



# irregular

Spring Issue 2026

magazine

Gaslands

Wizard's Brawl

Welsh Conflicts

Beyond the Brush

*Plus Interviews, Reviews, and much, much more*





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# Spring Issue 2026

# Editorial

**Jason Hubbard**

Welcome back to another issue of Irregular Magazine.

So first off, yes this is a tad late, and the reason was a trip to China, wandering around several historical sites. Now that shouldn't have delayed the issue by much, but my laptop dying and losing several articles did. So as a result the Spring issue is a slight late, so there'll be a Summer/Autumn bumper issue.

So what's in this issue, well we have quite a packed magazine. This issue has a very historical bias, don't worry fantasy and Sci-fi fans the next couple issues will make up for that. So in this issue we look at why museums are great for inspiration. Along with a look at some of the conflicts that have occurred in the Welsh hills.

There is also a great article for those who enjoy solo gaming, and we provide some ideas on ways to make those games more enjoyable. There is a fantasy offering in the form of Wizard's Brawl, along with an article for those fans of converting die-cast cars by strapping weapons on them and then zooming around trying to destroy our opponents cars.

Don't forget readers we also have a YouTube channel with an abundance of additional content for you to enjoy.

<https://www.youtube.com/@irregularmagazine>

Well that's all folks.....

We'll see you just before Christmas with another jam packed issue.....



# Editor's Challenge

So, this year so far, I've been quite productive especially in regard to getting a whole ton of terrain pieces painted. Also, I've managed to get quite a few die-cast cars kit-bashed and painted for Gaslands,

Apart from slowly ploughing through the mass amount of terrain buildings and scatter pieces. I have also managed to get some miniatures for my Bolt Action armies painted and I've now finally nearly completed my 15mm Sci-Fi army. I'm literally down to the last 15 infantry figures.



This will be the first army completed this year. One of the items I have managed to paint recently was one of the Celtic Chariots for my 28mm Ancient British Army, which was fun to paint. I still have another two to complete, along with some warriors then that'll be another army completed this year.

My pile of terrain has been my main focus this year, as I have numerous terrain pieces across a variety of scales, that includes 10mm, 15mm and 28mm. On top of that those different scales are also across varying genres and historical periods. I still have buildings for Gangs of Rome that need to be built and painted, along with American Civil War period pieces for Warlord Epic scale that need getting finished for a future campaign. One of the terrain types I have managed to get quite a lot of painted and ready for the battlefield has been scatter.



Scatter is an important aspect of the battlefield, as it makes any tabletop battle feel more realistic.

Recently I decided to get some die-cast cars ready to do battle using the Gasland's rules. I went a bit overboard on purchasing Hotwheels cars and a few Matchbox vehicles. I decided that I prefer the cars to be on a base so that they look more like a wargaming piece rather than







a toy car. I picked up some of the Gasland sprues from Northstar Miniatures, as well as using 15mm parts left over from my Flames of War and Team Yankee leftovers.

I decided to create several team/factions that included interceptors, similar to those from the Mad Max films. I used muscle cars for the interceptors painting them to look like US police cars. Other factions I built is a corporate race team, and a Good Ole Boys team which is made up of pick-up trucks.

My plan with my painting this year is to get some of my started armies finished. So this will include getting the celts done, which won't take much of a push to do. I have an Early British Flames of War force that needs building and painting, at the same time there are few German infantry and vehicles to also build and paint.



For the Russians I just have infantry to paint, which is the same for my Team Yankee British. I have also started a 10mm Orc army that needs to be painted ready for the table-top, along with a Lizardman army and a Barbarian force both in 10mm.

