part in Operation Archway.

A British special forces mission which involved the 1st and 2nd Special Air Service Regiments acting in support of the advance of Field Marshal Sir Bernard Montgomery's Allied 21st Army Group in operations Varsity and Plunder, this crossing of the Rhine was one of the largest and most diverse operations ever carried out by the SAS. In this offensive, the SAS teams were thrust deep into German territory, often having to battle their way through the enemy lines to get back to safety. 'I quickly learned that there was no way to control an SAS battle,' Wellsted wrote of his first major encounter in charge of a patrol. 'The din was deafening - seventy odd Vickers and half a dozen Brownings all chattering together. The screech of ricochets and the fire of the enemy made my voice sound like the squeak of a mouse against a church organ. I was helpless.'

In one of these encounters, as the war was ending, Wellsted's troop found itself surrounded. In the ensuing firefight, Wellsted was wounded, bringing his active front line career to an end.

I cannot stress how good this book is. I found it to be an absolutely riveting read from start to finish. It contains a plethora of information regarding how the SAS operated in the latter part of World War Two, which will be invaluable to both the historian and war gamer. I have to say of all the books I have read this year I would put



this at the top of my list. As a wargamer building a SAS based army for Bolt Action I found reading this book very useful. I now plan to build my army based on the unit commanded by the author. The book also contains information of the French and Belgian SAS along with descriptions of weapons used, and the tactics employed by the SAS units. Throughout the book there several map illustrations along with a section of photographs taken during operations.

It's one of those books that once you start reading you can't put it down, a great read about one of the most famous elite units in the world. A definite one to grab if you're interested in the SAS, WW2 or military history in general.

REBELLION AGAINST HENRY III (THE DISINHERITED MONTFORTIANS 1265-1274)

Author: David Pilling *Publisher: Pen & Sword*

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

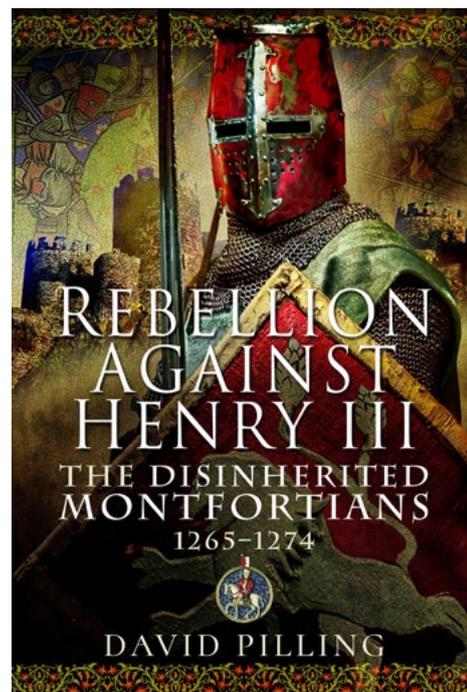
This is the first full length study of the Disinherited since 1959. This book fills a surprisingly significant gap in the history of Simon De Monfort and Baronial Rebellion. The author sheds light on the half-forgotten figures of the Montfortian Wars such as Sir John Deyville and Sir Adam Gurdon.

The book also contains a study of the military tactics and guerilla type warfare employed by the rebel Barons, as well as the tactics exploited by the Royalist captains. This is one of those hinge moments in British medieval history, which could have ended with the defeat and removal of the king.

The Second Barons' War (1264–1267) was a civil war in England between the forces of a number of barons led by Simon de Montfort against the royalist forces of King Henry III, led initially by the king himself and later by his son, the future King Edward I. Though the death of Simon de Montfort and so many of his followers at the battle of Evesham in 1265 ought to have ended the conflict. In the aftermath of the battle, Henry III's decision to disinherit all the surviving Montfortians served to prolong the war for another two years. Hundreds of landless men took up arms again to defend their land and property: the redistribution of estates in the wake of Evesham occurred on a massive scale, as lands were either granted away by the king or simply taken by his supporters.

The Disinherited, as they were known, defied the might of the Crown longer than anyone could have reasonably expected. They were scattered, outnumbered, and out resourced, with no real unifying figure after the death of Earl Simon, and suffered a number of heavy defeats. Despite all their problems and setbacks, they succeeded in forcing the king into a compromise. The Dictum of Kenilworth, published in 1266, acknowledged that Henry could not hope to defeat the Disinherited via military force alone.

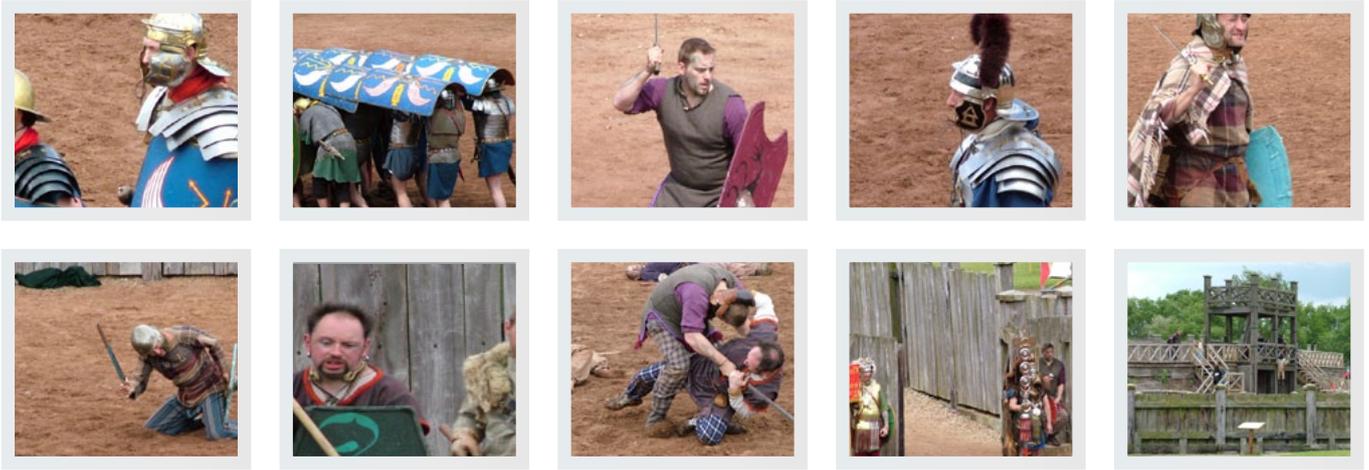
I was vaguely aware of this period in medieval history, but not in any great detail. I was aware of Simon de Montfort, and of the rebellion against the king but not in any



major detail, so, I was quite motivated to read this book. It's been penned in 19 short, well written and informative chapters with additional material in two case studies and 2 appendices. One of those case studies was a fascinating read that suggests a certain legendary character from Nottingham, namely Robin Hood was possibly one of the disinherited. The author make a convincing case and it does make sense to make this suggestion.

