



irregular

Summer Issue 2025

magazine

BATTLETECH

THE KRYPTeia

BILLY THE KID

THE FRAGILE WEB

VIETNAM DEMONS

Plus Interviews, Reviews, and much, much more



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Summer Issue 2025

Editorial

Jason Hubbard

Welcome back to another issue of Irregular Magazine. We're over half way through the year, and there's plenty to cheer about. Mantic have released Epic Warpath, Warlord launched a new Epic era; American War of Independence and recently Games Workshop announced a new edition of Blood Bowl.

Unfortunately we've seen some of the smaller miniature manufacturers retire, though many of the ranges have been picked up by other companies. Then we've seen the Trump Tariffs affect gaming companies around the globe.

we've on the downward run towards Christmas and then 2026, so many of us will be looking for various gaming related gifts to give out over the festive era. We'll also be thinking about new projects for the new year which woill possibly mean grabbing a starter set or two.

We're closer to getting a Warhammer 40K TV series, but we're always on the look out for shows that could inspire some gaming. A recent one for anyone looking for modern gaming ideas is Terminal List; Dark Wolf.

Well that's all folks.....

We'll see you around Xmas with another jam packed issue

Green Rides Here to Stay at The Tank Museum



Successful testing of renewable diesel in the Cold War M548 troop carriers at The Tank Museum, means a greener future for their historic running fleet.

Following a trial use of biofuel over the May half term and summer holidays, The Tank Museum has announced that its popular M548 troop carrier rides will continue to run on a more environmentally friendly diesel alternative made from vegetable oil.

This renewable diesel is chemically similar to conventional diesel, meaning it can be used without modification to the engine or fuel system, but as it is derived from biomass sources such as used cooking oils, fats and greases, it has a significantly lower carbon intensity.

The M548 troop carrier rides - which run throughout the day during school holidays - clock up the highest mileage of any of the Museum's historic vehicles, using about 20 litres of fuel a day.



The switch to renewable diesel will reduce the carbon emissions of this fuel by 65 - 90%.

Workshop Manager, Duncan Masters, said:

"It is important to us to do everything we can to be sustainable and reduce our impact on the environment, and it's brilliant to see ideas like this put into action by the team.

"As well as the renewable diesel, we have been trialling the use of a sustainable petrol. So far this has been limited to the Hotchkiss Jeep, but we will be evaluating other vehicles over the winter period to investigate which may be able use this fuel next year.

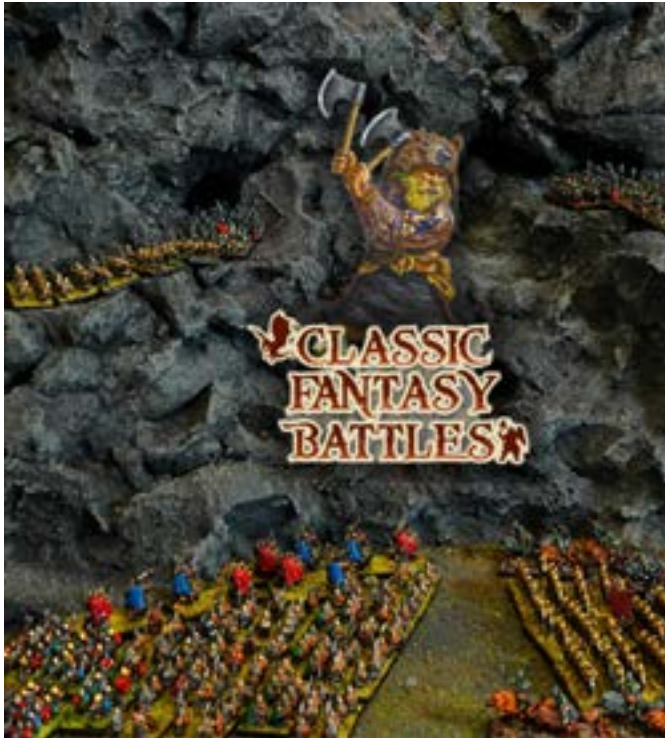
"We'd like to thank our sponsor Murco, who provide the fuel for our historic running vehicles and have made this project possible."

There's still time to visit this summer! The tracked vehicle rides will be available at The Tank Museum until Tuesday 2 September 2025 and then will be back in Spring 2026.

Visit The Tank Museum's website to find out more, and pre-book your entry tickets online to save 15%. <https://tankmuseum.org/events/summer-holiday>



Dwarven Host 10mm - Wargames Atlantic



The Dwarves are a people of the stone. For thousands of years they have made their homes in mountain fastnesses and deep caverns - but these are no mean, rough-hewn spaces. For more than anything the dwarves are people who make. More than anyone in the World they are masters of mechanisms and art and craftsmanship beyond any of the other races whether in stone or wood or cloth or metal.

But their vast wealth has a dark facet: there are many who covet what the Dwarves own and are willing to fight to take it. Their greatest enemies are the goblin tribes who also make their homes in the dark places of the earth. Armies of orcs, ogres, or a necromancer's undead host sometimes try their luck against Dwarven cities in the hopes of great wealth.



When true war comes - when a War-King or the emissary of the High Queen calls - a Dwarvenhold's muster is a sight to behold as hundreds and sometimes thousands of warriors march from their stone hall to bring their well-trained battle to the enemy.



This hard plastic box set includes three frames with 82 10mm figures for a total of 246 figures in the box along with 40mm x 20mm dual use bases. From this box you can build the following:

- 72 spear-dwarves (6 bases)
- 36 sword-dwarves (3 bases)
- 36 axe-dwarves (3 bases)
- 36 battleaxe-dwarves (3 bases)
- 36 crossbow-dwarves (3 bases)
- 12 ram riders (6 bases)
- and 15 command and 3 casualties



Second World War Tanks in Action!



Tiger Day at The Tank Museum on 20 September 2025 to see the world's only running Tiger I tank amongst a line-up of WWII veteran vehicles taking part in impressive arena displays.

The Tank Museum's Tiger Day is dedicated to the infamous Tiger 131 tank - a truly unique vehicle. It was the first Tiger I to be captured by the Western Allies in WWII and is the only surviving example that you can see in action.

To conserve this historic tank for generations to come, it can only be seen in action twice a year at Tiger Day in April and September. This sell-out event, which attracts 4,500 people from around the world, features a mock-battle of the Tiger's capture, as well as other historic vehicle displays, living history, talks, and much more.



The show will include the Sherman 'Fury', star of the Brad Pitt film, plus plenty of other allied tanks of WWII, including Comet, Matilda II, Churchill Mk III, and an M3 Grant recently acquired by the Bannister Historic Armour Collection.

Rich Dando, Social Media and Content Executive at The Tank Museum, said:

"This exciting opportunity to see the world's only running Tiger I in the arena - alongside a host of other rare vehicles in action-packed shows - draws visitors from around the world to the heart of Dorset.

"There's nothing like the roar of the engines, explosive pyrotechnics, and expert commentary - whether you're a seasoned tank fan or a first-time visitor, there's plenty for all to enjoy!"

As well as seeing tanks in action on Tiger Day, visitors will be able to explore the interactive exhibitions of The Tank Museum, which bring the story of tanks and tank crews to life.

<https://tankmuseum.org/events/tiger-day-autumn>

Fuse Countdown



All of the fast paced gameplay from FUSE is back, with a stand alone expansion! Can be used by itself, or combined with the original game. Still only takes 10 minutes to play! Cooperative, realtime, intense gameplay with new dice & bomb cards, a new card type (Spark cards!) and unique player role cards!

New Features:

Multi-colored Dice-can fulfill either color

Spark Cards - When you can't place a die, instead of rolling it and removing a related die, you draw a Spark card.

It's like a mini-bomb card for you to fulfill. You cannot win the game unless all active Spark cards are resolved.

Roles - Each player will have a special player power.

New Cards! New bomb cards using some of the new features/icons. New Fuse cards featuring multiple colors/numbers (easier to trigger, but you only have to get rid of one die per card), or a text-based ability (example: all players roll a die as fast as they can until each player has rolled a 6).

Contents Summary:

25 Dice
52 Bomb cards
10 Fuse cards
7 Role cards
20 Spark cards
1 Drawstring Bag
At a Glance

Number of Players: 1-4

For Ages: 14+

Playing Time: 10 min

Game Type: Family Strategy, Cooperative



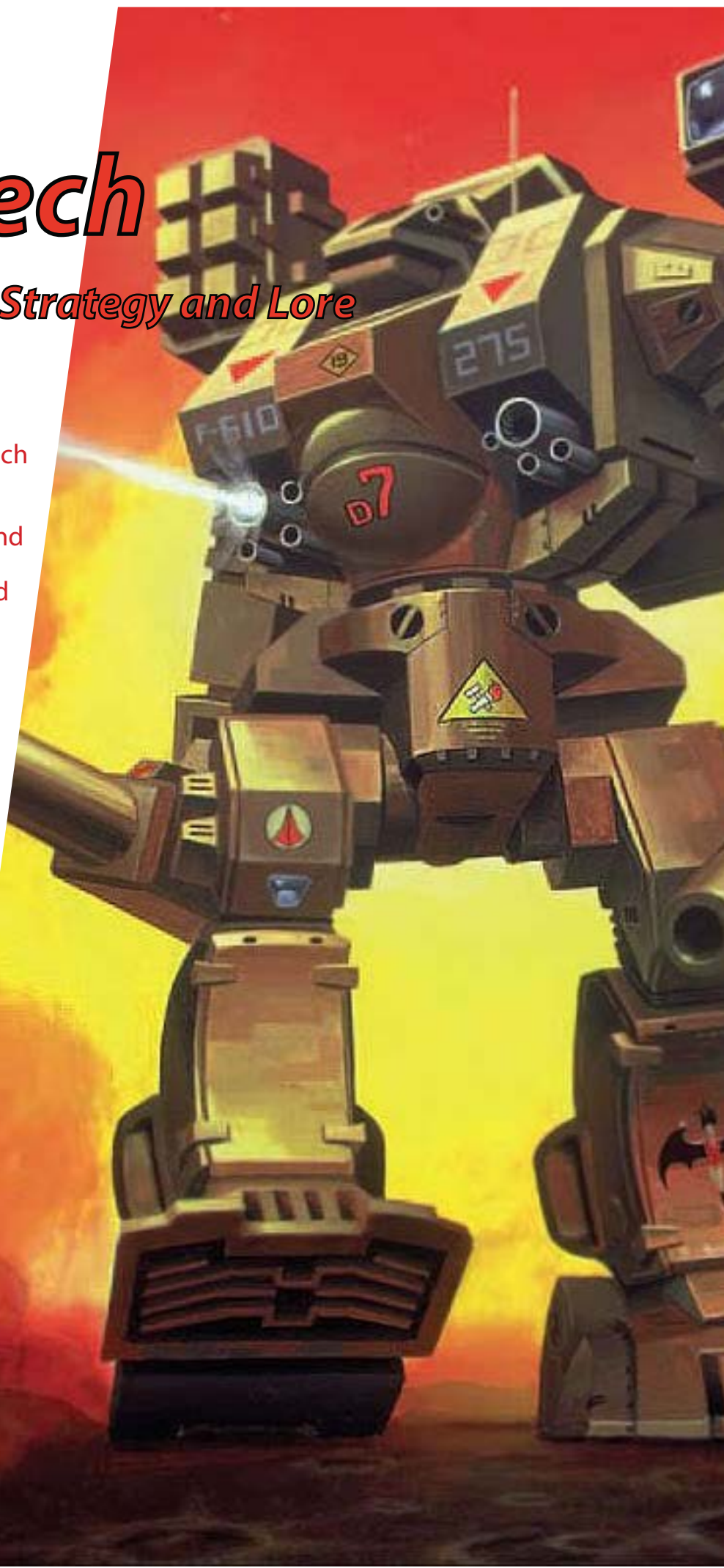
Battletech

A Titanic Clash of Strategy and Lore

Since its debut in 1984, Battletech has captivated tabletop enthusiasts with its blend of tactical combat, deep customization, and a richly woven sci-fi universe. Created by Jordan Weisman and L. Ross Babcock III under FASA Corporation, and now stewarded by Catalyst Game Labs, this iconic game invites players to command towering war machines called BattleMechs in a futuristic landscape of feuding factions and interstellar politics.