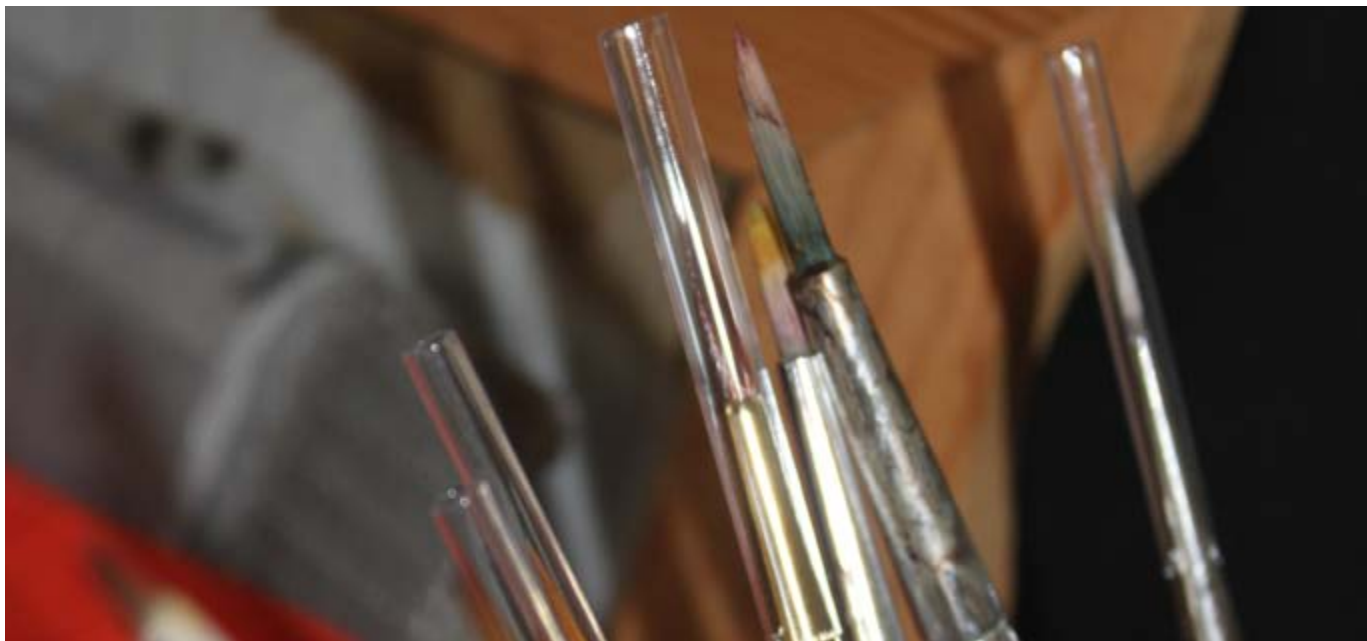


Other armies that I have that need finishing is a 28mm Cathay army for Warhammer Old World, other armies include both Union and Confederate forces for the American Civil War, an English Civil War Parliamentarian Army in Warlord Epic scale and in the same scale a Carthage army.



# Beyond the Brush

## Storytelling Through Wargaming Terrain and Miniatures



In tabletop wargaming, miniatures and terrain are often approached as tools for gameplay. Figures move, dice roll, and rules resolve battles. Yet, when approached thoughtfully, these same pieces become more than tokens—they are narrative vessels, capable of telling stories that reach beyond the mechanics of the game.

From Napoleonic skirmishes to Dark Age sieges, wargaming allows us to inhabit moments of conflict, strategy, and human drama. Each miniature's pose, each terrain feature, and each carefully painted detail contributes to an immersive tapestry of storytelling, inviting players to see the battlefield not only as a challenge to overcome but as a stage for unfolding history and personal interpretation.

### Miniatures as Characters

Miniatures are miniature actors on a stage. The way they are posed—kneeling, charging, rallying, or retreating—suggests action, emotion, and narrative potential.

- **Combat Poses:** A model frozen mid-swing tells a story of aggression or desperation.
- **Stances and Gestures:** Slight tilts, raised weapons, or hesitant postures indicate tension, morale, or hesitation.
- **Conversions and Customisation:** Kitbashes and custom paintwork can embed backstory, allegiances, and personality into figures.

Through careful attention to these details, each miniature becomes an individual within a larger story, rather than a generic game piece.

### Terrain as Setting and Mood

Terrain transforms the battlefield into a narrative landscape. Hills, rivers, ruined walls, and forests are not merely obstacles—they are story elements.