The book is a methodically laid out and engaging read, yet I wanted to know more about the social implications this period had on the country. What was the affect the disinherited had on the populace. Otherwise it is worth a read if you're interested in this volatile period, that would make an exciting campaign for anyone interested medieval war gaming.

Anyone who has an interest in medieval, military, or Royal history will probably enjoy this book. It's an easy to follow and informative book, with a level of information that will appeal to many historians and war gamers alike.



Roman Derby

Gangs of Rome



I've been looking around for an alternative setting for a *Gangs of Rome* campaign, and I didn't want to set it in Rome. I've been thinking about setting it in Britannia for a while, and did initially consider Londinium, but this felt a bit obvious. This prompted me to go more rural, and I wanted to set a campaign that was localish to where I live. Now the most obvious locations near me would be York or Chester, but yet again I decided these locations were still too large. Then it dawned on me, a few years back I did a desktop survey of Derby or as the Romans called it Derventio.

It was originally a Roman military location but a small town grew up around it, probably because of the lead mines in the Peak District not that far away. The idea is that gangs have moved into the area, which would include *Aquae Arnemetiae* (Buxton), *Castrafeld* (Ches-terfield) and *Melandra/Ardotalia* (Glossop).

The plot for the campaign will around the lead and silver industry, the gangs have been sent north from Londinium to try and take control of the lead and silver industry. Not only are there gangs from Londinium but also from *Eboracum* (York) and *Deva Victrix* (Ches-ter) all trying to gain control of the lead and silver.

Aquae Arnemetiae was a small town in the Roman province of Britannia. The settlement was based around its natural warm springs. Today it is the town of Buxton, Derbyshire in England.



Castrafeld was a Roman Fort along with two vici nearby the Roman military site. This would have been the equivalent of a small rural town.

Melandra/Ardotalia is a Roman fort in Gamesley, near Glossop, there was also a Mansio or posting station nearby, along with a large vicus or local town sized settlement. Several of the local farmsteads were owned by veterans who had completed their length of service.

Derventio

Established in the latter part of the first century by the Romans, the military role of this vital river-crossing was diminished as a prosperous small town emerged. Derventio was occupied for 40 years as a military location until around 120AD. To put this in context, the Emperor Hadrian visited Britannia in AD120 and ordered his wall to be built. Though Britannia always had a large garrison, focus now changed to industrial production. Derby produced pottery and had access

to the lead mining to the north in the Peak District, later it became a centre for metalworking. This continued for the next 200 years.



Scenario suggestion – Steal the Silver

Description: The shipment of silver is being transported from the mine to the local warehouse before being sent on to Londinium. Players are allowed 100 coins of fighters and Denarii for this scenario.

Location: On the outskirts of the Vicus, the building will be a combination of workshops, round houses and simple Roman buildings. There will be carts and scattered stalls in the area.

The Silver Convoy: This is made up one cart, with a driver and labourer, which is guarded by 2-3 guards. **Deployment:** Players deploy their gang members on opposite edges, the silver cart is placed in the centre.

Mob Justice: The mob will become active once the gangs attack the cart, they will come to the aid of the silver workers. They will move straight into rage state with no dice rolling required.

Gang Mission: The gangs are determined to steal the silver as this will aid them when they try to setup a protection racket on the silver merchants at a later date.

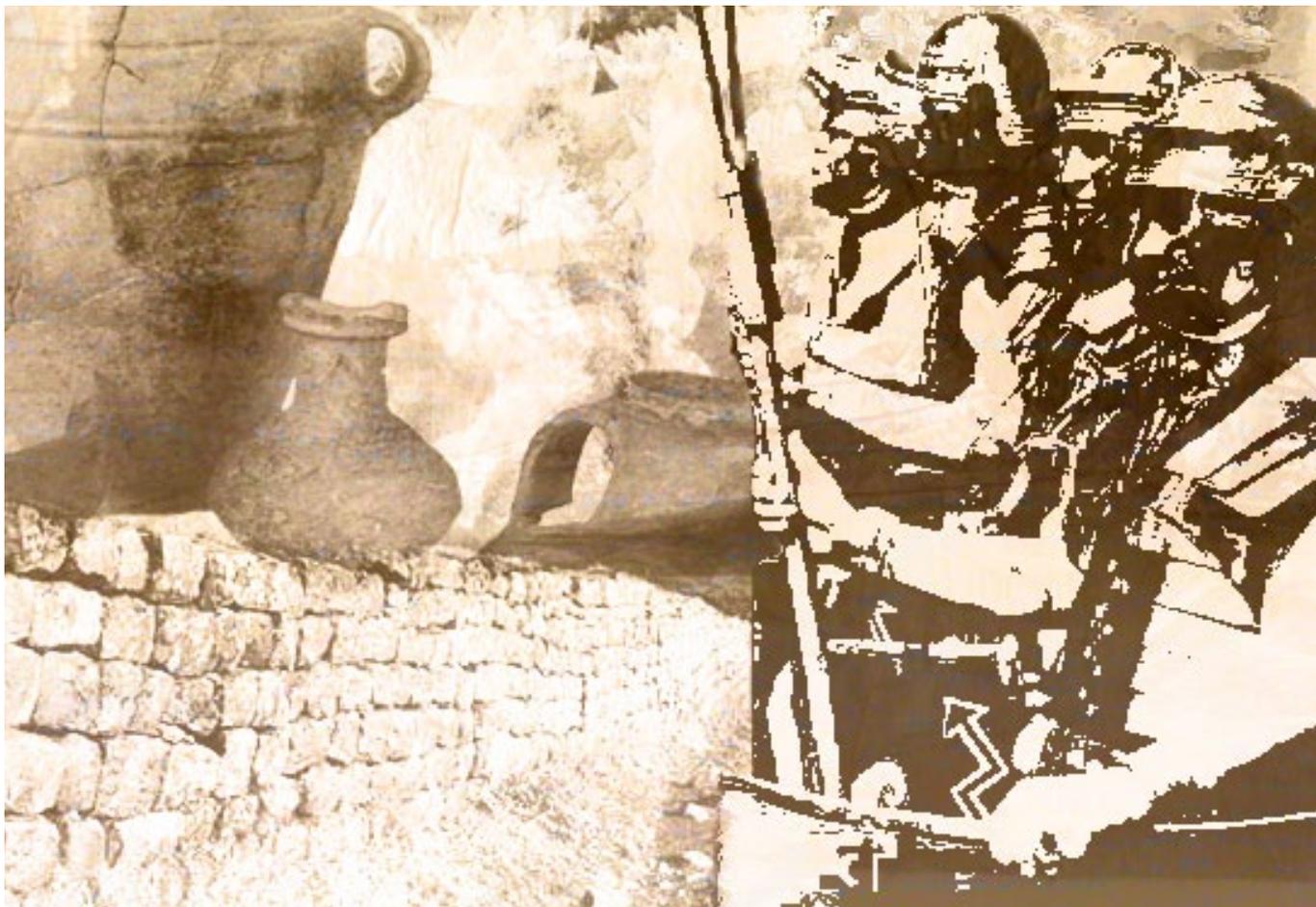
Winning: The gang that manages to steal the cart and take it off they're own table edge wins the game.