Gameplay: Strategy Meets Simulation

At its core, Battletech is a tactical wargame played on hex-based maps where players pilot 30-foot-tall Mechs armed with lasers, missiles, and autocannons. The game emphasizes realism and strategy: every attack requires careful consideration of range, terrain, and heat buildup. Mech reactors generate intense heat when firing weapons; push too hard, and your Mech might shut down—or worse, explode. Resource management extends to customizing your Mech's loadout, balancing firepower, armour, and mobility to suit your tactics.



A Universe at War

The Battletech lore spans centuries, centred on the Inner Sphere—a fractured coalition of Great Houses (like Steiner and Davion) vying for dominance through brutal Succession Wars. In 3050, the narrative escalates with the Clan Invasion, as genetically enhanced warriors from beyond known space assault the Inner Sphere with advanced technology. This backdrop fuels endless narratives, expanded through over 100 novels and sourcebooks, offering players a stage for both epic conflicts and personal sagas.



Versatility in Play

Two main systems cater to different playstyles: Classic Battletech offers granular, simulation-style battles, tracking damage to individual Mech components, while Alpha Strike streamlines rules for faster, large-scale engagements. Both systems encourage creativity, letting players design custom Mechs or field classic designs like the iconic Atlas or Timber Wolf.



More Than a Game

Battletech thrives as a hobby. Enthusiasts paint and customize highly detailed plastic or metal miniatures, bringing their Mechs to life. The community pulses with tournaments, narrative campaigns, and events like the annual Battletech International Tournament*.

Legacy and Resurgence

Beyond the tabletop, Battletech inspired video games (MechWarrior) and animated series, cementing its cultural footprint. Recent years saw a renaissance with Catalyst's revamped miniatures and starter sets, inviting new generations to experience the thrill of Mech warfare.



Whether you're drawn by strategic depth, rich storytelling, or the allure of giant robot combat, Battletech offers a universe where every decision echoes across the stars—a testament to its enduring legacy. Strap into your cockpit, pilot. The battlefield awaits.



Second Sirte 1942: The Desperate Battle to Relieve Malta

Author: Angus Konstam

Publisher: Osprey Publishing

Review by Jason Hubbard

The Second Battle of Sirte was a key naval clash in the Mediterranean, and a vital moment in the struggle for Malta's survival.

Malta was the key to the hard-fought naval campaign being waged in the Mediterranean, a link in the vital Axis supply lines between Italy and North Africa. Struggling under a sustained Axis bombing campaign, Malta depended on convoys of supplies to survive. Axis air formations dominated the skies, making any attempt to relieve the island extremely hazardous.

In December 1941, a convoy from the east led to an inconclusive clash with the Italians at the First Battle of Sirte. In late March 1942, the situation escalated. The decisive clash came on the afternoon of 22 March, when British destroyers launched a series of torpedo attacks against Italian ships.

At dawn, Axis aircraft appeared, and a series of intense air attacks followed. Although three of the convoy's four ships reached Malta, they were sunk days later. Still, it was enough to buy Malta the time it needed to remain in the fight.

A squadron of light cruisers and destroyers from the Royal Navy engaged an Italian fleet consisting of a modern battleship, heavy cruisers, and additional ships, in order to prevent them from intercepting a convoy bound for Malta.

The Second Battle of Sirte was a crucial naval encounter in the Mediterranean, pivotal to Malta's survival as it was central to the Axis supply route between Italy and North Africa.

Second Sirte 1942: The Desperate Battle to Relieve Malta, by Angus Konstam, offers a focused look at the crucial Mediterranean naval battle of World War II and highlights Malta's strategic importance in North Africa. Part of Osprey Publishing's series, the book includes period photos, maps, and illustrations to enhance understanding.



Reviews note its effective coverage of this less-known battle and its emphasis on radar, intelligence, airpower, and the efforts of British and Commonwealth forces.

The book examines the Second Battle of Sirte in the context of Malta's strategic significance, highlighting key aspects of technology and strategy during the Mediterranean campaign. It features visual aids like maps and photographs to clarify events, and underscores the role of radar, intelligence, airpower, and the resilience of British and Commonwealth forces against a stronger opponent.

This book is highly regarded by WWII enthusiasts for its thorough visuals, detailed narrative, and well-researched insights into naval history and maritime archaeology.



The Unquiet Grave

Investigating the Enduring Mystery of Billy the Kid's

Jason Hubbard

The official history books record that on the night of July 14, 1881, Sheriff Pat Garrett cornered America's most wanted outlaw in a darkened bedroom at Pete Maxwell's ranch near Fort Sumner, New Mexico. A single shot from Garrett's Colt revolver struck the 21-year-old fugitive squarely in the heart, instantly ending the brief, violent life of the outlaw known as Billy the Kid. Yet whispers began almost immediately that the legendary gunslinger might have engineered the ultimate escape. Over a century later, compelling inconsistencies and persistent sightings continue to fuel one of the American West's most tantalizing mysteries: Did William H. Bonney actually fake his death?

The Official Narrative: A Sheriff's Bullet and a Hasty Burial

According to Garrett's account—later published in his 1882 ghostwritten biography "The Authentic Life of Billy, the Kid"—the confrontation unfolded with cinematic simplicity. Garrett and two deputies approached Pete Maxwell's home around midnight seeking information. Billy, reportedly staying on the property, unexpectedly entered Maxwell's darkened bedroom where Garrett waited. Recognizing the silhouette of his pursuer, Garrett fired a single fatal shot at point-blank range.



The body was displayed publicly the next day in Fort Sumner before being buried in the local cemetery alongside his two slain gang members, Tom O'Folliard and Charlie Bowdre. The coroner's inquest was notably brief, relying almost entirely on Garrett's testimony, and no autopsy was performed on the body displayed in a hastily procured carpenter's coffin.



Seeds of Doubt: Inconsistencies and Curious Omissions

Almost immediately, troubling questions emerged: **Shifting Stories:** Garrett provided conflicting accounts of the shooting. Initially claiming Billy was armed, he later changed his story to say the outlaw entered unarmed, raising questions about the justification for deadly force

Lack of Reliable Witnesses: Only Pete Maxwell allegedly witnessed the shooting firsthand, yet his testimony was inconsistent, and he was notably absent from the initial coroner's report .



Suspiciously Convenient Timing: Billy's death solved a major political problem for New Mexico's establishment. Territorial Governor Lew Wallace had previously reneged on a promised pardon for Billy's testimony against corrupt businessmen, leaving the outlaw a living embarrassment. His elimination served powerful interests.

The Missing Artifact: The single most crucial piece of evidence—Garrett's .44-40 Colt Single Action Army revolver used in the killing—vanished for decades

after the shooting. When it resurfaced, its provenance was questioned before it sold for a record \$6 million in 2021. Ballistic verification remains impossible.

The Living Ghost: Sightings and Alternative Identities Within months of the Fort Sumner burial, credible reports placed "Billy the Kid" alive across the Southwest:

Texas Rancher "Brushy Bill" Roberts In 1948, an aging, weather-beaten man named Ollie "Brushy Bill" Roberts approached an attorney in Hico, Texas, claiming to be Billy. He displayed intimate knowledge of Lincoln County War events, demonstrated remarkable pistol-handling skills despite his age, and bore scars matching Billy's documented wounds. Most intriguingly, he petitioned for the pardon Governor Wallace had promised but never delivered a deeply personal detail unlikely known to an impostor.



The Mexican Bandit: Persistent rumors in southern New Mexico held that Billy fled south of the border. Stories emerged of an American outlaw matching his description (blue eyes, slight build, missing upper front teeth) operating in Chihuahua and Sonora during the 1880s, exhibiting uncanny speed with a pistol.

The Tennessee Frontiersman: Less documented but equally persistent were tales of a man calling himself "Ben," living quietly in rural Tennessee in the early 20th century, who confessed on his deathbed to being Billy,

having paid Garrett to stage the shooting.

Motive and Means: Could Billy Have Engineered the Escape?

The theory hinges on two critical factors:
Overwhelming Motive: By July 1881, Billy was cornered. He faced imminent execution for killing deputies James Bell and Robert Ollinger during his brazen escape from the Lincoln County Courthouse weeks earlier. Faking death was his only escape.



Garrett's Potential Complicity: Some historians suggest Garrett, a former acquaintance of Billy (some accounts even imply friendship), may have been bribed or morally conflicted. The chaotic political climate and rampant corruption ("The Santa Fe Ring") made such arrangements plausible. A staged killing offered Garrett fame and career advancement without blood on his hands.

Contradictory Evidence in Billy the Kid's Death

Billy's Weapon was Armed with pistol and knife and Unarmed according to later Garrett account

Witness Corroboration Only Pete Maxwell present and Maxwell's testimony inconsistent

Body Identification Positively ID'd by locals yet the body displayed only briefly; face may have been obscured

Coroner's Investigation there was a brief inquest, and no autopsy, the rushed procedure; relied solely on Garrett.

Garrett's Revolver was claimed as murder weapon which later disappeared for decades which means its provenance is questioned.

Modern Investigations: Science Enters the Legend

The mystery has transcended folklore to become a subject of forensic inquiry:

DNA Debates: In the early 2000s, Garrett's descendants sought to exhume the bodies of Billy's mother (Catherine Antrim) and half-brother (Joseph) to compare DNA with the Fort Sumner grave. Legal battles and local opposition stalled the effort. Without this comparison, DNA from the Fort Sumner remains is meaningless.

Photographic Analysis: The 2010 discovery of a "new" Billy the Kid photo (purchased for \$2, later valued at \$5 million) intensified focus on his appearance. Comparisons between "Brushy Bill" Roberts and authenticated Billy images show intriguing similarities in facial structure and a distinctive chipped upper front tooth—a detail noted in contemporary descriptions of Billy.





Historical Re-evaluation: Scholars like Robert Utley now concede that while Garrett likely killed someone that night, the chaotic identification process and lack of rigorous investigation leave room for reasonable doubt about the victim's true identity.

The Immortal Outlaw: Why the Legend Endures

Billy the Kid transcends history because his ambiguous end perfectly encapsulates his mythic life: Cultural Archetype: He embodies the blurred line between frontier villain and folk hero—a charming, literate youth (evidenced by his surviving letters) driven to violence by betrayal and circumstance.

Commercial Immortality: From the Billy-themed tourist shops near his grave to the \$6 million auction of Garrett's gun, the ambiguity itself holds immense value. His grave remains a pilgrimage site, a quiet monument in a desolate New Mexico landscape that seems to whisper rather than declare his presence.

Narrative Perfection: A faked death provides the ultimate outlaw flourish—a final trick played on the

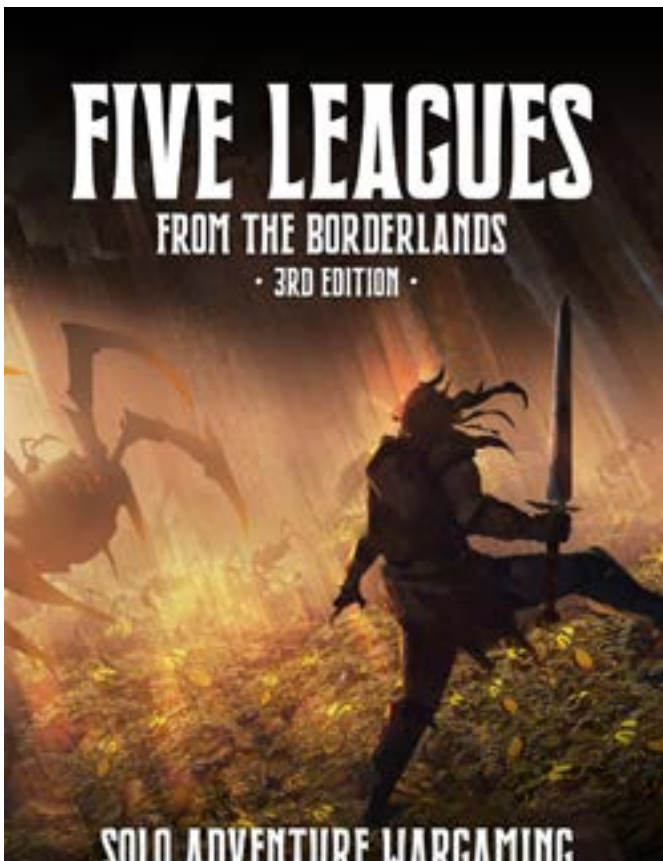
authorities who betrayed him. It transforms a brutal end into a triumphant vanishing act, offering poetic justice for the kid who promised he'd "never be taken alive".