- **Environmental Storytelling:** A shattered bridge hints at a prior conflict or desperate retreat. A scorched village evokes past raids.
- **Strategic Drama:** Narrow passes, hidden defiles, and chokepoints create tension, suggesting risk, opportunity, and narrative choices.
- **Mood and Atmosphere:** Weathered buildings, misted forests, and carefully painted skies establish tone, influencing how players perceive each encounter.
- **By treating terrain as a narrative tool,** game tables become immersive dioramas of historical or fictional conflict.

### Campaigns and Scenario Design

Storytelling extends beyond individual games into campaigns and scenarios. Narrative-driven design shapes objectives, victory conditions, and progression:

- **Historical Campaigns:** Napoleonic skirmishes, medieval sieges, or colonial encounters can be recreated with attention to period tactics, unit composition, and terrain context.
- **Fictional Scenarios:** Player-created worlds allow for inventive terrain that tells unique stories, such as abandoned outposts, mystical ruins, or post-apocalyptic settlements.
- **Dynamic Consequences:** Wounds, attrition, and



environmental effects carry through games, creating continuity and a developing narrative over multiple sessions.

Well-designed scenarios integrate miniatures and terrain into a story, turning each battle into a chapter of a larger tale.

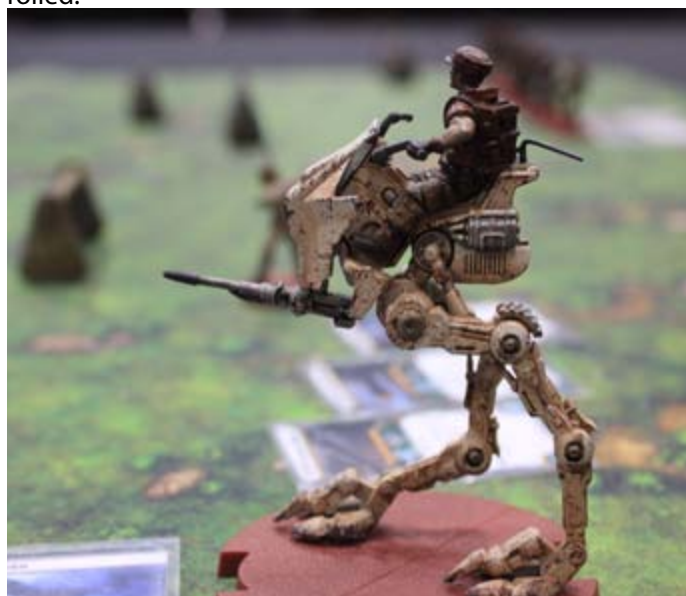


## Visual Storytelling Techniques

The visual presentation of miniatures and terrain greatly affects narrative perception:

- **Colour and Weathering:** Subtle fading, scorch marks, and mud can suggest history, climate, and battle conditions.
- **Composition and Placement:** Groupings of figures, positioning relative to terrain, and focal points guide the viewer's eye and imply relationships or tension.
- **Lighting and Display:** Directional light, shadows, and contrast can highlight narrative beats, turning a tabletop into a dramatic scene.

Visual storytelling allows players to read the battlefield at a glance, extracting narrative cues before a single die is rolled.



## Interactive Storytelling and Player Interpretation

Wargaming is inherently interactive. Players do not merely observe a story—they participate in it.

- **Decision-Making as Narrative:** Choosing where to advance, when to retreat, or which objective to prioritise generates emergent stories.
- **Roleplay Elements:** Naming units, assigning personalities, and interpreting enemy actions add layers of narrative.
- **Collaborative Storytelling:** When multiple players engage with the scene, the narrative evolves with each decision, reflecting both history and imagination.

By engaging with miniatures and terrain in this way, players are co-authors of the battlefield story.

## Beyond Historical Accuracy

While historical fidelity adds depth, storytelling can thrive even in fictional or anachronistic settings.

The same techniques—pose, terrain, composition, atmosphere—translate to fantasy, sci-fi, and hybrid genres. The key is cohesion and intention: every figure, obstacle, and scenic element should suggest purpose or history.

Miniatures and terrain are more than tools for resolving tabletop combat—they are storytelling instruments.



From subtle weathering to carefully chosen stances, from strategic terrain layout to narrative-driven campaigns, each element contributes to the narrative tapestry. By viewing the game table as a stage, players and hobbyists can transform wargaming into an art form that tells compelling stories of conflict, strategy, and human experience.