Loosing: If the gangs are beaten back by a combination of the silver workers and the mob, then they loose and limp off in disgrace.

This scenario should be played out in 7 turns.

Other scenarios could include attacks on a local villa, bribing officials, attacking a rival gang hideout or rampaging through a small settlement causing fear and destruction.

I've included the desktop survey I carried out several years ago to provide some information about Roman Derby.



Derwentio - The Market in the Oaks

Introduction

The only reference we have for the Roman name of Little Chester is contained within the Ravenna Cosmology of the seventh century, wherein is listed the name Derbentione (R&C#89), between the entries for Lutudarum (Crich, Derbyshire) and Salinae (Middlewich, Cheshire). The name is purely Celtic in origin from the words dyr 'oak tree' and venta 'market settlement'.

Numerous keyhole excavations have been undertaken prior to development and near to 19th and 20th century urban infill, with the most recent excavation by Tuarc in 1981. The Roman fort was established in the Agricola era and succeeded by a Hadrianic phase enclosing c.2.4 ha. The latter defences belonging to the Antonine period consist of a wall 2.74m wide with an earth ramp behind, with a street pattern reflected by the present road pattern. There is some evidence for occupation into the sub-Roman era with an extensive vicus on the eastern bank of the Derwent.

The 1968 W gate excavations and the N-W sector excavations 1979-80, now underlying Chester Green Community Centre were published in 1985. Recently, in 1987, building development on City Road on the Old Pickford's Garage site have revealed a substantial stone building within the fort and a section of the W wall and ditch have been recorded by TPAT.

Forts and Fortlets

There are two known fort sites in Derby, the first was built in the period around 50AD under Nero and was located on the west side of the Derwent in the area known locally as Strutts Park. The second was located at the site known as Chester Green, dating around 75-80 AD. The Chester Green fort supplanted the original fort at struts Park in the 70's AD, though there is some evidence to suggest this fort, along with others in the Derbyshire region was abandoned for a short period in the 2nd century.

Strutts Park Fort

The Roman fort at Little Chester lay on high ground to the west of the River Derwent in Strutt's Park. Surface finds of coins and pottery indicate a late-Claudian/ Early-Nero foundation date for the fort, probably sometime during the campaigns of Aulus Didius Gallus between AD52-57. Limited excavations in the 1970's uncovered building slots of timber barrack-blocks which seemed to indicate that the buildings in the interior of the fort were carefully dismantled and the fort abandoned.

A few pieces of bronze military equipment have been recovered from the site, all of it pretty standard issue which gives no indication as to the type of unit

stationed at the Derventio fort, although some of the pieces had been gilded, which perhaps indicates a more prestigious regiment, possibly a cavalry ala or a legionary cohort.

Unfortunately, the Strutt's Park site is buried beneath a housing estate before the fort could be thoroughly investigated.

Little Chester Fort (Grid Ref: SK 353376)

Archaeological excavations of the site revealed that the defences of the fort were rectangular in shape, enclosing an estimated area of seven acres, being surrounded by two deep ditches placed 100 ft apart. The playing field and carpark at the junction of City Road and old Chester Road is probably where the main headquarters building stood. It is also thought that several other buildings occupied the site, which may have included an infirmary, an armoury and other smaller units making the whole site of Little Chester self-sufficient.

To date there have been no inscriptions found to indicate which Roman Military units were stationed at Derventio. The only indication as to how many personnel were stationed on the site lies in the size of the fort. The fact that the site was seven acres in size, could suggest that it was one of the large auxiliary forts. The largest cavalry units (Ala Milliararia), meaning a thousand horsemen, were believed to be stationed in Britain, at Stanwix, on Hadrian's Wall. The unit which would seem most suitably placed at Little Chester would have been a Cohors Equitata Milliararia, which consisted of ten centuries of infantry, and in total five of these units were stationed in Britain.

Roman Bath House (SK 352373)

Located at the playing field adjacent to the old railway line, where remains discovered in 1924 during erection of a pavilion, possibly the bath building to the nearby Roman station of Derventio. This was excavated incompletely and filled in without proper record. The excavation of the hypocaust on Parker's Piece, Little Chester 1924-6 has been written up from the City Surveyor's notes by M Brassington. The remains are described as the foundation of a stone wall, 35ft long x 3ft thick, flanged hypocaust tiles and small pieces of wall plaster.

Vicus (Grid Ref: SK 36243752)

The term vicus has several connotations, which can be applied to districts within a town, to some private and imperial estates, commercial villages, trade centres,

mining villages, industrial and religious sites and small towns connected in some way to a fort.

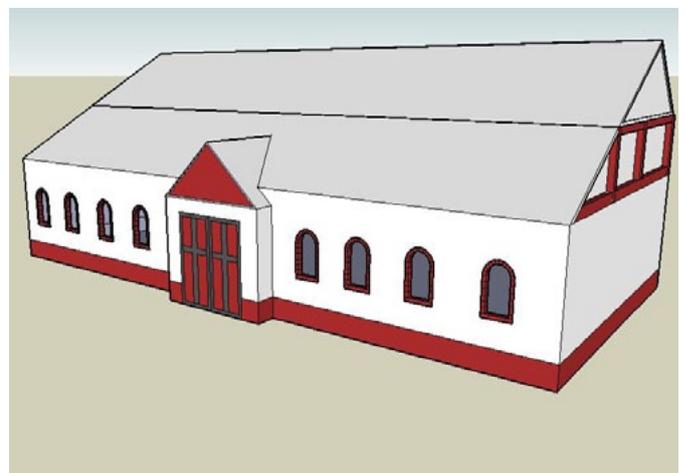
The vicus at Derby is an important example of a fort vicus, there are less than sixty identified examples nationally and are situated mostly in the frontier regions of the country. The conditions for most of these sites meant that they were not secure enough for fully fledged towns to develop. They acted as important sites where local people settled to provide goods and services to the fort. The site at Derby racecourse has been identified as one of two well-preserved Vicus.

The Vicus or settlement site associated with the Fort at Chester Green is situated on the Roman road from Little Chester to the Trent at Sawley. Between 1968 and 1974 excavations were carried out on part of the site, these revealed the site to be a Roman industrial settlement, which specialised in pottery and later metalworking, also located on the site was a cemetery.

The pottery finds indicate that industrial activity began with the site creation circa AD 90 and probably lasted until the mid-second century. At this point metal working took over as the main industrial activity on the site, which continued until the settlement's decline around the mid part of the 4th century AD.

The area of the cemetery that was excavated revealed a line of five mausolea, located near the road and an open cemetery to the north of the site which had both cremation and inhumation burials.

Three of these contained military dress fittings, suggesting they were either serving legionaries or those who had served. Slightly north of the main complex, a walled area of the cemetery contained a mixture of both cremation and inhumation burials. Also revealed during the excavation were traces of timber buildings dated to the Antonine period.