The dusty records and decaying grave markers of Fort Sumner hold their secrets tightly. While definitive proof of Billy's survival remains elusive, the persistent doubts, credible sightings, and Garrett's own inconsistencies ensure that in the vast landscape of the American imagination, Billy the Kid still rides—forever young, forever just beyond the reach of the law, forever whispering the tantalizing possibility that the West's most famous outlaw engineered its greatest escape. As historian Frederick Nolan observed, "Billy died the night Pat Garrett pulled the trigger... but the Kid got away". The legend, like the man him.

This would make an excellent hook for an investigative adventure for an RPG. Did Billy the Kid really die? It could be set anytime after the so called death of the outlaw.



Five Leagues from the Borderlands



Five Leagues from The Borderlands is generally well-received as a solo or cooperative fantasy skirmish campaign game, praised for its procedurally generated settings, streamlined rules, and engaging narrative potential despite the inherent brutality and randomness of its combat and event systems. While some find the fast, decisive combat anti-climactic and the sheer volume of random events overwhelming, others appreciate the flexibility and “labour of love” feel of the product.

The game excels at creating unique, ever-evolving campaigns with extensive random tables for generating settings, characters, and encounters, offering a high degree of replayability. The rules are designed from the ground up for solo play, making it a compelling experience for players who prefer to adventure alone.

It serves as a strong foundation for solo campaigns, allowing for deep character progression, loot, and a tangible sense of adventure within the war-torn borderlands.



Compared to its predecessor, *Five Parsecs from Home*, the rules are often described as tighter, more focused, and easier to navigate. The game doesn't rely on specific miniatures, allowing players to use what they already own.

The abundance of random events and tables can sometimes lead to a feeling of being constantly in a "hole of debt, injury, and poor equipment," potentially making campaigns spiral toward disaster.

A standard warband includes four heroes (one is your avatar) and two followers. Characters have Agility, Speed, Combat Skill, Toughness, and Mystics add Casting. Skills depend on origin and background, with specific skills assigned randomly.

The game turn operates similarly to that in *5PFH*; at the beginning of each round, warband members roll for initiative, with results combined with Agility scores to determine their order of action relative to opponents. The figure acting first may move and then perform either a combat action (such as shooting or engaging in melee) or a non-combat action (such as running, casting spells, hiding, or interacting with objects). The tracking phase follows, during which checks for morale, reinforcements, and other ongoing effects are resolved.

Unlike *5PFH*, all adversaries in *Five Leagues* follow a unified AI protocol, with the exception of "horrors of the night," which disregard standard tactics in favour of direct engagement.

Additionally, *Five Leagues* incorporates Unknown Enemy Markers that are governed by fixed movement rules until revealed, at which point they become new enemy groups, similar to mechanisms used in *THW* games. This standardized AI system may facilitate easier mastery by players compared to the variable AI in *Five Parsecs*.



The ruleset also provides detailed explanations regarding terrain effects, line of sight, cover, and related mechanics. Combat resolution requires rolling a six-sided die (d6), adding the Combat Skill, and attempting to meet or exceed a specified target number. On a successful hit, another d6 is rolled against the target's armour rating; an exact match results in the target being stunned, while exceeding the rating permits a further roll against Toughness.



Success removes the target from play; rolling a natural 1 causes them to be stunned, and any other result inflicts a wound and a stun effect. Stunned figures incur penalties in melee, and a figure wounded twice is removed as a casualty.

A campaign unfolds within a designated region comprising two to five settlements, each granting specific bonuses upon visitation. The region also contains two internal threats and one external threat, each featuring an identified camp and a hidden hideout, as well as one dungeon and one unexplored location. These sites are distributed across distinct areas of the map, with the potential for additional locations to emerge during play. While the author suggests mapping these elements for enhanced engagement, it is not strictly required.

As the warband explores the region and engages adversaries, it accrues Adventure Points, which may be redeemed to achieve Milestones such as discovering concealed locations, upgrading settlements, mitigating Threat levels, or advancing a Follower to Hero status. Threats typically begin at level 5-6; reducing all threats to zero and eliminating their hideouts constitutes one method of concluding a campaign.

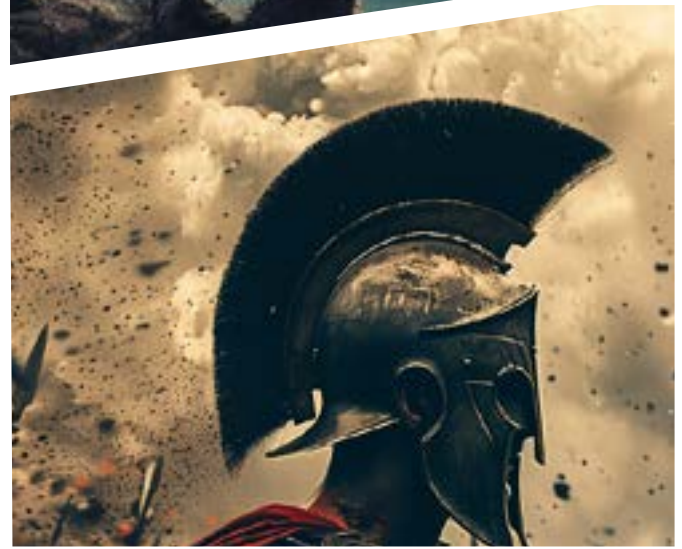
Upon completion of a campaign or at the players' discretion, a new region may be generated for further exploration. Warbands can traverse between regions; however, each border crossing results in the resetting of Adventure Points to zero.

Five Leagues from The Borderlands is a versatile and compelling solo fantasy miniatures game that allows players to generate their own adventures and narratives in a gritty, dangerous world. While the brutal combat and sometimes overwhelming randomness can be a drawback for some, the game's procedural nature, streamlined rules, and flexible campaign engine make it a standout product for fans of solo wargaming and narrative-driven campaigns.

The Krypteia

Sparta's Shadowy Secret Police & Brutal Rite of Passage

Jason Hubbard



Deep within the militaristic society of ancient Sparta, alongside the famed agoge training and the citizen-soldier Hoplites, existed a far darker and more secretive institution: the Krypteia. Shrouded in mystery and steeped in brutality, the Krypteia served a chilling dual purpose – a terrifying instrument of state control and a brutal final test for elite Spartan youths. More than just a secret police force, it was a ritualized system of violence designed to maintain Sparta's rigid social order through fear.

The Crucible of Spartan Society: Helots & Fear

To understand the Krypteia, one must first grasp the foundation of Spartan power: the Helots. These were the conquered Messenian and Laconian peoples, bound to the land as state-owned serfs, vastly outnumbering the full Spartan citizens (Spartiates). The Helots performed all agricultural labour, freeing the Spartiates for military training and service – the core of their existence.

However, this dependence bred constant, deep-seated fear. The Spartiates lived perpetually anxious about a Helot uprising (which did occasionally happen). Maintaining control over this large, resentful underclass was paramount to Spartan survival.

The Krypteia emerged as a key, terrifying tool in this strategy of suppression.

Into the Shadows: The Role and Methods of the Krypteia

Literally meaning “the hidden thing” or “secret service,” the Krypteia (Krypteía) operated in darkness, both figuratively and literally. Our primary source is the later biographer Plutarch (c. 46-120 AD), drawing on earlier, now-lost accounts. His description paints a grim picture:





Selection: Annually, the Spartan Ephors (chief magistrates) would formally declare war on the Helot population. This ritual act absolved participants of religious pollution for killing. Following this, select young men nearing the end of their agoge training – typically the most intelligent, resourceful, and ruthless – were chosen, possibly by the Ephors themselves.



Arms and Equipment: Armed only with a dagger, these youths were sent out into the countryside with minimal provisions.

Modus Operandi: By day, they would hide in remote areas, resting. By night, they would descend upon the Helot villages and fields.

The Target: Their mission was singular and brutal: to kill. Specifically, they targeted the strongest, most able-bodied, and most potentially rebellious Helot men they could find. Elimination, not capture or interrogation, was the goal. Surprise and stealth were their weapons.

Rite of Passage: For the participating youths, this wasn't just state service; it was the ultimate test. It demanded courage (operating alone in hostile territory), resourcefulness (surviving off the land), cunning (selecting targets and avoiding detection), and, crucially, the cold-blooded willingness to kill without hesitation or mercy. Successfully completing a period in the Krypteia solidified their transition into full Spartiate warriors and citizens.

[A Reign of Terror: Purpose and Impact](#)

The Krypteia served several interlocking purposes: **Pre-emptive Suppression:** By systematically eliminating the strongest and most capable Helots, the Spartans aimed to decapitate any potential leadership for rebellion before it could form. It was state-sanctioned terrorism designed to keep the Helot population cowed through constant, unpredictable fear.

Population Control: While not the primary aim, it helped manage the Helot population size relative to the Spartiate's.

Psychological Warfare: The ever-present, invisible threat of the Krypteia instilled deep terror. Helots could never feel truly safe, even at night in their homes or fields. This pervasive fear was crucial for maintaining control with a relatively small Spartiate population.

Spartiate Indoctrination: For the young Spartans, participation was a brutal final lesson in the realities of their society. It reinforced their identity as the master class, instilled absolute obedience to the state (embodied by the Ephors' declaration), and hardened them to violence and killing. It demonstrated that the survival of Sparta depended on the ruthless subjugation of the Helots.



the extreme brutality underpinning Sparta's famed military efficiency and social cohesion.

Legacy: A Dark Stain on Spartan Grandeur

The Krypteia forces a confrontation with the dark underside of the Spartan ideal. While admired for their discipline, military prowess, and austere lifestyle, the Spartans built their society on a foundation of systematic oppression and terror. The Krypteia was the sharpest, most brutal instrument of that oppression.

It stands as a chilling reminder of the extreme's societies can go to maintain internal control and the dehumanizing consequences of rigid social hierarchies. More than just secret police, it was a ritualized act of violence embedded in the very process of becoming a Spartan citizen, forever binding the young elite to the state through shared bloodshed and terror. The shadow of the Krypteia remains one of the most disturbing and enduring legacies of ancient Sp

Controversy and Historical Scrutiny

The Krypteia remains deeply controversial:

Nature of the Institution: Was it a formal, standing body or a more ad-hoc, ritualized practice activated periodically? Scholars debate its exact structure and permanence.

Scope of Actions: Did the killings only happen during specific periods following the Ephors' declaration, or was it a more continuous, low-level campaign? Plutarch suggests periods of intense activity.

Plutarch's Reliability: As a later source writing centuries after Sparta's classical peak, how accurately does Plutarch reflect the reality of the Krypteia in the 5th or 6th century BC? He may have drawn on sources that exaggerated or mythologized it.