The next time you paint a figure or build a terrain piece, consider not just the mechanics, but the story it tells. Every battle becomes an opportunity to engage with history, imagination, and narrative in miniature form.

Beyond the brush lies a world where every model and hill-top speaks, inviting players to step into stories that unfold with each move, each roll, each decision.



# Byzantine Soldier vs Seljuk Warrior

Publisher: Osprey Publishing

Author:

Osprey's Combat series thrives on contrast—two opposing forces, a defined battlefield, and the tension that emerges when doctrine, culture, and circumstance collide. In *Byzantine Soldier vs Seljuk Warrior: Manzikert to Myriokephalon, 1071–1176*, Si Sheppard leans fully into that formula, using three pivotal clashes to explore a struggle that reshaped the medieval Near East.

At the heart of the book lies a simple but powerful idea: this was not a single war, but an ongoing contest for control of Anatolia—a region that refused to stabilise. Beginning with the catastrophic Byzantine defeat at Manzikert in 1071, the narrative traces how Seljuk expansion pushed deep into Byzantine territory, triggering a chain reaction that would include the launch of the First Crusade.

What follows is less a story of linear conquest and more a cycle of raids, counter-raids, and uneasy recoveries, as Byzantine forces claw back coastal strongholds while the Seljuks consolidate the interior. ([ospreypublishing.com](https://ospreypublishing.com)) The result is a theatre defined by uncertainty—where no victory feels permanent, and every campaign risks tipping the balance.

The real strength of the book lies in how it frames its opposing forces. On one side, the Byzantine army appears as a system built on adaptability and tradition—a hybrid force drawing on Roman legacy, mercenaries, and regional contingents.

On the other, the Seljuk warriors embody mobility and pressure, their tactics shaped by steppe warfare, mounted archery, and fluid engagement.

Sheppard doesn't oversimplify this contrast. Instead, he shows how each side could exploit the other's weaknesses:

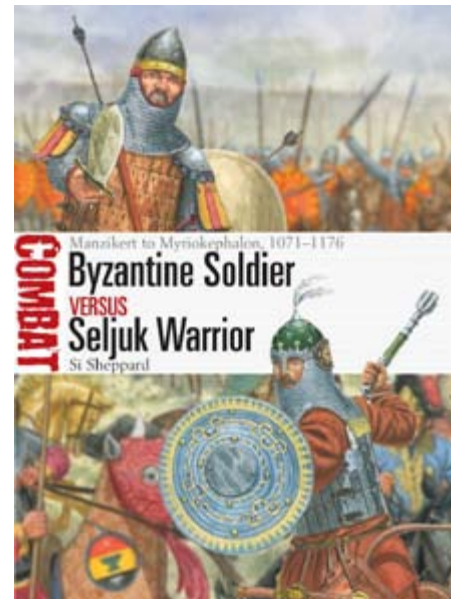
- Byzantine discipline vs. vulnerability to encirclement
- Seljuk mobility vs. difficulty in decisive set-piece battles
- It's this interplay—rather than simple battlefield outcomes—that gives the book its analytical weight.

## Battles That Define the Narrative

Rather than attempting a broad survey, the book focuses tightly on three engagements:

- Manzikert (1071)
- Philomelion (1116)
- Myriokephalon (1176)
- 

Each is treated as a case study, illustrating different phases of the conflict. This approach works well, giving the



narrative structure while allowing deeper tactical insight. The inclusion of maps, diagrams, and artwork—standard for Osprey but particularly effective here—helps clarify what might otherwise be a confusing series of manoeuvres. Contemporary reviews note the strength of these visual aids, highlighting “excellent maps” and clear analysis of strategy and fighting styles.

At 80 pages, the book inevitably walks a familiar line between clarity and compression.

On the positive side, it is:

- Highly readable
- Visually rich
- Focused on the experience of soldiers and commanders

But that brevity comes at a cost. The deeper political and cultural dimensions of the Byzantine–Seljuk struggle—particularly the internal weaknesses of the Byzantine state—are present but not fully explored.