Roman Roads

Known and possible roads to and from Derventio
 Probable road: NW to AQVAE ARNEMETIAE (Buxton, Derbyshire) W (16) to Rocester (East Staffordshire)

Probable road: SE to VERNEMETVM (Willoughby-on-the-Wolds, Nottinghamshire)

Ryknild Street: N to LVTVDARVM (Crich, Derbyshire)
 The Roman road runs from Little Chester to Chesterfield, surviving as earthwork in places and sub-surface deposit. At Old Tupton the agger was noted to be 40 feet wide and 3 to 4 feet wide.

Ryknild Street: SW to LETOCETVM (Wall, Staffordshire)
 Littleover, Derby (SK 32493415)



A section of Ryknild street is located at Littleover, Derby, approximately 4KM south west of Derventio. Visible remains of the road are now believed to be a medieval headland and field boundary. The remains of the roman road are buried and set slightly offset to the east of the headland.

These include drainage features and construction pits which are flanked by shallow boundary ditches. These form party of the road from Wall, near Litchfield and the Fort at Little Chester, the road is believed to have been constructed in the mid first century AD, though it is assumed they would have been constantly repaired and resurfaced on a regular basis throughout the Roman period.

Bridge (SK 33 NE 53)

In 1968 the piers of the Roman bridge of Little Chester were located after a fall in the water level of the River Derwent.



THE LIGHT DIVISION IN THE PENINSULAR WAR 1808-1811

Author: Tim Saunders and Rob Yull

Publisher: Pen & Sword

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

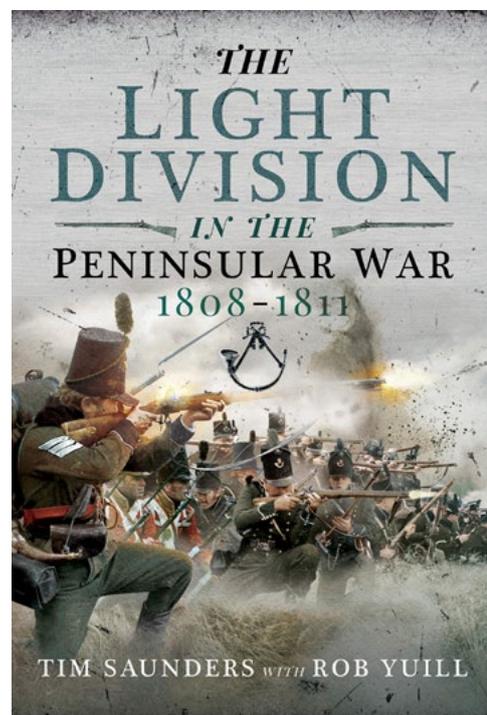
Histories of the Light Division have tended to be incomplete, being based on memoirs of a few well-known diarists, principally from the 95th Rifles. The authors of this book, the first volume of two, have sought memoirs from across the division, including the artillery, the King's German Hussars and others to complete a broader history of Wellington's elite division.

The authors have used extensive memoirs and diaries from across the division to provide a wider understanding of the campaign in Spain against the French. The book discusses the life of the soldier from the officer ranks down to the lowly private.

The authors cover all the major engagements such as Talavera, the retreat to Corunna along with the smaller skirmishes and day to day routine of those who served in the Light Division. There are plethora of maps and images illustrating the text throughout this book. There are several photographs of the locations as they are today, which will be a great help for those who are interested in visiting some of these battlefields and locations in Spain. One of the aspects I really enjoyed about this book are the insights into the lives of the ordinary soldiers and officers during their daily routines between clashes with the French. The book follows the division from its inception to the end of 1811. It's an easy read where you aren't bogged down in stuffy writing, the authors have produced a great read about this division of the British Army.

The Peninsula War is a favorite aspect of the Napoleonic period made popular through fictional characters such as Richard Sharpe, a soldier of the 95th Rifles who rises from the ordinary ranks to the officer class. This book is an historical account from real soldiers who like Sharpe fought in one of the many regiments of the Light Division.

What makes this a more interesting read is the fact that both of the authors have served in regiments that make



up the Rifles, a modern version of the Light Division. Modern riflemen looking back at how their historical counterparts operated in a theatre of war. I've really enjoyed reading this especially as I'm a big fan of the Sharpe books. I didn't find it a difficult read, it was quite easy going. I am definitely going to use this for future reference for gaming skirmishes in the Napoleonic period.

So, I would recommend this for anyone who play war games set in this period of history. It is also a great read for anyone with a passing interest in the Peninsula campaign. I've always found this period of military history to be extremely interesting, and for years I've always fancied gaming this period but didn't want to build an army for it. This year I had the idea of just gaming small skirmishes with Light Infantry, so this has been an invaluable resource for me getting to grips with this idea.

STEPHEN AND MATILDA'S CIVIL WAR (COUSINS OF ANARCHY)

Author: Matthew Lewis

Publisher: Pen & Sword

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

In 12th Century Britain two cousins waged war for the throne of England, only one could win. This book is the story of Stephen and Matilda, and the civil war they waged which is remembered as The Anarchy.

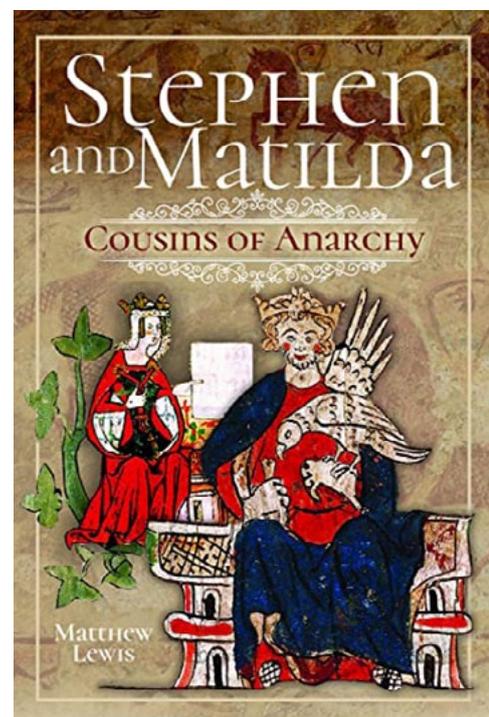
The civil war known as The Anarchy dominated English politics during the middle of the 12th Century, yet the question that needs to be asked is how accurate that term might be? In this new appraisal the author seeks to rectify the myths that surround this turbulent period in English history.

This civil war endured throughout the reign of King Stephen between 1135 to 1154 and culminated in bringing an end to the Norman dynasty, and gave birth to the Plantagenet Dynasty. When Henry I died having lost his only legitimate son in a shipwreck, he had caused all of his barons to swear to recognize his daughter Matilda, widow of the Holy Roman Emperor, as his heir and remarried her to Geoffrey, Count of Anjou. When she was slow to move to England on her father's death, Henry's favorite nephew Stephen of Blois rushed to have himself crowned, much as Henry himself had done on the death of his brother William Rufus.