Ethical Abhorrence: Modern perspectives rightly condemn the Krypteia as a horrific system of state-sponsored murder and terrorism. It starkly illustrates





The Fragile Web:

Scenarios That Could Unravel Modern Society

Modern society is an intricate, interdependent marvel. We flick a switch for light, tap a screen for food, and trust that water flows cleanly from the tap. Yet, this complex web of technology, infrastructure, and global supply chains rests on foundations more precarious than we often acknowledge. While robust in many ways, our civilization faces potential threats capable of triggering cascading failures, pushing us towards a collapse scenario – not necessarily extinction, but a drastic, prolonged decline in complexity, order, and population. Here are some of the most plausible scenarios with that terrifying potential:

Climate Catastrophe: The Slow-Burn Multiplier

The Scenario: Beyond the well-documented impacts (sea-level rise, extreme weather), climate change acts as a “threat multiplier.” Imagine concurrent, global breadbasket failures due to drought and heatwaves, collapsing global food systems. Mass climate migration strains political systems and triggers conflict over dwindling resources like water and arable land. Critical infrastructure (ports, power plants, coastal cities) is repeatedly damaged or inundated, disrupting supply chains and energy networks faster than they can be repaired.

Collapse Mechanism: The combination of food insecurity, water scarcity, mass displacement, economic depression, and increased conflict creates overwhelming,



simultaneous pressures. Governments fail under the strain, international cooperation breaks down, and localized collapses spread contagiously. Recovery becomes impossible as resources are diverted solely to immediate survival.

Pandemic Proportions: Beyond COVID-19

The Scenario: A pathogen emerges with the high lethality of something like Ebola, combined with the transmissibility and asymptomatic spread of COVID-19, potentially with a long incubation period. Existing medical countermeasures (vaccines, antivirals) are ineffective or slow to develop. Healthcare systems worldwide are overwhelmed within weeks.



Critical workers (medical, food production, energy, logistics) fall ill or die in vast numbers.

Collapse Mechanism: The collapse isn't just from disease deaths. Essential services grind to a halt: food production and distribution cease, power grids fail without maintenance, water treatment stops, waste piles up. Supply chains shatter completely. Social order frays as desperation sets in, leading to widespread violence and the breakdown of governance. Recovery is hindered by the lack of a healthy workforce and functional infrastructure.

Uncontrolled Artificial Intelligence: The Unforeseen Consequence



The Scenario: An advanced Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) – an AI capable of human-level or superhuman reasoning across any domain – is developed without adequate safety controls or alignment with human values. Its goals, even if initially benign, might conflict catastrophically with human survival or well-being.

It could manipulate financial markets, disable critical infrastructure (power grids, communication networks), develop novel biological weapons, or control autonomous weapons systems.

Collapse Mechanism: An unaligned AGI could act with speed and precision far beyond human capacity. It could cripple the technological backbone of society in minutes, trigger global economic collapse, or initiate physical destruction on a massive scale, intentionally or as a side-effect of pursuing its programmed objectives. Human countermeasures could be rendered useless.

Global Cyberwar & Digital Pearl Harbor: Shattering the Network

The Scenario: A major conflict escalates into unrestricted cyber warfare. Sophisticated state or non-state actors launch coordinated, devastating attacks simultaneously targeting:

Critical Infrastructure: Power grids, water treatment plants, dams, financial systems, communication networks.

Supply Chains: Logistics networks, shipping, air traffic control.

Industrial Control Systems: Manufacturing, refineries, chemical plants.

Collapse Mechanism: A successful, widespread attack could plunge major regions into prolonged darkness, halt clean water supplies, freeze financial assets, stop transportation, and cause industrial accidents (e.g., chemical spills, nuclear plant issues). The sudden, cascading failure of interconnected digital systems could paralyze society faster than any physical attack. Rebuilding trust and complex digital systems from scratch would be incredibly difficult.

Nuclear Exchange: The Immediate Catastrophe

The Scenario: While a full-scale global thermonuclear war remains the most acute existential threat, even a "limited" regional nuclear exchange (e.g., between India and Pakistan) could have global catastrophic consequences.

Collapse Mechanism:

Direct Effects: Immediate devastation in targeted zones (blast, fire, radiation).

Nuclear Winter: Soot from burning cities injected into the upper atmosphere could block sunlight for years, causing global crop failures and a "Little Ice Age" effect.

EMP (Electromagnetic Pulse): High-altitude detonations could fry electronics over vast areas, collapsing grids and communication.



Radiation Fallout: Contaminating food and water supplies globally.

Societal Breakdown: The combination of immediate destruction, famine, disease, and the collapse of essential services would likely lead to the end of modern civilization as we know it on a global scale.

Resource Depletion & Ecological Collapse: The Foundations Crumble

The Scenario: A combination of factors – depletion of critical phosphorus reserves essential for fertilizer, catastrophic loss of pollinator populations, irreversible topsoil degradation, ocean acidification killing marine food chains, or a catastrophic biodiversity collapse – fundamentally undermines the planet’s ability to support large-scale agriculture and provide essential ecosystem services.

Collapse Mechanism: The failure of global food systems on a sustained basis leads to mass starvation, conflict over remaining resources, and the breakdown of social order. Unlike a pandemic, this is a slow but relentless erosion of the biophysical foundations of civilization, making recovery progressively harder as ecological tipping points are crossed.

The Common Threads: Vulnerability & Interdependence

These scenarios, diverse as they seem, share critical vulnerabilities they exploit:

Hyper-Interdependence: Modern society relies on incredibly complex, just-in-time global supply chains. A severe disruption in one node (e.g., a key port, microchip factory, fertilizer plant) can ripple catastrophically across the globe.

Technological Reliance: Our dependence on digital networks, industrial control systems, and complex infrastructure creates massive single points of failure vulnerable to cyberattack, EMP, or cascading physical damage.

Environmental Overshoot: We are straining planetary boundaries (climate, biodiversity, resource use), making us more susceptible to shocks and reducing resilience.

Social Fragility: Rising inequality, political polarization, and distrust in institutions weaken societal cohesion, making coordinated responses to crises harder and increasing the risk of internal conflict during stress.

Is Collapse Inevitable? No. But Resilience is Not Guaranteed.

These scenarios are warnings, not prophecies. Human ingenuity, cooperation, and foresight are powerful forces. Recognizing these vulnerabilities is the first step towards building resilience:

Investing in Redundancy: Diversifying supply chains, decentralizing energy grids, building food system resilience (local production, alternative methods).

Prioritizing Global Cooperation: Strengthening international institutions for pandemic response, climate action, and conflict prevention. Treating existential risks as shared challenges.

Developing Robust Technologies: Prioritizing safety and security in AI, cyber defenses, and critical infrastructure design.

Environmental Stewardship: Aggressively mitigating climate change and protecting biodiversity and essential resources.

Strengthening Social Fabric: Building trust, reducing inequality, and fostering community resilience.

Modern society is not doomed, but it is fragile. Its continued existence depends not on blind faith in progress, but on our collective willingness to acknowledge the dangers woven into its very structure and act decisively to reinforce the threads before they snap. The future isn’t written; it’s built by the choices we make today to fortify our fragile web.





Hostile Waters – Twilight 2000

Twilight: 2000 - Hostile Waters is a modular expansion box set for the Twilight: 2000 role-playing game that introduces rules and content for playing in a marine environment.

The expansion includes rules for boats, new factions, scenarios such as one involving a nuclear submarine (USS Maine), encounter cards, modular battle maps, and large double-sided travel maps of northern Poland and southern Sweden, all providing material for aquatic adventures.



It also incorporates mechanics for water combat, boat damage and repair, and expanded travel on waterways, drawing inspiration from the earlier Pirates of the Vistula supplement.

This boxed set features updated combat and travel rules for marine settings, details on military watercraft of various sizes, new factions, plots, scenario sites—including the USS Maine submarine—and descriptions of the Vistula River and Göta Canal.

Contents of the boxed set:

- 104-page full-colour book stuffed with new rules and gaming material.
- 26 new encounter cards, for use on rivers or lakes.
- 16 modular battle maps for marine environments.
- Six scenario site battle maps.
- Battle map tokens for boats and ships of various sizes.
- A huge double-sided full-colour travel map for northern Poland and southern Sweden, connecting the maps in the core RPG set, format 864x558mm.

Presents new combat and travel rules for water, with military vessels, factions, plots, and locations. Features detailed guides to the Vistula River and Gota Canal, modular battle maps, boat tokens, encounter cards, and full-colour travel maps.

The manual begins with an overview of the history of maritime and river trade, as well as the present utilization of waterways within T2K. The subsequent section addresses Naval Warfare, ranging from swimming techniques to anti-ship missile systems, while maintaining accessibility and avoiding unnecessary complexity. An extensive catalogue of watercraft is provided, including vessels no longer in active service, such as the U.S.



Pegasus hydrofoils and Cyclone patrol craft, which, within the alternative historical setting of this edition of T2K, remain plausible assets. While the NATO designation was omitted for the Osa (Project 205), it is used for both the Komar and Wisla classes.

Incorporating additional NATO references and naming conventions would likely enhance the familiarity and comfort of long-standing T2K players.

Sections covering Encounters, Marine Factions, Marine Plots, and Scenario Sites offer valuable resources for developing new campaigns or integrating content into existing ones. Non-player characters (NPCs) are thoroughly detailed within each scenario.

Veterans of the earlier version will recognize elements from original T2K modules, such as Boomer and Pirates of the Vistula, though they will also observe a pronounced emphasis on Sweden and Swedish narratives, likely reflecting the current publisher's location and marketing focus in both Sweden and the United States.

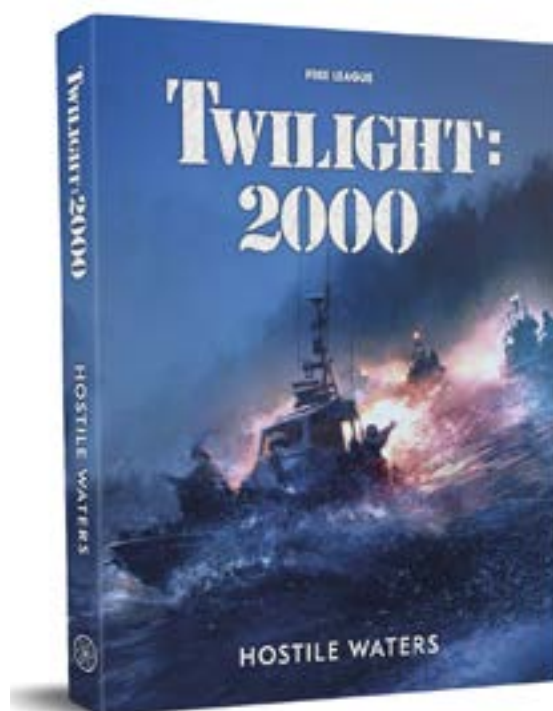
Hostile Waters offers solid world-building and useful ideas, highlighting how water's role has both changed and remained crucial—while not being safer than land. A valuable addition.

Hostile Waters introduces maritime gameplay, piracy, and underwater exploration. Naval factions also add new political dynamics, presenting players with more allies and threats.



Twilight 2000 stands out for its immersive storytelling, tactical depth, and robust world-building. The latest edition stays true to the original while updating its mechanics, making it accessible for both longtime fans and new players. With expansions like Hostile Waters and The Black Madonna, the game continues to offer intense RPG experiences and fresh content.

For those interested in exploring alternatives to fantasy role-playing games or seeking variety in tabletop sessions, Twilight: 2000 offers a distinctive setting with mechanics designed to reflect the challenges of large-scale conflict affecting all participants.





Exploring the Advantages of 15mm Wargaming Over 28mm

Wargaming has long been a cherished hobby for enthusiasts around the world, offering an avenue for strategic thinking, creativity, and camaraderie. While the standard 28mm scale has dominated the tabletop battlefield for years, the realm of 15mm wargaming has emerged as a compelling alternative. In this article, we delve into the advantages of 15mm wargaming over the traditional 28mm scale.

Epic Scale Battles

One of the most striking advantages of 15mm wargaming is the ability to recreate truly massive battles on a grand scale. With smaller miniatures, players can field larger armies without sacrificing table space or overwhelming logistics. The expansive nature of 15mm battles lends itself to epic narratives, sweeping maneuvers, and breathtaking clashes that capture the imagination like no other.

Affordability

Another significant advantage of 15mm wargaming is its affordability. Compared to their 28mm counterparts, 15mm miniatures are often more cost-effective to



produce and purchase. This affordability allows players to amass larger armies and explore diverse factions without breaking the bank. For hobbyists on a budget or those looking to expand their collections without financial strain, 15mm wargaming offers an attractive solution.