This is not a comprehensive history of the period. It is a sharply framed military study, and it rarely strays beyond that remit.

*Byzantine Soldier vs Seljuk Warrior* succeeds by narrowing its focus. Instead of trying to explain everything, it concentrates on the human and tactical dimension of a long, grinding frontier war.

What emerges is a portrait of two military systems locked in a contest neither could fully resolve—a conflict defined as much by endurance and adaptation as by decisive victories.

# What Hot Wheels and Matchbox Cars Work Best for Gaslands



One of the coolest things about Gaslands is that the “miniatures” aren’t expensive injection-moulded armies — they’re repurposed toy cars you customise yourself. The official rules are designed around roughly 1:64-scale vehicles such as Hot Wheels and Matchbox, and players use die-cast cars as blank canvases to build post-apocalyptic war machines.

Not all cars are created equal when it comes to conversion potential, tabletop presence, or thematic flair. Here’s how to choose the best Hot Wheels and Matchbox bases for your Gaslands crews.

## Why Hot Wheels & Matchbox Are Ideal

- Hot Wheels and Matchbox cars dominate the Gaslands hobby because:
- They’re cheap and plentiful — you can pick up cases, bargain bins, or thrift store lots for very little.
- Most are roughly 1:64 scale, which fits the templates provided in the rules.

They include a huge variety of vehicle types (cars, trucks, buggies, vans, rigs, etc.) so you can build diverse fleets. Matchbox tends toward more realistic vehicles with detailed bodywork, while Hot Wheels often provides wilder, more dramatic castings — great for Mad-Max-style builds.

## Best Types of Cars to Look For

### Classic Muscle & Sports Cars

These are great for nimble frontline racers or gun platform forms because they have recognizable silhouettes and lots of surface detail for paints and weapons.

Good choices include:

- ‘55 Chevy Bel Air / Gasser — excellent as a classic brute.
- Nissan/Datsun 240Z / Fairlady Z — sleek, sporty bodies that work for both racers and beaters.
- Custom Volkswagen Beetle — fun as a buggy or quirky support car.

These castings look great on the tabletop and can easily accommodate armour plates, gun mounts, or ram bars.

## Buggies & Off-Roaders

Buggies are lightweight and visually work for fast, agile builds — excellent flankers or objective racers.

What to target:

- Hot Wheels buggies (e.g., Mountain Mauler or similar off-road castings) — they inherently look rugged and can inspire creative builds.







- Short wheelbase dune buggy styles — compact and ideal for high-speed manoeuvres.

Because these models are already exaggerated in stance and detail, they fit the post-apocalyptic theme naturally.

#### Trucks, Vans & Heavy Bodies

If you want a serious war rig, tank, or support transport, larger vehicles are perfect.

Useful picks:

- Full-size trucks (e.g., Hot Wheels “Super Rig” series or Matchbox lorries) — these form great heavy hitters or crew transports.
- Vans and SUVs — good multi-purpose bases that can be armoured up or weaponised.
- Utility vehicles with flatbeds (trucks, pickups) — handy for war gear, cargo, or extra crew.

Because Gaslands isn’t strict about exact scale as long as most cars are consistent, you can use these bigger bodies to represent “heavy” vehicles without breaking the game.

#### Fan-Favourite Hot Wheels Castings

These are widely used in Gaslands conversions because they’re abundant, have strong shapes, and convert well:

- Mountain Mauler – Classic off-road buggy style, perfect for dunes, rams, and high-clearance builds.
- ’32 Ford / Deuce – Great for rat-rod or post-apoc themed cars with characterful front ends.
- Bone Shaker – Iconic “skull” styled hot rod body that makes a striking aggressive vehicle.
- Acceleracers castings in general – Sleek shapes make for fast looking racers or tech vehicles in the wasteland.



- Piledriver – Chunky, bold silhouette often cited in community builds.
- Classic muscle cars like ’70 Chevelle or Camaro-style castings — great for muscle cars, rammers or lead vehicles.

Matchbox tends to offer more real-world vehicle designs that suit gritty, realistic builds:

SUVs and pickups from Matchbox assortments — sturdy bases for armoured rigs or heavy haulers.