Supported by his brother Henry, Bishop of Winchester, Stephen made a promising start, but Matilda would not give up her birthright and tried to hold the English barons to their oaths. The result was more than a decade of civil war that saw England split apart. Empress Matilda is often remembered as aloof and high-handed, Stephen as ineffective and indecisive.

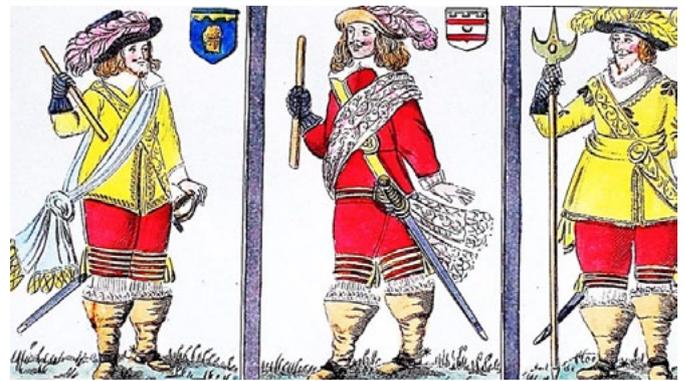
By following both sides of the dispute and seeking to understand their actions and motivations, Matthew Lewis aims to reach a more rounded understanding of this crucial period of English history and asks to what extent there really was anarchy.

This was not a period in Britain's history I was very familiar with. I don't recall covering this in school, and so



I wasn't very knowledgeable about the subject before reading this book. I did find this a very enjoyable read; it was very accessible and at the same time informative without being dry and boring. The author has researched each aspect of the conflict, such as the battles, conferences, truces and stalemates.

I did find the subject matter quite interesting, it made me realize how unstable the country was during this period. As a wargamer I've been looking for a suitable conflict from the medieval period to game, and after reading this book I think I've found the perfect candidate. This book proved to be a great introduction to the period, the question is which side do I build my army for, Matilda the rightful contender to the throne or the interloper Stephen who took advantage of her being on the continent and installing himself as King.



Developing a local based ECW campaign

Jason Hubbard

For many years I've been toying with the idea of starting an English Civil War campaign and project. This year whilst on furlough I started watching several documentaries on the subject and this prompted me to start this project.

The English Civil War is full of small campaigns fought at local level right across the country. I'm particularly interested in the background set in and around Derbyshire and Sheffield, though with some research most counties will throw up a local character who led forces either against or for the King.

Another option would be to follow the exploits of a local regiment – for instance, here in Sheffield a prime example would be Sir John Bright's Regiment of Foote. A local campaign would have more small engagements and simple skirmishes; also, a localized army/unit may switch sides, and would be lightly armed in regard to artillery.

Now I plan to follow the exploits of Sir John Bright in Sheffield, and in Derbyshire I'll be following Sir John Gell, both of whom are parliamentary.



There was also a movement of disgruntled country folk across the counties called clubmen. They banded together to protect their homes and land from both sides, as armies of both sides tended to forage off



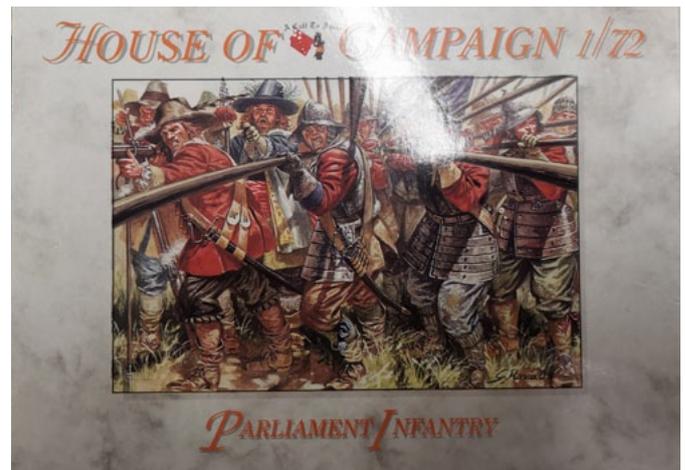
the land, taking whatever, they saw fit. The clubmen were often poorly armed yet could number in their thousands. This also could form the backbone of a local campaign, with one player controlling an army of clubmen.

I plan to use this aspect for possible small skirmishes in local villages and small towns, whereby Gell's forces are attacked/confronted by clubmen. There is no record I can find of this happening, but it is possible it did occur towards the end of the war, when people were becoming angry by the marauding soldiers.

This project is designed to act as a starting background source to a localized campaign. This type of campaign would be ideal for those just dipping their toes in to the world of English Civil War gaming, as well as being an excellent opportunity for a seasoned campaigner to research a local area for ECW war stories.



Now that I've decided which aspect of the ECW, I want the project to be based around I now have to decide scale and rules. I initially contemplated on 28 mm but once I started to investigate miniatures and costs, I decided it would be too expensive. So, I then considered 15 mm, it's a scale I like but I didn't find any miniatures in this scale I was happy with. So I went up to 20 mm or 1/72, now the problem with this scale was the lack of ECW miniature producers at this scale, but I did discover a company that made plastic 1/72 miniatures called A Call to Arms, they produce Parliamentary and Royalist infantry, artillery and command sets.



I've ordered a box of Parliamentary infantry to begin with, which contains 32 figures. I shouldn't need any more than that, once I've painted these, I'll then purchase artillery, cavalry and command boxes. Price wise each box is around £8, so an army should cost around £32 give or take a pound or two.

Rules is a big one as there's plenty to choose from out there. Osprey Publishing produce a popular set called *The Pikeman's Lament*, designed to cover all wars for this period of military history. Foundry Miniatures also produce a great set of rules called *1644*, yet I decided on two set of rules which doesn't include either of these.

The first set I went for was *Field of Glory Renaissance* rules, these I plan to use for large battles, and for more skirmish level games I plan to use *The Kingdom is Ours* by James Daniels published by Helion & Company. The FoG rules are no longer published by Osprey, so you'll have to look around for a copy on sites like Ebay.

Timeline of Sir John Gell's Campaign in Derbyshire

Sir John Gell of Hopton, Derbyshire controlled Parliamentary forces in Derbyshire. He also assisted in many skirmishes in Staffordshire and other Midland counties during the English Civil War. He was made a baronet in January 1642, and Gell headed the County

Committee that controlled Parliamentary forces in Derbyshire. He was known to be a ruthless commander and used his position during the war to exact his revenge against those he had grudges and feuds with prior to the war starting.

1642

John Gell received a commission from the Earl of Essex on the 27th August, to raise a regiment of foot. Gell and his brother went to Hull where they were given a company of grey-coated London volunteers, which would form the nucleus of a Derby regiment.

Gell and his company left Hull on the 17th October; he managed to raise a further 200 at Chesterfield. When he reached Wirksworth he managed to scatter a Royalist forage party under the command of Sir Francis Whortley.