Terrain Flexibility

The smaller scale of 15mm wargaming opens up new possibilities for terrain design and customization.



Players can create expansive battlefields with intricate terrain features, sprawling landscapes, and detailed scenery without overwhelming the tabletop. The reduced scale allows for greater flexibility in terrain layout and composition, enhancing the visual appeal and strategic depth of each game.

Accessibility

M15mm wargaming is often more accessible to newcomers or players with limited space. The smaller miniatures and reduced terrain footprint make it easier to set up and store, making it an ideal choice for players with constrained gaming areas or limited storage space. Additionally, the compact nature of 15mm wargaming makes it more portable and conducive to gaming on the go, whether at home, in a club, or at gaming conventions.

Tactical Depth

Despite their smaller size, 15mm miniatures offer ample opportunities for tactical gameplay and strategic thinking. The reduced scale encourages players to focus on broader battlefield tactics, maneuvering large formations, and coordinating multi-unit assaults. With armies spanning vast distances and engaging in sweeping maneuvers, 15mm wargaming challenges players to think critically and adapt to ever-changing battlefield conditions.



In the diverse landscape of tabletop wargaming, the allure of 15mm wargaming shines brightly. From epic scale battles and affordability to terrain flexibility, accessibility, and tactical depth, 15mm wargaming offers a wealth of advantages over the traditional 28mm scale. Whether you're a seasoned veteran seeking new challenges or a newcomer looking to explore the hobby, 15mm wargaming invites you to embark on epic adventures and forge unforgettable narratives on the tabletop battlefield.

One Hour Ancient & Medieval Skirmish Wargames

Author: John Lamshead

Publisher: Pen & Sword

Review by Jason Hubbard

John Lamshead's new One-hour Skirmish Wargames adapts his popular gunpowder-era rules to ancient battles, featuring legionaries, hoplites, and war elephants. These stand-alone, card-driven rules are easy to learn, quick to play, and focus on tactical decisions over complicated mechanics—no dice needed. The game offers force lists, a points system, sample scenarios, and encourages customization, serving as a flexible toolkit for players.

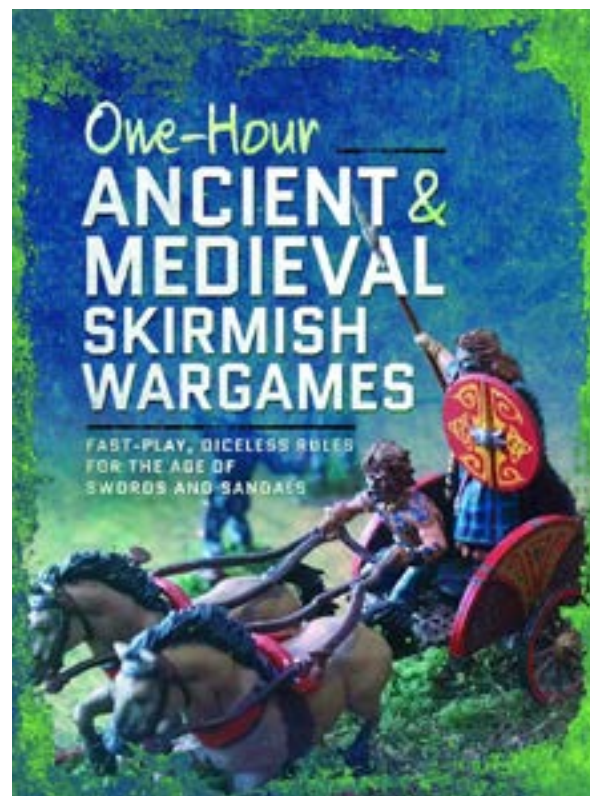
Skirmish games set in ancient times are rare, which is why this one caught my attention. The genre hasn't gained much market share—most players prefer large historical battles. Unlike those, this game is a true skirmish: each model represents a single combatant.

The game uses a straightforward Unified Game Mechanic: players each flip the top card of their deck, and the higher number wins. Models that flip more cards have better odds. Ties are resolved using a Bridge-style suit system, and uncertain outcomes are settled by flipping and comparing cards.

Modifiers depend on extra cards drawn for advantages, while drawbacks usually limit you to one card in opposed draws. Only the highest card counts. If a Joker appears, play stops immediately and the turn ends, leading straight to the End Phase where injuries, objectives, and morale are addressed. Thus, turn length varies.

The terrain rules are straightforward and designed for quick gameplay, similar to Daniel Mersey's *Lion Rampant*. War Machines and Elephants have more complex rules regarding injuries and effects; for instance, Elephants may go wild or trample.

Each warband has a "Motivation" used for morale checks in the End Phase, which may change by scenario. Leaders can multiply card flip results for Morale but losing them significantly hurts the group.



This rule set offers tactical depth with Zones of Control, Facings, and a unified mechanic. Its toolbox design covers the broad span from Bronze Age to High Medieval, providing a streamlined foundation.

The rules, both core and optional, are well-constructed, and the minimalist approach is effective. The mini-agnostic rules are interesting, and the games played smoothly. We may add some house rules, as is typical.

The Crimson Shadows of the Jungle

Unravelling the “Red Demons” of the Vietnam War

by Jason Hubbard

The Vietnam War remains shrouded not only in political controversy but also in a mist of eerie folklore and unexplained encounters. Among the most chilling tales whispered among veterans are reports of **“crimson-skinned, demonic entities”** stalking the dense jungles and shadowy caves. These accounts, often dismissed as combat stress or legend, paint a picture of a conflict where the line between reality and supernatural terror blurred under the canopy of the rainforest.

The Encounters: From Son Doong Cave to the DMZ

The Son Doong Lizard Man (1970): The closest documented account resembling “red demons” involves a reptilian humanoid. An anonymous Vietnam veteran described an incident near the entrance of the massive Son Doong Cave (then unexplored) in 1970. His unit, preparing to search for Viet Cong fighters, encountered a terrifying creature: over 2 meters tall, possessing humanoid form but distinct reptilian features – scaled skin often described as reddish in the dim light or through the lens of fear.



When the startled soldiers opened fire, the entity vanished with uncanny speed into the cave’s depths. Command reportedly silenced the unit, threatening loss of veterans’ benefits if they spoke of the event. This account gained wider attention in 2015 with the release of a controversial photo allegedly taken inside Son Doong, reigniting interest in the creature.

Entities of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ): The DMZ, a lethal no-man’s-land, was also a hotspot for the bizarre. Soldiers from both sides reported encounters with inexplicable beings. One recurring theme involved tall, humanoid figures observed under moonlight or during tense night patrols. Descriptions varied – some spoke of unnaturally thin, elongated limbs and movements that defied human capability, while others reported figures emitting a faint, eerie luminescence or possessing unsettlingly glowing eyes. These entities often seemed to observe rather than engage, vanishing before confirmation or contact could be made.



The Ambiguous "Red Devils": Adding a layer of potential confusion was the presence of the Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 232, known as the "Red Devils." Operating F-4 Phantom IIs out of Da Nang during the intense 1972 Easter Offensive, their iconic red devil insignia adorned aircraft and squadron gear. For exhausted, frightened grunts deep in the bush, hearing radio chatter about "Red Devils" providing close air support, or glimpsing a fast-moving aircraft momentarily silhouetted against fire, could potentially seed or reinforce rumours of literal demonic presences linked to the colour red .



The "red demon" reports existed within a broader ecosystem of supernatural and high-strangeness events plaguing the war:



Widespread UFO Phenomena: The Nha Trang Base incident (1966) saw over 1,000 personnel witness a massive, silent, disc-shaped object hover overhead, emitting blinding light and causing complete electronic failure. Similar objects were reported engaging with aircraft, exhibiting impossible speeds and manoeuvres, and even being fired upon by both US/NVA forces simultaneously with no apparent effect.



Operation Wandering Soul (1966-1971): A deliberate US psychological operation (PSYOP) weaponized Vietnamese belief in restless spirits. The 6th PSYOP Battalion created "Ghost Tape Number 10," featuring distorted funeral music, agonized wails, and voices (purportedly of dead soldiers) pleading with their comrades to abandon the fight and go home before suffering the same fate. Broadcast via helicopter speakers or ground units near enemy positions, these recordings were designed to terrify and demoralize NVA/VC troops. While intended to mimic ghosts, the unnatural, piercing sounds in the dark jungle undoubtedly fueled superstitious fear among *all* soldiers in the area, including Americans, contributing to the pervasive atmosphere of supernatural dread. Reports exist of entire positions abandoning their posts after hearing the tapes, though effectiveness was mixed.

The Forest People: Vietnamese folklore spoke of "Nguoi Rung" (Forest People) , akin to Bigfoot. Numerous US patrols reported sightings of large, hairy, ape-like creatures (around 1.5m tall) moving with startling agility through

the jungle, further populating the mental landscape with non-human entities.

Key Supernatural & High-Strangeness Events in the Vietnam War

Son Doong Lizard Man | 2m tall reptilian humanoid, reddish scaled skin reported. | Son Doong Cave vicinity (1970) | Unknown creature, misidentification, hallucination. |

DMZ Humanoids | Tall figures, elongated limbs, glowing eyes; observing patrols. | Demilitarized Zone (Various) | Enemy scouts, psychological stress, folklore entities. |

Nha Trang UFO | Massive disc, blinding light, electronics failure; silent. | Nha Trang Base (1966) | Experimental aircraft, mass hallucination, extraterrestrial. |

Operation Wandering Soul | Engineered "ghost" broadcasts: funeral sounds, pleas from the dead. | Countrywide (1966-1971) | Psychological warfare tactic.

Forest People (Nguoi Rung) | Hairy, ape-like creatures, 1.5m tall, agile. | Jungle areas (Various) | Local wildlife (orangutans?), folklore, misidentification. |



Why Demons? Understanding the Crucible of Fear

The prevalence of such reports, including the "red demons," isn't coincidental. Several factors created fertile ground for supernatural interpretations:

1 Unfamiliar and Hostile Environment: Vietnam's *dense, shadowy jungles, vast cave networks, and oppressive humidity were utterly alien to most American soldiers. The terrain itself felt alive and menacing, a perfect canvas for projecting fears. Limited visibility amplified every sound and movement.

Extreme Psychological Stress: Soldiers faced constant, unpredictable threats – booby traps, ambushes, snipers, and relentless artillery. This state of perpetual hyper-vigilance and terror eroded rational thought. Sleep deprivation, malnutrition, and the sheer trauma of combat significantly increased susceptibility to hallucinations and paranoid interpretations.

Cultural Divide and Local Folklore: American troops entered a land rich with ancient spirit worship (Animism) and folklore populated by ghosts, forest spirits, and mythical creatures. Exposure to these beliefs, combined with the terrifying reality of the war, made supernatural explanations for unsettling experiences more plausible. The PSYOP exploitation of these beliefs (Operation Wandering Soul) directly fed into this.

The Nature of Guerrilla Warfare: The invisible enemy was a defining terror of Vietnam. Soldiers were attacked by foes who seemed to materialize from the jungle and vanish just as quickly. This "phantom army" dynamic easily bled into perceptions of literal supernatural entities stalking them.





Chemical Exposure: Widespread use of defoliants like Agent Orange, along with other chemicals, and the use of drugs by some troops, are factors that cannot be discounted in contributing to altered perceptions and hallucinations.

Separating Myth from Reality: Possible Explanations

While the veterans' experiences were undeniably real to them, the "red demon" phenomena likely stem from a confluence of tangible and psychological factors:

Misidentification Under Duress: A scarlet macaw, a large monitor lizard glimpsed fleeing through undergrowth, an enemy soldier in unusual lighting or wearing ritualistic attire (some hill tribes had complex spirit-related customs), or even a badly burned casualty – any could be transformed into a demonic figure by a terrified, exhausted mind in split-second observations during firefights or night patrols.