Off-road and 4x4 castings (e.g., Scout/Off-road packs) — wide wheels and lifted stance make excellent buggies or support cars.

Classic road cars like Corvettes or older sports cars — good for themed crews or support cars.

#### Specialist & Eye-Catching Picks

These aren’t official lists, but hobbyists repeatedly highlight them as great Gaslands bases:

- Wagons, vans, or boxy vehicles — ideal for war rigs or gun platforms thanks to extra body surface.
- Trucks or hoods with large beds — easy to mount weapons or cargo.
- Older classic cars — vintage silhouettes often make the most visually compelling wasteland vehicles.



#### Tips for Picking Cars That Convert Well

##### Easy Customisation

Metal bodies held together with rivets can be fun to convert, but they take effort! If you want to cut, bend or kitbash freely, look for cars where the chassis is easy to disassemble, or start with brands that use screws or simpler construction.

##### Good Painting Surface

Vehicles with flat panels and distinctive lines make painting and weathering easier. Muscle cars and classic sedans usually fit this category

##### Thematic Flair

Whether you’re after a splatter-paint death squad or a rusty mining crew, choose cars whose shapes match your narrative. A vintage panel van feels very different to a sleek

sports racer on the table!

## Alternative Vehicle Sources

While Hot Wheels and Matchbox are the go-to, some players also use:



- Metal Machines or Street Machines brand cars — easier to take apart if they use plastic shells or screws.
- Majorette or Greenlight cars for more realistic proportions if you want consistency.
- 1:72/1:64 die-cast models (e.g., Mini Lindy) sourced online for unique vehicles like campers or buses.

None of these are required, but they're great options if you want variety beyond traditional toy shelves. When it comes to Gaslands, the right Hot Wheels or Matchbox car isn't about perfect scale or specific casting — it's about inspiration. Look for vehicles that:

- 
- Fit your theme
- Give you surface and shape to build on
- Feel fun to drive and customise

Since most hobbyists agree that looking through bargain bins and thrift store lots is half the fun, there's no wrong car to start with — so long as it inspires chaos on the tabletop!

Would you like a list of specific castings by name that are fan-favourites for Gaslands conversions? I can pull together a ready-to-print checklist.



Here's a ready-to-use list of popular Hot Wheels and Matchbox castings that Gaslands players and builders often love for conversions — either because they have great silhouettes, fantastic surface detail, or just look epic on the tabletop after mods:

Here's a shortlist you can use when digging through bins or ordering bulk cars:



## Hot Wheels

- Mountain Mauler
- '32 Ford / Deuce
- Bone Shaker
- Various Acceleracers
- Classic muscle casts (Chevelle/Camaro styles)



## Matchbox & Similar Diecasts

- 4x4 Off-Road packs
- SUVs & pickups
- Classic road cars & muscle cars
- Vans / Delivery rigs

This list is drawn from community favourites and typical Gaslands builds seen in hobby post photos — not an official list, but widely referenced by players.





# Museums for Forgotten Wargaming Inspiration

Wargaming inspiration is often sought in the usual places: rulebooks, box art, social media feeds, and the latest releases from miniature manufacturers. These sources are convenient—but they are also circular. The same visual language, the same archetypes, and the same narratives repeat, slowly narrowing what the hobby imagines as “normal.”

Local museums offer a way out of that loop. Often overlooked, under-visited, and deeply specific, museums—especially small regional ones—are rich with forgotten stories, unusual visuals, and grounded details that translate beautifully into wargaming scenarios, terrain, and dioramas. They remind us that history is messy, local, and full of human-scale drama.

This article explores how scouting local museums can unlock fresh, authentic inspiration for tabletop gaming and diorama building—without chasing trends or buying anything new.

## Why Museums Are an Untapped Resource

Unlike films or games, museums aren’t designed to impress at a glance. They reward slow looking.

- A single display case might contain:
- A rusted tool repaired multiple times
- A faded uniform with mismatched buttons
- A hand-drawn map marked with corrections and doubts

These are details rarely captured in mass-produced miniatures or terrain kits—but they are exactly what make a table feel real.

Museums also reflect local history, which is often stranger and more compelling than grand, well-known narratives. Small conflicts, supply shortages, improvised defences, and civilian involvement all emerge naturally.