31 October 1642 – Derby

After the indecisive battle at Edgehill on the 23rd October, Gell swiftly descended on Derby. He entered unopposed and set about creating a garrison, where he recruited further men locally. He was also reinforced with a troop of horse under the command of George Gressley from Drakelow and on the 5th of November Charles White arrived with a troop of Dragoons from Nottinghamshire.

10th November 1642

Sir Francis Whortley appeared in Dale, Gell sent a company of muskets. Whortley promptly fled the field and left the county. At the same time as this incident the following commissions were given out.

Thomas Gell – Lt Colonel

Johannes Molanus – (Dutchman) Major

Cornelius Vermuyden – Captain (later became Sir)

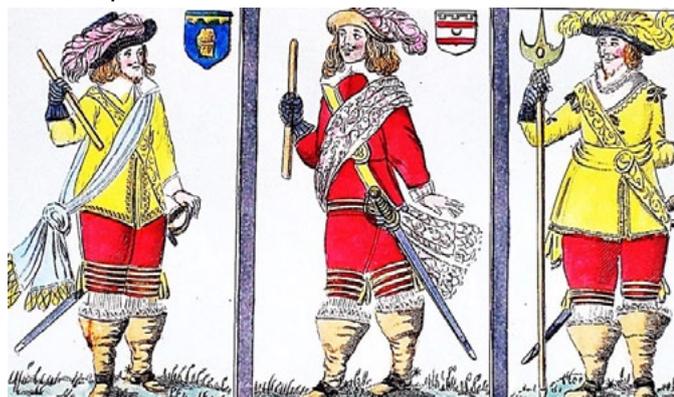
John Mundy – Captain

Thomas Sanders – Captain

George Gressley – Captain of the horse troop.

Charles White – Captain of the Dragoons

Major Molanus returned from Coventry with 2 sakers and a supply of ammunition on the November 30th, 1642, (a possible ambush scenario).



Siege of Bretby House – December 1642

Bretby House was the seat of Philip Stanhope, 1st Earl of Chesterfield. The house had been garrisoned in the name of the King with 40 Musketeers, 80 Horse and 7 drakes.

Major Molanus was forced to storm the house with 400 foot after the sakers proved incapable of making a breach; Stanhope fled the field to Litchfield. Molanus captured the 7 drakes and the house was savagely sacked and plundered by the troops. The reason for this sacking and plunder was that Gell and Stanhope had a bitter feud before the war.

Shortly after the siege Captain White left the Derby forces to help raise a regiment and garrison the castle at Nottingham with Colonel Pierrepont. Daniel Watson took his place as Captain of the Dragoons.

Swarkestone Skirmish – 5th January 1642

The Swarkestone Bridge over the river Trent provided a valuable line of defence and communication, thus Royalist Commander Henry Hastings garrisoned the house of Sir John Harpur at Swarkestone with a regiment of Royalists (numbering around 700), as well as fortifying the bridge.



Gell speedily organised an attack with the whole regiment and the horse (approximately 700-850), plus 2 sakers on the house and the bridge. Gell's forces suffered one wounded soldier, whilst killing 8 royalists and wounding several. The barricades on the bridge were dismantled and part of the bridge was demolished. This impeded Gell's movements into Leicestershire and Staffordshire, but it also hindered the movements of the Royalist approach into Derby and Derbyshire.

In March 1643, he successfully took over command at the siege of Lichfield after the death of Lord Brooke, and then collaborated with Sir William Brereton to defeat the Earl of Northampton at the battle of Hopton Heath. At the battle of Hopton Heath the Earl of Northampton was killed. When the Earl's son refused to return the artillery captured at Hopton Heath or the money Gell had paid to embalm the body, the corpse was paraded through the streets of Derby before its burial at All Hallows Church. Gell was appointed governor of Derby in 1643

He was involved in the siege and subsequent capture of Lichfield in 1643. He owned lead mines in the High Peak area and served as High Sheriff of Derbyshire in 1635. It is believed under his orders; a troop of Sir John's men went to arrest Christopher Fulwood at Middleton (Fulwood) Castle. In the process Christopher tried to escape but was shot and fatally wounded.

Whigfield Manor Siege – July 1644

In July 1644, Sir John Gell and his forces were besieging Wingfield Manor, which is close to the village of Wingfield and perched high on a hilltop. It is still surrounded by open fields and for the enthusiast, it is still possible to stand in the position of John Gell's guns and see the Manor they fired on.



On the 21st July 1644, the Royalist Commander, one Colonel Roger Molyneux of Hasland Hall reported the guns of Gell were ineffective. On the 14th August, from the gates of Wingfield Park they blasted a way through the wall. The forces were allowed to leave the fortress.

The longest and most telling siege of the English Civil War had ended

His troops were notorious for plundering and Gell himself was suspected of planning to join the King just before Naseby. Gell's loyalty came under suspicion when he failed to obey an order to bring his troops from the Midlands to join Fairfax on the Naseby



campaign in 1645. At the siege of Tutbury Castle in 1646, he offered the Royalist defenders his own favorable terms for surrender in opposition to those offered by his fellow commander Brereton.

In 1648, Gell attempted to secure a pardon from Charles I during his imprisonment at Carisbrooke Castle by offering to lend him £900 in gold. In 1650 he was found guilty of plotting against the Commonwealth and imprisoned. He was released in 1652 and took no further part in public life. At the Restoration, Charles II pardoned him for his role in the civil war and granted him a position at court, where he remained until his death in October 1671.

Sheffield During the English Civil War

Tensions between the king and Parliament broke out over the king's methods of governance, which led to Charles moving his royal court to York in 1642. Civil war eventually broke out in the August of 42 when the king raised his standard at Nottingham.



Parliament issued a list of proposals, which became known as the Nineteen Propositions, which were aimed at raising Parliaments power. There were rejected by the King, and as a result civil war broke out, this was to last until 1651, ending in victory for Parliament forces. The king was executed, and the monarchy was replaced with a commonwealth, and then a protectorate under the command of Oliver Cromwell.

At the start of the English Civil War in 1642, Sheffield castle was seized by the Parliamentary commander Sir John Gell; all spare arms had been collected by Royalist forces, so the castle had weakened defences.

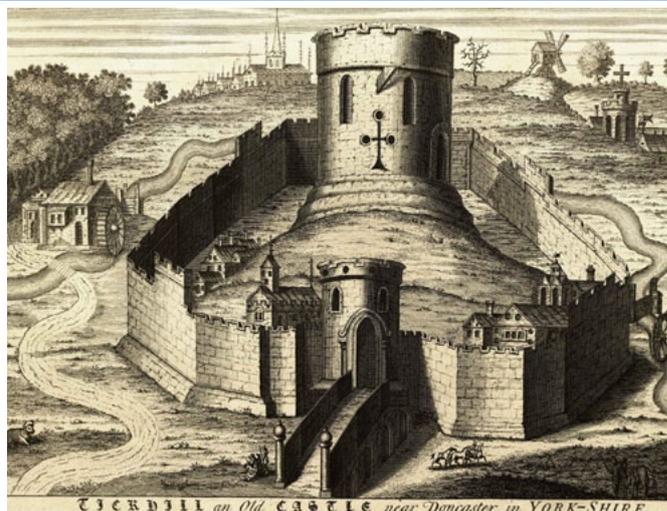
In 1643, the castle changed hands after Royalist forces entered Yorkshire, led by the Earl of Newcastle.