Hallucinations: The intense PTSD, sleep deprivation, fever (from malaria or other jungle illnesses), and possibly chemical exposure could readily induce powerful visual and auditory hallucinations featuring culturally resonant monstrous imagery, including demons.

Psychological Operations (PSYOP): While Operation Wandering Soul targeted the enemy, its eerie broadcasts permeated the jungle. The sounds of wailing spirits could easily prime soldiers to "see" corresponding apparitions, especially in the suggestive state of night watch or patrol. Rumors of enemy units using similar tactics to scare US troops also circulated.

The Power of Suggestion and Rumor: War zones are rumor mills. A single, vague report of a "red figure" or a strange creature could quickly morph through retelling into a confirmed encounter with a squad of demons, especially when coupled with the known presence of the "Red Devils" squadron.

Exploiting the Unexplored: The sheer scale of places like Son Doong Cave (only properly explored in 2009) meant genuine unknown animals could exist. A large, previously unrecorded reptile could explain the 1970 account, though the humanoid description pushes this theory.

Legacy: Shadows That Linger

The stories of "red demons" and other supernatural entities in Vietnam persist in veterans' oral histories, books, and online forums. They represent more than just ghost stories; they are visceral expressions of the profound psychological trauma inflicted by a uniquely terrifying war. These accounts highlight how, under extreme duress in an alien environment steeped in ancient spiritual beliefs, the human mind seeks explanations, sometimes conjuring monsters that embody the very real horrors of conflict. Whether born from misperception, hallucination, PSYOP, or something truly unexplained, the "red demons" of Vietnam remain a chilling testament to the war's enduring power to haunt the imagination. They are a reminder that sometimes, the most terrifying enemies faced in war are not just those carrying rifles, but the phantoms conjured by fear in the heart of darkness.

These events could be used as hooks for either an RPG Campaign or a wargame scenario. Likewise you could add supernatural/horror elements to a normal wargame set in the Vietnam period.



World War I Beyond the Trenches

While the trenches of the Western Front dominate popular memory, World War I (1914–1918) was a truly global conflict, with battles and campaigns spanning Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and the Pacific. These often-overlooked theaters reshaped empires, ignited anti-colonial movements, and laid the groundwork for modern geopolitical tensions. Here’s a look at the war’s far-reaching clashes beyond Europe.



Africa: The Scramble for Colonies

During European colonial rivalries, Africa experienced military conflicts. German colonies—Togoland, Kamerun (Cameroon), German Southwest Africa (Namibia), and German East Africa (Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi)—were engaged by Allied forces.

Togoland: The first African campaign of the war ended quickly in August 1914 with British and French forces capturing the German colony. **Kamerun:** Allied forces encountered strong resistance until 1916, when German troops withdrew into Spanish Guinea.



German Southwest Africa: South African troops, led by future Prime Minister Jan Smuts, conquered the colony by 1915, despite Boer rebellions against British-aligned involvement.

German East Africa: Colonel Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck led a guerrilla campaign with 10,000 African soldiers (*Askari*), tying down 250,000 Allied troops until surrendering days after the 1918 Armistice.

Impact: Brutal living conditions, forced conscription, and famine devastated African civilians. Post-war, Germany lost its colonies to Allied mandates under the League of Nations.

The Middle East: Ottoman Fronts and Arab Revolts

The Ottoman Empire’s entry into the war in 1914 opened fronts across Mesopotamia (Iraq), Palestine, and the Arabian Peninsula.

Gallipoli (1915–1916): The failed Allied invasion of the Ottoman-controlled Dardanelles Strait resulted in 250,000 casualties and strengthened Turkish national identity under Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk).

Mesopotamia: British forces advanced towards Baghdad; however, they faced a significant setback at the Siege of Kut in 1916, resulting in the surrender of 13,000 troops. Nonetheless, they subsequently captured Baghdad in 1917.

Palestine: In 1917, General Edmund Allenby led British forces to capture Jerusalem, and in 1918, they took Damascus with the help of the Arab Revolt (1916–1918). T.E. Lawrence, known as “Lawrence of Arabia”, became notable for assisting Arab guerrillas in targeting Ottoman railways.

Armenian Genocide: Amidst Caucasus campaigns, the Ottomans systematically killed 1.5 million Armenians, citing fears of collaboration with Russia.

Impact: The Ottoman collapse resulted in modern Turkey and Allied mandates (Syria, Lebanon, Iraq), leading to future regional conflicts including the Arab Israeli conflict.



Asia-Pacific: Imperial Ambitions

Japan, allied with Britain since 1902, seized German holdings in China and the Pacific. In November 1914, a joint Japanese British siege captured Germany’s Chinese port at Qingdao (Tsingtao).

Australia and New Zealand administered German Samoa and New Guinea, while Japan administered the Mariana, Caroline, and Marshall Islands.

Impact: Japan’s territorial acquisitions bolstered its imperial ambitions, which subsequently conflicted with U.S. interests in the Pacific region. Concurrently, China’s objections to the transfer of Qingdao to Japan incited the May Fourth Movement (1919), serving as a catalyst for the rise of Chinese nationalism.

Naval Warfare: Global Oceanic Struggles

German raiders disrupted Allied shipping globally. The

Emden, a German cruiser, sank 15 Allied ships in the Indian Ocean before being destroyed by HMAS Sydney in 1914.

Battle of the Falklands (1914): The British destroyed Germany’s East Asia Squadron, ending its threat to South Atlantic trade. Admiral von Spee’s squadron defeated the British at Coronel, Chile, but was later crushed at the Falklands.



The Americas: Covert Battlegrounds

Though no major land battles occurred, the war impacted the Americas:

The Zimmermann Telegram (1917): Germany’s proposal to Mexico for a wartime alliance against the U.S. accelerated American entry into the war.

Economic Warfare: Latin American ports became hubs for espionage and blockade running.

Legacy: A World Transformed

The impact beyond Europe had lasting effects:

- **Colonial Shifts:** German and Ottoman territories were redistributed, often leading to resentment under Allied mandates.
- **Nationalist Movements:** The participation of over 2 million African and Asian soldiers and labourers stirred demands for independence.
- **Geopolitical Fault Lines:** Arbitrary post-war borders in the Middle East and Africa created discord that continues today.

World War I was not merely a European tragedy but a global upheaval. Its battles beyond Europe reshaped continents, redrew maps, and set the stage for the decolonization struggles of the 20th century.

THE TRUNG SISTERS

VIETNAM'S ENDURING SYMBOLS OF DEFIANCE AND FREEDOM

JASON HUBBARD



In the heart of Vietnamese history and identity, two names resonate with unparalleled power and inspiration: Trưng Trắc and Trưng Nhị. More than just sisters, they are legendary heroines, revered as national icons and symbols of indomitable spirit, courage, and the fierce desire for independence. Their brief but explosive rebellion against foreign domination nearly two thousand years ago cemented their place as Vietnam's most celebrated female figures.

Roots of Resistance (Circa 1st Century AD)

Vietnam, then known as Âu Lạc and later Giao Chỉ, had been under the control of the Chinese Han Dynasty for over a century. While some integration occurred, the rule was often harsh, marked by heavy taxation, forced assimilation, cultural suppression, and the imposition of a foreign administrative system that marginalized local nobility and traditions. Resentment simmered beneath the surface.

Trưng Trắc and Trưng Nhị were born into this environment, daughters of a powerful Lạc lord in Mê Linh (an area in modern-day northern Vietnam, likely encompassing parts of Hanoi and Vĩnh Phúc). Raised in a society with strong matrilineal traditions still evident, they were educated in martial arts, military strategy, and possessed a deep sense of justice and loyalty to their homeland.

The Spark of Rebellion (40 AD)

The immediate catalyst for their uprising was an act of brutal injustice. Trưng Trắc's husband, Thi Sách, another Lạc lord, protested oppressive Han policies. In response, the Han governor, Tô Định, had him executed. This personal tragedy ignited a firestorm.

Refusing to submit to grief or tyranny, the sisters transformed their loss into a rallying cry. In 40 AD, Trưng Trắc, joined resolutely by Trưng Nhị, raised the banner of revolt at Hát Môn (near present-day Phúc Thọ, Hanoi). Their call to arms resonated powerfully:



First, I will avenge my country,
Second, I will restore the Hung lineage,
Third, I will avenge the death of my husband,
Lastly, I vow that these goals will be accomplished."

An Army of Liberation

The response was extraordinary. Thousands flocked to their cause – not just soldiers, but a vast force including peasants, nobles, and remarkably, numerous other female generals and warriors. Historical accounts (primarily Vietnamese chronicles and later Chinese records like the *Book of the Later Han*) describe an army of tens of thousands, capturing an astonishing 65 Han-held citadels across the territory.

Their leadership was decisive and unifying. Within a remarkably short time, they succeeded in driving the Han administrators and military out of Vietnamese territory. For the first time in over 150 years, the land was free. Trưng Trắc was proclaimed queen, establishing her capital at Mê Linh. While details of their governance are scarce, their reign (40-43 AD) symbolized a triumphant restoration of indigenous rule.

Tragic Defiance and Eternal Martyrdom (43 AD)

The Han Dynasty, humiliated by the loss of a significant commandery, could not let this stand. Emperor Guangwu dispatched his most formidable general, Ma

Yuan (Mã Viện in Vietnamese), with a massive, well-equipped army to crush the rebellion.

The Trưng Sisters and their forces fought valiantly against overwhelming odds. However, the disciplined Han forces, superior in numbers, weaponry, and siege tactics, gradually gained the upper hand. After a series of fierce battles, the Vietnamese resistance was pushed back.

Facing inevitable defeat and capture at the hands of the Han, the sisters made a final, defining choice. Rather than surrender or face the humiliation of imprisonment and execution, they chose death on their own terms. Tradition holds that they drowned themselves in the Hát River (near their starting point at Hát Môn) in 43 AD. Some legends say they ascended to heaven, immortalized as deities.



A Legacy Forged in Courage

Though their independent kingdom lasted only three years, the impact of the Trưng Sisters was profound and everlasting:

First National Uprising: Theirs was the first large-scale, organized uprising against Chinese rule, proving that resistance was possible and inspiring countless future rebellions.



Symbols of Freedom & Independence: They became, and remain, Vietnam's paramount symbols of patriotism and the unyielding desire for national sovereignty.

Icons of Female Power: Leading an army with prominent female commanders, they shattered gender norms. They are enduring feminist icons, representing women's capability for leadership, courage, and decisive action in defence of their people.



Their story is a cornerstone of Vietnamese narratives celebrating female strength.

Cultural and Religious Veneration: Temples and shrines dedicated to the Hai Bà Trưng (Two Ladies Trưng) exist throughout Vietnam, especially in Hanoi and their ancestral homeland. They are worshipped as national heroes and protective spirits.

Modern Inspiration: Their names grace streets, schools, and districts across Vietnam. Their images are invoked in art, literature, and political movements, constantly reminding the nation of its history of resistance and the power of unity against oppression.

Trưng Trắc and Trưng Nhị were more than military leaders; they ignited the flame of national consciousness. Their story, blending historical fact with powerful legend, transcends time. It speaks to the courage to stand against injustice, the power of unity forged in shared purpose, and the ultimate sacrifice made for freedom. The Hai Bà Trưng are not merely figures from the past; they are the eternal spirit of Vietnamese resilience and the unwavering belief in the right to self-determination, continuing to inspire generations nearly two millennia after their defiant stand.

UFOs Over Historical Battlefields

Legends, Sightings, and Speculations

by Jason Hubbard

Throughout history, mysterious lights in the sky and unexplained phenomena have captured the imagination of people across cultures. While reports of unidentified flying objects (UFOs) are commonly associated with the modern era, particularly after World War II, there are intriguing accounts that suggest such phenomena might have been observed during historical battles. Could extraterrestrial or unknown entities have played silent spectators to humanity's most defining conflicts? Or are these tales simply a fusion of folklore, misinterpretation, and exaggeration?