For wargamers and diorama builders, this is fertile ground.

## What to Look for Beyond the Obvious

You don’t need tanks, swords, or uniforms to find wargaming ideas.

### Everyday Objects

Cooking tools, medical kits, religious items, trade goods—these suggest logistics, morale, and culture.

A single object can inspire:

- a scenario objective
- a campaign resource
- environmental storytelling on a base

A broken lantern or ration tin can say more than a weapon ever could.





### Architecture and Spaces

Museums often preserve or document buildings long gone:

- workshops
- border forts
- warehouses
- temporary shelters

Note their proportions, materials, and wear. These details help terrain feel grounded rather than generic. Sketching or photographing floor plans can translate directly into playable tables.

### Improvisation and Adaptation

One of the strongest recurring themes in museums is making do.

Reused equipment, field repairs, and hybrid solutions are everywhere. This is gold for kitbashing and narrative play. Improvised barricades, patched armour, or mixed-era gear immediately suggest stories of scarcity and survival.

### From Display Case to Game Table

The key is translation, not replication.

Instead of asking “How do I model this exactly?” ask:

- What problem was this solving?
- Who used it, and under what pressure?
- What went wrong?
- 



These questions turn static objects into dynamic game elements.

A damaged bridge display becomes:

- a contested choke point
- a timed demolition objective
- a risky crossing under fire

A medical exhibit becomes a campaign rule about wounded fighters and recovery.

### Dioramas: Capturing Moments, Not Spectacle

Museums excel at showing moments between famous events.

For dioramas, this is invaluable.

Consider scenes such as:

- troops waiting rather than fighting
- repairs being made under poor conditions
- civilians navigating occupied spaces
- abandoned positions reclaimed by nature

These quieter moments often resonate more strongly than dramatic combat poses. They also encourage subtle painting, restrained weathering, and storytelling through posture and placement.



### Taking Notes Like a Researcher, Not a Tourist

To make museum visits useful for the hobby:

Photograph textures, not just objects

- Note colour variation caused by age and use
- Pay attention to labels describing why something looks the way it does
- Sketch shapes and layouts rather than copying details

Many museums allow photography for personal use—but



always check signage and respect restrictions.  
The goal isn't reference hoarding. It's pattern recognition.



### Breaking Free from Established Aesthetics

One of the biggest benefits of museum inspiration is aesthetic independence.

When your reference point is a 19th-century flood defence or a Cold War civil shelter, your terrain will not look like everyone else's—and that's the point.

This approach naturally leads to:

- unusual colour palettes
- asymmetric terrain layouts
- scenarios driven by environment rather than balance



Your games feel discovered, not designed.

### Museums as Ethical Inspiration

Using museums also encourages a more thoughtful relationship with history.

Rather than glorifying conflict, museum displays often foreground:

- cost
- consequence
- human impact

This perspective can inform more reflective narrative play, where victory is complicated and survival matters more than domination.

It doesn't make games less fun.

It makes them more meaningful.



### Making It a Habit

You don't need special trips or famous institutions. Local history centres, volunteer-run museums, industrial heritage sites, and even temporary exhibitions are enough.

A single afternoon visit can fuel months of hobby work. Go without a shopping list. Go curious.

Wargaming thrives on imagination—but imagination needs raw material. Local museums provide that material in abundance: authentic detail, forgotten stories, and visuals untouched by current trends. They reconnect the hobby with scale, texture, and human experience.

The next time you're stuck for an idea—or tired of seeing the same tables and armies—skip the web store and visit a museum instead.

In the quiet of display cases and handwritten labels, you may find the most original wargaming inspiration you've had in years. Inspiration doesn't always shout. Sometimes it's waiting behind glass, quietly asking you to look closer.

# Gulf War 1990-91

Publisher: Osprey Publishing

Author: Steven J. Zaloga

There is a certain challenge in writing about the Gulf War: it is at once one of the most technologically decisive conflicts in modern history, and one of the most deceptively brief. In *Gulf War 1990-91: Saddam's Iraq Faces Operation Desert Storm*, Steven J. Zaloga attempts to compress that contradiction into Osprey's familiar 96-page Campaign format—and, for the most part, succeeds.