The Parliamentary defenders fled into Derbyshire allowing the Royalists to take the castle without a fight. Although a national conflict, the English Civil War left a significant mark in Sheffield. The town fluctuated between Parliamentary and Royalist control, culminating in a 10-day siege of Sheffield Castle by Parliamentary forces in August 1644

In August 1644, a force of 1200 soldiers, led by Major-General Crawford and Colonel Pickering, besieged the castle. At first their artillery was insufficient to breach the castle wall, but additional cannon was brought to Sheffield. On 11 August 1644, Sheffield Castle surrendered under this increased firepower.

Three years later, a resolution was passed for the castle to be slighted and demolished. This was carried out in 1648. The stones and other items were sold for building material to the people of Sheffield.



Tickhill Castle

Tickhill Castle is near Doncaster, it functioned as a key administrative centre on the Nottingham/Yorkshire border for hundreds of years and witnessed multiple sieges including action during Prince John's failed attempts to displace his brother, King Richard. By the time the civil war came around it had lost a lot of its importance, and after the War of the Roses had allowed to fall into a state of neglect. The castle was given a new lease of life due to the Hansby family, who by the early part of the 17th century had risen in prominence, and in 1614 started rebuilding some of the castle's structures, and constructed a house over the site of the former hall.



Being Catholics, the Hansby family declared for the king at the start of the civil war. Sir Ralph Hansby re-fortified some of the castles defences and formed a garrison which secured control of the area for the Royalists. When Sir Ralph died in December of 1643, Major Monckton took over the garrison.



With the defeat at Marston Moor, the Royalist forces lost control of the north.

Parliamentary forces under the command of Edward Montagu, Earl of Manchester sent Colonel John Lilburn with a troop of 200 Dragoons, to take the castle. Due to the strategic situation that had developed in the aftermath of Marston Moor, the Royalist garrison surrendered Lilburn and his Dragoons on July 28th, 1644.

On the orders of Parliament in 1647, the castle's defences were damaged to prevent the castle from being used a strategic location. Parts of the curtain wall were pulled down, and the eleven-sided keep was destroyed. The house remained in house as this didn't have a defensive capability.

So, this is the campaign I have planned currently, it may change as I discovered more information regarding Sheffield and South Yorkshire. I'm aware that John Brighte's regiment of foote took part in the battle of Marston Moor. Since starting the project I've learnt that the John Brighte regiment mainly fought outside of South Yorkshire, in some of the major campaigns of the war. So, at this stage I'll won't be following them to closely, though I will paint up a small unit. As they did take part in the siege of Sheffield Castle, most of their campaigning in Yorkshire was in Leeds, Bradford, York and Pontefract.





UNBOXING 1/72 PARLIAMENT INFANTRY

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

The miniatures in question are 1/72 scale English Civil War Parliament infantry from A Call to Arms (www.acalltoarms.co.uk).

The Civil Wars of the mid seventeenth century were probably the most dramatic encounters in early modern British history. They were a great and bloody affair that left the nation stunned and horrified.

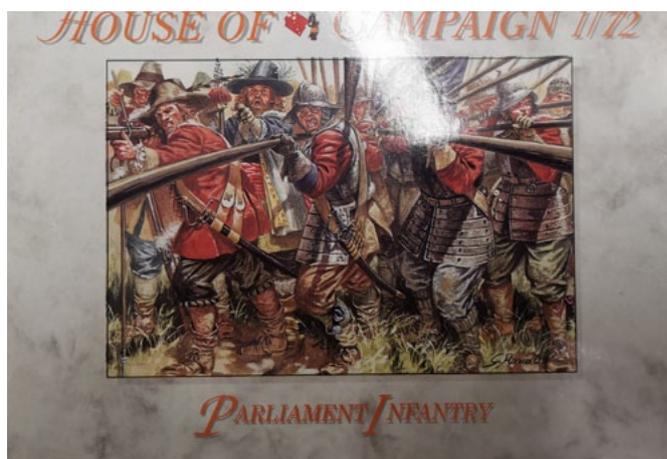
The front of the box has a nice piece of art work featuring the front rank of a pike block, which really put you in the thick of the action. On the rear of the box is an illustration of a musketeer and a introduction to the Civil War period.

Inside are 32 miniatures on sprues, there are four sprues in total with eight figures and four pikes on each of them. The figures are the same on each sprue, 4 pikeman and 4 muskets giving you a total of 16 of each type in four different poses.



The box says Parliament infantry but I suspect you could mix and match this set with the Royalist infantry set, due to there not really being much difference between the two forces of this period.

There is a little flash on some of the figures but overall they're very clean and won't need much work before



painting them. These are exceptionally good sculpts with a lot of fine detail for this scale. They're in a hard plastic though the weapons are a little thin which is to be expected at this scale and material.

I would have preferred some of the musketeers to be firing their weapons but we can't have everything. The pike-men are nicely posed, I especially like the chap drinking from his water bottle. The pikes provided are rather bendy and I will look at replacing these with metal versions.

Overall I'm impressed with the quality of the figures at this scale and material. 1/72 can be a bit of a hit and miss affair when it comes to plastic miniatures, but Call to Arms have done an exceptional job with these. I look forward to getting some paint on them.



TIGER BATTALION 507

Edited by Helmut Schneider

Publisher: Greenhill Books

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

This book is a unique recollections of tank battles from the original crewmen who fought during World War 2. Alongside them are accounts from the workshop companies as well as the repair and supply sections. This provides a fascinating insight into a Tiger battalion during war.

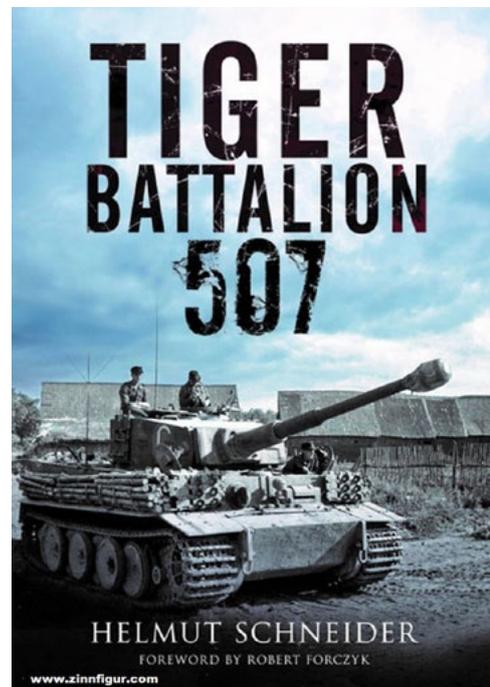
The author describes the initial training of the battalion from 1943 through its reorganization when they were equipped with the Tiger II in the remaining few weeks of the war. The book covers the unit fighting on both the Eastern and Western fronts.