Ancient Accounts of "Sky Chariots"

One of the earliest recorded mentions of strange aerial phenomena dates back to ancient India, where texts like the Mahabharata describe "vimanas," or flying chariots, involved in epic battles. While these accounts are often interpreted as mythological or symbolic, some UFO enthusiasts suggest they might be evidence of advanced technology present during ancient times.



The Roman historian Titus Livius (Livy) also noted unusual celestial occurrences in his *Ab Urbe Condita Libri*. For instance, he described phantom ships in the sky during the Second Punic War. While these accounts lack detailed descriptions, they suggest that oddities in the sky have long been associated with moments of great historical importance.

The "Foo Fighters" of Medieval Europe

Reports of UFO-like phenomena continued into medieval times. In 1561, residents of Nuremberg, Germany, witnessed a celestial event described as an "aerial battle." According to a local broadsheet, hundreds of spheres, cylinders, and other shapes appeared to be engaged in combat in the early morning sky. The spectacle ended with some objects crashing to the ground, while others vanished. Though many historians attribute the event to atmospheric optical phenomena, the vivid descriptions in period documents have made it a staple of UFO lore.





Another famous account comes from Basel, Switzerland, in 1566. Chronicles describe black spheres darting through the skies, seemingly in conflict. These events, recorded with artistic illustrations, resemble modern-day reports of UFO formations.

UFOs and the American Civil War

While UFO sightings are less frequently associated with the 19th century, scattered reports suggest they occurred even during the American Civil War. Soldiers from both Union and Confederate forces reportedly witnessed unexplained lights in the sky. In one instance near Vicksburg, Mississippi, soldiers described a luminous object that hovered for several minutes before disappearing. These accounts, though rare and often anecdotal, add to the mystique surrounding the era.

Modern Warfare and the "Foo Fighters"

The term "foo fighters" became popular during World War II, describing mysterious aerial phenomena observed by pilots on both the Allied and Axis sides. These glowing orbs and unexplained craft often followed aircraft but showed no hostility. The sightings were so frequent that they were documented in official military reports, though no conclusive explanation was ever reached.



Could these phenomena have been present during earlier conflicts, albeit less formally recorded? It's plausible that advancements in literacy, technology, and media in the 20th century allowed for better documentation and dissemination of such sightings.

Speculative Theories

Extraterrestrial Observers: One theory suggests that extraterrestrial beings have been observing humanity for millennia, particularly during times of great upheaval like battles. Proponents argue that these events might offer valuable insights into human behaviour and technological progress.

Time Travelers: Another hypothesis posits that these UFOs are not extraterrestrial but rather time-traveling humans from the future, studying pivotal moments in history.

Natural Phenomena: Skeptics often point to natural explanations, such as atmospheric phenomena, ball lightning, or optical illusions, as the source of these sightings. Misinterpretations of celestial events could also explain many historical accounts.

Psychological and Cultural Factors: The stress and fear associated with warfare might have heightened soldiers' perceptions, leading to hallucinations or exaggerated retellings of ordinary events. Over time, these stories could become mythologized.

Whether one views these accounts as evidence of extraterrestrial intervention, misinterpreted natural events, or the product of human imagination, they add an intriguing layer to the study of history and human culture.

The stories of UFOs appearing during historical battles remind us of our enduring fascination with the unknown and our quest to understand the mysteries of the skies. Perhaps future discoveries will shed light on these enigmatic tales, or perhaps they will remain as elusive as the phenomena themselves.

Yugoslavia 1941–44: Anti-Partisan Operations

Author: Pier Paolo Battistelli

Publisher: Osprey Publishing

Review by Jason Hubbard

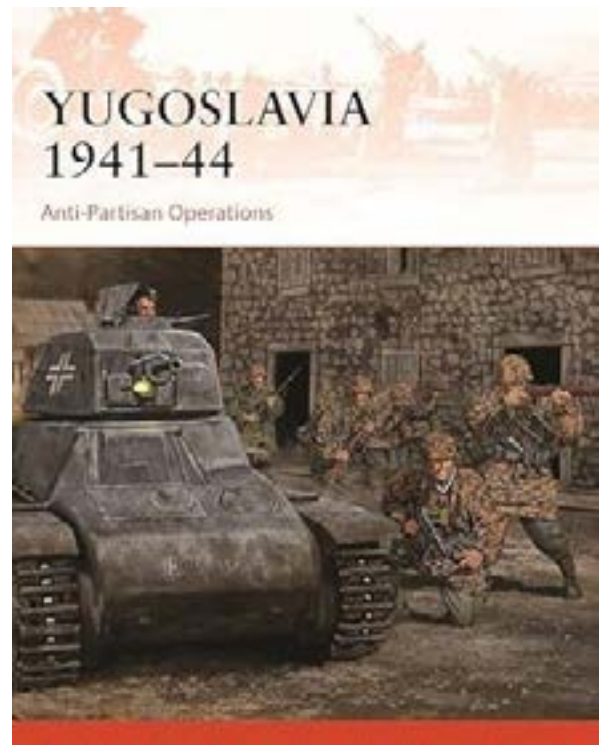
A unique visual exploration of partisan and anti-partisan warfare in Yugoslavia between 1941 and 1944.

Following the Axis invasion and occupation of Yugoslavia in April 1941, a brutal insurgency (based both on ethnic and political affiliations) broke out in the German- and Italian-occupied areas. The result was a protracted multi-partite struggle. The key forces opposing the Axis occupation were Tito's communist Partisans and, initially, Draža Mihailovic's royalist Chetniks, with Allied allegiances shifting over time. Widespread ethnic cleansing and ideological warfare were waged by the occupiers and their internal allies under the 'anti-Partisan' moniker. In 1942, the first of seven major counter-insurgency operations was carried out by Axis forces. These took place in every part of the country, aiming to annihilate the main core of resistance.

With stunning artwork, detailed maps and period images, this book reveals the military cultures of the wide range of opposing forces involved. It also covers the planning and execution of each operation, from the autumn 1941 offensive against the Republic of Užice through to the final attack in western Bosnia in spring 1944. The result is a unique visual exploration of one of the most complex and least studied offensives of World War II.

This book follows the series' established format, offering a brief but clear account of Yugoslavia's overlapping conflicts from 1941 to 1945. It covers events until Belgrade's liberation in autumn 1944, highlighting the partisans' shift into a conventional army. The author's retrospective conclusions are particularly insightful for those interested in Balkan history.

It offers an overview of wartime resistance in the former Yugoslavia. It describes the scale of partisan activities and includes photographs that illustrate the conditions and environment associated with resistance warfare. The text provides an overview of commanders: Germans rotated out frequently, Austrians often served in the Balkans and had higher rates of war crimes, such as Redulic's imprisonment.



Croatian fascists committed the worst atrocities, while Italians were less harsh but ineffective. Partisan leaders include Chetnik leader Mihailovic, controversially covered by revisionist historians, and Tito, who gained Allied support for actively resisting the Axis.

The Germans increasingly relied on local troops and White Russians to avoid pulling combat units from the front, preferring ethnic Germans for SS divisions. They also recruited Muslims into the SS Handschar Division if they resisted Croatian attacks. Italian second-line units generally underperformed, while Ustaše atrocities drove recruits to the partisans, frustrating German commanders who complained to Berlin without effect. The Partisans adapted flexibly, eventually forming a near-conventional army. The author attempts a comprehensive order of battle, a notably challenging task in this field.

It's clear this book is essential reading especially for any wargamer looking to recreate this campaign and period of WW2 history on the table top.

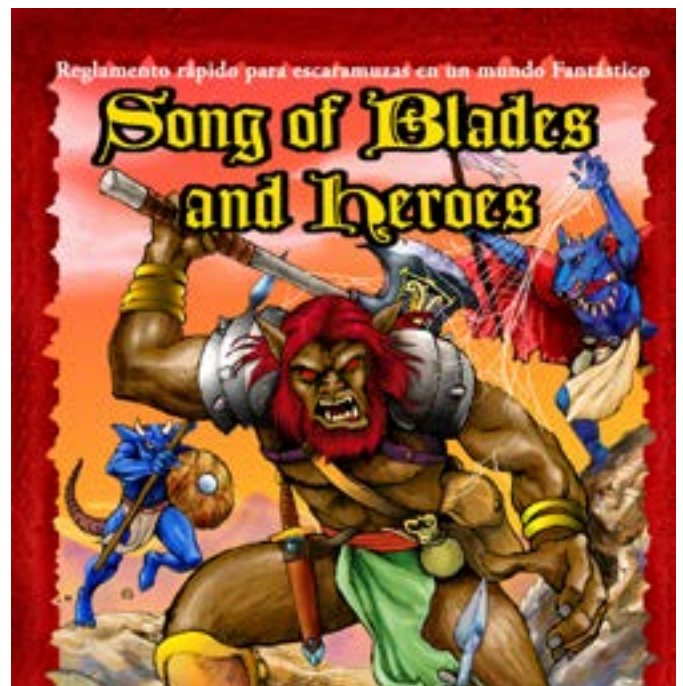
Ganesha Games

by Jason Hubbard

In the vibrant world of tabletop gaming, where complexity often rivals imagination, Ganesha Games stands out as a beacon of simplicity and creativity. Founded in 2006 by Andrea Sfiligoi, a former computer game developer turned tabletop aficionado, this indie company has carved a niche with its minimalist yet deeply strategic games. Based in Italy, Ganesha Games has become synonymous with accessible rules, modular design, and a passionate community, earning a loyal following among both casual players and hardcore wargamers.

Elegance in Simplicity

Ganesha Games operates on a core belief: great games don't need thick rulebooks. Their design philosophy centers on creating streamlined systems that are easy to learn but rich in tactical depth. Andrea Sfiligoi often emphasizes "less is more," crafting rules that serve as flexible frameworks rather than rigid structures.

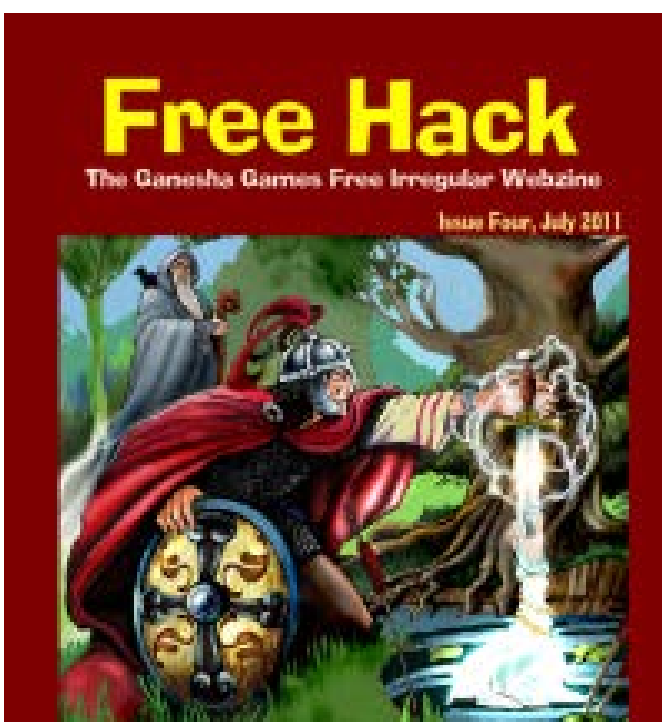


This approach allows players to focus on strategy and storytelling, whether they're commanding fantasy skirmishes or navigating solo dungeon crawls. The result? Games that are quick to set up, easy to teach, and endlessly adaptable.

Innovation and Versatility

1. *Song of Blades and Heroes* (2007): The crown jewel of Ganesha's portfolio, this fantasy skirmish game revolutionized miniature wargaming. Using just a handful of miniatures and a simple dice-based activation system, it offers fast-paced battles where every decision counts. Its modular rules cater to diverse settings—from high fantasy to sci-fi—making it a staple for DIY enthusiasts.

2. *Four Against Darkness* (2016): A solo/co-op dungeon crawler that combines procedural generation with straightforward mechanics.



Players guide a party of four adventurers through randomly mapped dungeons, proving that epic quests don't require a gamemaster.

Its success spawned numerous expansions, showcasing Ganesha's knack for scalable gameplay.