The author is a former member of the unit, started gathering records and accounts from surviving personnel in the 1980's. The result is an outstanding source of firsthand material that includes personnel memories, diaries, letters through to medal certificates, newspaper clippings, Wehrmacht bulletins and other documents. This all accompanied with over 200 photographs, most of which were privately owned and taken by the serving soldiers during active service.

Schneider volunteered for the Panzer Arm in March 1941. He was one of the first five men sent to the Eastern Front. He took part in the Caucasus campaigns in and joined the Heavy Panzer Battalion 507 in 1943. He next moved on to the panzer grenadiers where he was given a Wanderer bicycle, a Panzerfaust and an assault rifle and was sent to fight the US Army on the Western Front. His decorations included the Panzer Assault Badge and the Iron Cross Second Class.

The book takes us from the formation of the unit in 1943 and the Tiger I and the active service throughout the war through to the final days of the conflict when they were equipped with the Tiger II.

If you have an interest in tank armour then this is a fascinating read that you will not be able to put down. It is a beautifully written easy read providing a vast amount



of insightful information on an operational Tiger unit of World War Two. It is also a great resource for model makers and wargamers due to the 200 rare images used to illustrate the book throughout. I can highly recommend this book for anyone with an avid interest in tank warfare during World War Two, it's a fascinating insight, that's at times brutal and very honest but at the same time a great compelling read.

THE HISTORY OF TOY SOLDIERS

Author: Luigi Toiati

Publisher: Pen & Sword

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

This book is an interesting historical survey of toy soldiers, from ancient history right through to modern day. It covers all soldiers from their days in tin to the plastics of the post war era.

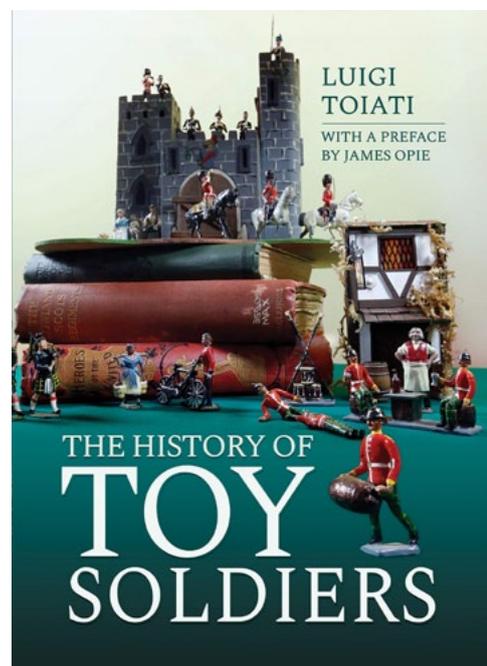
The author looks at how the humble toy soldier has been used as a toy by children through to its development and use in war gaming, firstly as a method to teach tactics to professional soldiers, secondly as a past time to replay battles from history by war game enthusiasts.

This is a fascinating record for anyone who collects toy soldiers regardless of whether you're a war gamer an avid collector of military toys. This is not a simple encyclopaedia of the genre, but a truly fascinating look at the evolution of the toy soldier. It offers an insight into why different types of toy soldiers were created in a particular period and country, also the size in which they were designed, and the material utilised. It's a plethora of great informative detail and nostalgia.

This isn't one of those books that you can't stop reading once you pick it up. It's a book that you pick up and read periodically. At 600 pages it's a hefty tome on the subject, it's a great read chock full of informative detail on the subject, which is illustrated throughout with excellent images of the toy soldiers in question.

I would say it's worth picking up a copy to read for anyone who has a passing interest in the subject matter, and a definitive must have if you're a collector. You're not going to blast through this book very quickly, in fact I didn't start reading from the first chapter but dived into the chapters that interested me the most.

I particularly enjoyed the chapter on modern plastics kits by Airfix, as I grew up with those. I remember as a kid a hardware store around the corner from where we lived that sold Airfix soldiers in a bucket, 1/32 scale were 1 for 2 pence and the 1/72 were two for a penny.



My brother always bought the 1/72 scale whilst I would buy the larger ones.

This would make a great present for anyone who is a collector or is just interested in model/toy soldiers. The author has done an excellent job of delving into this fascinating subject and its history.

1 IN 10 GAMERS SAY THEY WOULD RATHER THEIR HOUSE WAS DESTROYED, THAN THEIR 'GAME SAVE' DATA

Mobile gaming publisher Kwalee has revealed exactly how important our virtual lives have become in 2020, finding that 1 in 10 gamers admit they would rather see their whole house destroyed, before losing their 'save game data'.

The 'save game data' refers to the data file that allows players to pick up where they left off on any game they're playing. Meaning that a FIFA fan can pick up their career managing their favourite team after switching the console off, continue playing as a character they have spent countless hours to create or keep progressing through that mobile game they play on their lunch break.

This data is so important to players that it isn't just the brick and mortar of a home that gamers would rather be destroyed to save their playthrough, as 1 in 10 also admitted that they would rather their car was crushed, or even that their wedding ring was destroyed (ouch).

With many now referring to losing their phone as feeling like they've lost a limb, you would think the one item gamers would want to keep a hold of would be their phone, but almost 1 in 5 (17%) would choose to lose their phone, before their game's progress.



With game save data harking back to the days of physical 'memory cards', Kwalee spoke to various gamers that had suffered the loss of their game progress and can attest to the horrors of losing it.

One of these gamers is Dinara, 29, who explains: "Back in 2015, I had long been awaiting the release of Assassin's Creed: Syndicate and made sure I was amongst the first to get my hands on it and play. I was glued to the game, sinking hours into completing everything and was around 95% through the game, when my boyfriend tried to free up space on our external hard drive to install the new Call of Duty.

Long story short, he accidentally selected 'delete all' and wiped everything, including my game, from the hard drive. I was speechless. I didn't even have the power to be angry and couldn't speak to him for days. It's been almost five years and I still can't bring myself



to pick up the game again and haven't completed an Assassin's Creed game since!"

Kwalee's study also revealed other areas that help to describe how important gaming is to us all, with further findings including that more gamers remember how to defeat an end of level boss in a video game, than remember what their actual boss set as their targets/KPIs at work (17% vs. 5%).

CEO of Kwalee, David Darling CBE commented: "I've been making and playing games for over 30 years and have always been driven by how immersed players can become in what you've created.

We wanted to find out how far this love of gaming will go, and the fact people would trade their homes or wedding rings to retain their saves shows just how important gaming is to modern life.

Of course, we wouldn't advise anyone to actually place their home above their game data or admit to their partner that they'd happily get rid of their wedding ring to save it!

We are however happy that being a company that makes quick, fun mobile games, our players would have to worry a little less about this jeopardy... although that's not to say some players aren't as attached to their achievements on Jetpack Jump, Line Up or Rocket Sky!"





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