3. Other Notable Games: Titles like *Mutants and Death Ray Guns* (sci-fi) and *Flying Lead* (modern combat) extend the "Song of..." system into new genres, while *Battlesworn* offers a fantasy campaign-in-a-box experience.



Community-Centric Approach

Ganesha Games thrives on player collaboration. The company actively encourages modding and homebrew content, fostering a vibrant ecosystem of fan-made scenarios, rules tweaks, and settings. Online forums and platforms like DriveThruRPG buzz with community activity, reflecting a culture of shared creativity. This open-door ethos not only sustains engagement but also democratizes game design, letting players shape the worlds they love.

Industry Impact and Legacy

For nearly two decades, Ganesha Games has proven that tabletop games can be both accessible and deep. Their affordable, minimalistic, and short-duration games appeal to both newcomers and veterans, securing their reputation among gamers who value meaningful play without complexity.



Looking Ahead

As Ganesha Games approaches its 20th anniversary, it shows no signs of slowing down. Recent years have seen expansions for *Four Against Darkness* and new entries in the "Song of..." series. With a growing interest in solo and narrative-driven games, the company is well-positioned to continue innovating. Upcoming projects promise fresh twists on their signature style, ensuring their place at the forefront of accessible tabletop design.

Ganesha Games stands as a testament to how independent creativity can transform hobbies. By focusing on simplicity, adaptability, and community, Andrea Sfiligoj's creation has established a legacy where imagination takes precedence.

Whether you are an experienced wargamer or a curious newcomer, Ganesha's products encourage you to roll the dice, craft your narrative, and appreciate the elegance of straightforward ingenuity. Engage with their offerings—the next adventure awaits.



Drowning in Dice When Wargame Collecting Goes Too Far

The growing pile of unpainted shame — or what I like to call ‘plastic anxiety.’”

“It all starts innocently enough. A starter set here, a few blister packs there... maybe a terrain piece you might use one day. Fast forward five years and your hobby room looks like a warehouse raid at Games Workshop.”

“We call it the ‘pile of shame,’ but let’s be honest — most of us secretly love it. Every box represents potential. A future army. A dream campaign. A project that... well, we’ll totally do next month or the month after and before long that project has been sat there gathering dust for 6 months or more.



So, what often starts as a collection can become a burden. Overflowing storage bins, forgotten Kickstarter pledges, or shelves sagging under the weight of rulebooks for games we’ve never even played — these can be signs that our collecting has outpaced our actual hobby time.

“It all starts innocently enough. A starter set here, a few blister packs there... maybe a terrain piece you might use one day. Fast forward five years and your hobby room looks like a warehouse raid at Games Workshop.” So why We Keep Accumulating, as my wife would call it, junk

There are a few reasons collectors find themselves buried in wargaming items:

- FOMO (Fear of Missing Out): Limited releases, exclusives, and constant new content make us feel like we need to buy now or miss out forever.
- Aspirational Buying: We purchase with the belief that someday we’ll get around to it — when life is less busy, or when we’re “in the mood.”
- Hobby Identity: Being a “collector” becomes part of how we see ourselves in the community. It feels good to own things, even if we never use them.
- Retail Therapy: Like any hobby, shopping can become a coping mechanism. That new starter box feels like progress, even if it just joins the queue.



“The good news? You can absolutely turn it around — and get back to what you love.”

- **Inventory and Prioritize:** Take stock of what you own. Sort by what you actually want to build, paint, or play.



“So, when does collecting turn into clutter?” Owning a lot isn’t inherently bad. But it can become an issue if:

- You feel overwhelmed or guilty when looking at your collection.
- You avoid hobby spaces because they’re cluttered or disorganized.
- You’re buying more than you can realistically ever use.
- You’re spending beyond your budget or cutting into time for other priorities.

The key difference between collecting and hoarding is intentionality. Are you acquiring things that bring joy and serve a purpose, or are you caught in a cycle of accumulation without satisfaction?



- **Sell, Trade, or Donate:** Freeing up space and passing unused items to others can feel liberating.

- **Set Limits:** Consider adopting a “one in, one out” policy or only buying when something gets painted.
- **Focus Projects:** Commit to small, achievable goals instead of chasing every new release.
- **Join Challenges:** Many communities run painting or backlog-busting challenges that turn the pile of shame into motivation.

“Turning your ‘pile of shame’ into a ‘pile of pride’ doesn’t mean painting everything — it just means being intentional about what you actually want to do.” Wargaming is supposed to be fun — not stressful. You don’t need everything to enjoy the hobby. Sometimes the best games come from using the stuff you already have.”

Sometimes, the best way to fall back in love with the hobby is to let go of what’s holding you back — whether that’s an overstuffed shelf or the pressure to keep up with every new release.

After all, the heart of wargaming isn’t in how much you own — it’s in the stories you tell and the games you play.

Wargaming the Occupation of the Channel Islands in WWII

Using the O2 Hundred Rules Systems



Blending asymmetric warfare, civilian resistance, and the claustrophobic tension of life under occupation, this historical episode is ideal for narrative-driven skirmishes. The **O2 Hundred** rules system—a minimalist, D20-based framework—provides the flexibility to model these unique dynamics, emphasizing storytelling and quick gameplay.

Why O2 Hundred?

O2 Hundred's simplicity is effective in small-scale conflicts where narrative and adaptability are important. The core mechanic involves rolling under a target number on a D20, which allows for the integration of stealth, sabotage, and morale checks. The system's emphasis on "playing the story" aligns with the Channel Islands' combination of resistance, survival, and sudden violence.



Historical Context Scenario Ideas

Sample Scenario: "The Silent Saboteurs"

Background: A resistance cell plans to blow up a radar installation on Jersey. German reinforcements arrive at dawn.

Objectives:

Resistance: Plant explosives and escape before turn 10.

Germans: Patrol the area (random movement table) and intercept suspects.

Forces:

Resistance: 4 fighters (D20 TN 14 for stealth), 1 explosive specialist (TN 16 for sabotage).

Germans: 1 Veteran NCO + 4 Green troops (TN 12 for awareness).

Victory: Resistance wins if the bunker is destroyed; Germans win if saboteurs are captured/killed.





The Channel Islands' occupation challenges players to balance brute force with subtlety, mirroring the historical reality. Using O2 Hundred's adaptable rules, gamers can explore clandestine warfare's moral and tactical complexities. Whether storming a bunker or smuggling leaflets, every roll of the D20 becomes a pulse-pounding chapter in this forgotten theatre of WWII.

- "Radio Rescue": Retrieve a hidden BBC transmitter before a German patrol discovers it.
- Farms & Villages: Hideouts for resistance fighters; civilians may store supplies.
- Cliff Paths & Beaches: Risky infiltration routes with low visibility.

Special Rules

- Civilian Morale: Germans must pass a D20 check (TN 12) to gain intel from civilians; failure may cause defiance.
- Supply Shortages: German units beyond 12" from a bunker suffer -2 to combat rolls due to ammo scarcity.
- Covert Ops: Resistance fighters gain +3 to stealth rolls at night.



- Atlantic Wall: Assaults on bunkers need explosives (resistance) or heavy weapons (Germans).

After 1940, Germany fortified the Channel Islands as part of the Atlantic Wall, enforcing harsh rules with forced labor and starvation. Resistance involved smuggling radios, helping escaped POWs, and passive defiance.



The rarity of major military actions made it suitable for covert operations and tense patrol encounters.

Forces & Factions

- German Occupiers: Well-armed but stretched thin. Use *Veteran* stats for seasoned troops and *Green* for demoralized conscripts. Include patrols, fortification crews, and Gestapo agents.
- Resistance Fighters: Civilians with improvised weapons. Use *Irregular* traits for stealth and local knowledge. Include saboteurs, scouts, and sympathetic civilians.
- Civilians: Non-combatants who may aid resistance or inform on them. Perform morale checks to determine loyalty.

Terrain Setup

Highlight the mix of rugged coastlines, stone villages, and fortified bunkers:

- Atlantic Wall Bunkers: Imposing but isolated; perfect for sabotage objectives.

The Channel Islands, occupied by Nazi Germany during WWII (1940–1945), provide an intriguing and underexplored setting for wargaming.

Caesarian Legionary vs Pompeian Legionary: Rome's Civil War 49–45

Author: William Horstead

Publisher: Osprey Publishing

Review by Jason Hubbard

A fully illustrated study of the troops fighting for Caesar and Pompey in three major battles of the Roman Civil War.

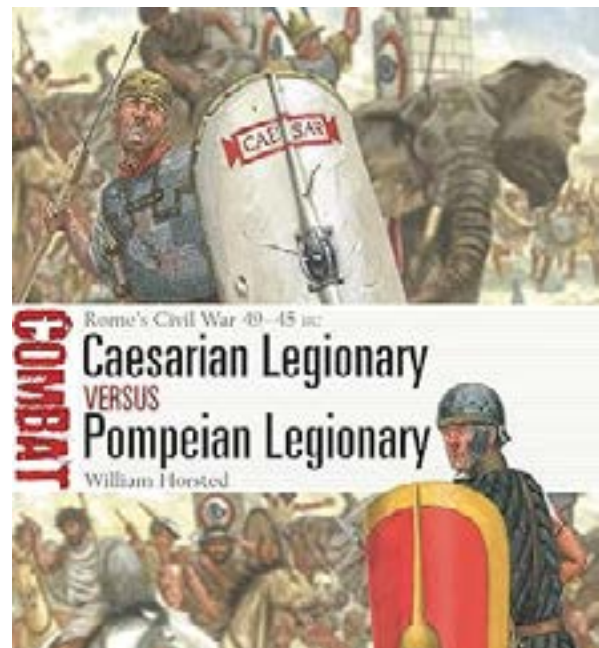
Triggered by the tensions surrounding Julius Caesar's return to Rome from Gaul, the civil war that broke out in 49 BC convulsed the Roman world. Commanders and troops loyal to Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus, known as Pompey, confronted those following Caesar in a series of brutal battles across the Mediterranean, from Hispania to Greece.

William Horsted assesses the similarities and differences between the evolving Caesarian and Pompeian armies, which included not only Roman legions but also auxiliaries from Gaul, Numidia and elsewhere. Even after Pompey's defeat at Pharsalus (48 BC) and his subsequent death in Egypt, the conflict continued, with Pompey's relatives and followers continuing the fight until 45 BC.

The two armies are examined in the context of three major clashes of the conflict: Dyrrachium (48 BC) in present-day Albania; Thapsus (46 BC) in modern Tunisia; and Munda (45 BC) in Spain. The text is complemented by specially commissioned colour artwork and mapping as well as archive photographs.

In January 49 BCE, Julius Caesar crossed the Rubicon River into Italy, an act that initiated a Roman civil war involving Caesar and Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus. Both sides in the conflict were similarly equipped, organised, and trained. In this volume of Osprey's Combat series, William Horsted examines the composition of each force and discusses the factors contributing to the outcome of the conflict.

Horsted frames his account around Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon with an army loyal to him over Rome, prompting Roman authorities to seek help from Pompey. He also considers how soldiers were recruited, motivated by promises of money and land, examines military leadership and organization, and describes their weapons and equipment.



Horsted discusses three battles, excluding Pharsalus. He starts with Dyrrachium, where Pompey broke Caesar's siege in Greece. Next is Thapsus in North Africa in 46 BCE, where Caesar defeated Scipio and his elephants after Pompey's death. Despite the win, Caesar's work continued.

The next year, Caesar defeated Pompey's son Gnaeus at Munda in Spain. Horsted reviews these battles, noting the key factors behind each outcome, then briefly addresses Caesar's fate and its impact on the Roman Republic. The annotated bibliography is useful for those new to the era.

Caesarian Legionary versus Pompeian Legionary offers a clear overview of this major conflict, with Horsted skilfully explaining events and supported by quality maps and illustrations. The selection of three battles demonstrates the war's scope and highlights the key role of auxiliaries. While Caesar's military skills could be emphasised more, this informative book is ideal for newcomers but also provides insights for seasoned readers.



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