Zaloga's approach is tightly structured, almost architectural. The book follows Osprey's established formula—chronology, opposing forces, operational plans, and then the campaign itself—but within that framework it delivers a clear, analytical narrative of how a vast multinational coalition dismantled Iraq's military position in Kuwait.

What emerges is not just a story of victory, but of asymmetry. Iraq fields one of the largest armies in the region; the Coalition brings coordination, air supremacy, and an industrial-scale application of modern warfare. The result feels less like a contest of equals and more like a demonstration of what late-20th-century military doctrine could achieve when executed at full capacity.

If you've read Osprey before, much here will feel familiar—but refined. The book is dense with:

- Full-colour maps and diagrams
- Orders of battle and command structures
- Contemporary photographs and commissioned artwork

These elements are not decorative. They do much of the heavy lifting, turning what could be an abstract operational study into something tactile and immediate. Osprey's hallmark—visual clarity—remains one of its strongest assets, and here it reinforces the scale and tempo of the campaign.

There is also a noticeable benefit in Zaloga's authorship. Drawing on decades of research and even personal proximity to the conflict, the book feels grounded in both documentation and lived perspective.

And yet, the book cannot entirely escape the limitations of its format. At just under 100 pages, *Gulf War 1990-91* inevitably compresses complexity. The political dimensions of the war, the Iraqi perspective in depth, and the longer-term consequences of the conflict are present—but necessarily abbreviated.



The focus remains firmly on the operational and tactical level, particularly the ground campaign following the air war.

For many readers—especially wargamers and military enthusiasts—this will be a strength. The clarity is purposeful. But those seeking a more expansive, critical history may find the treatment too concise.

What lingers after reading is not just the speed of the campaign, but its consequences. The book closes with the recognition that while Iraq was defeated, the regime remained—and the conflict's unresolved tensions would shape the decades that followed.

In that sense, the book captures something essential: the Gulf War as both an ending and a beginning. A demonstration of overwhelming force, yes—but also the prelude to a far more complicated future.

This is Osprey doing what it does best: delivering a clear, visually rich, and tightly focused operational history. It is not exhaustive, nor does it attempt to be. Instead, it offers a sharply defined lens through which to understand a pivotal modern conflict.

For readers who value clarity, structure, and visual storytelling, *Gulf War 1990-91* is an excellent addition to the Campaign series. For those looking for depth beyond the battlefield, it may feel like an introduction rather than a conclusion.

Either way, it captures the defining paradox of the war itself: brief, decisive—and far from simple.



# Unearthing Hidden Gems

## Lesser-Known Historical Wargaming Rule Sets



Historical wargaming is a broad church—but if you only judged it by social media, you'd think it was a very small one.

The same handful of rule sets dominate conversation, YouTube coverage, and club nights. They're not bad rules. Many of them are excellent. But their popularity has an unintended side effect: it narrows our sense of what historical wargaming can be.

Beyond the usual suspects lies a rich ecosystem of smaller, quieter rule sets—games with strong identities, clever mechanics, and a clear sense of historical purpose. They don't chase tournament balance or constant expansion. They exist because someone had a particular vision of how history should feel on the table. This article isn't about rejecting popular systems. It's about widening the lens.

### Why Lesser-Known Rules Matter

Most niche historical rules aren't trying to be universal engines. They are opinionated by design. That's their strength.

Smaller rulesets often:

- Model a specific type of conflict extremely well
- Embrace asymmetry instead of sanding it down
- Prioritise decision-making over list optimisation
- Expect players to meet the game halfway

They're less concerned with selling the next supplement and more interested in answering a single question: what actually mattered in this kind of fighting?

### When Popularity Becomes a Limitation

Big-name rules inevitably become compromise systems. To appeal to the widest audience, they smooth out rough edges, compress history, and aim for internal balance above all else.

That's not a criticism—it's a reality of scale. But the cost is that many games start to feel interchangeable. Swap the miniatures, tweak a few stats, and the experience barely changes.

Lesser-known rules tend to do the opposite. They lean into friction. They make you uncomfortable in historically appropriate ways. And they're often more memorable for it.



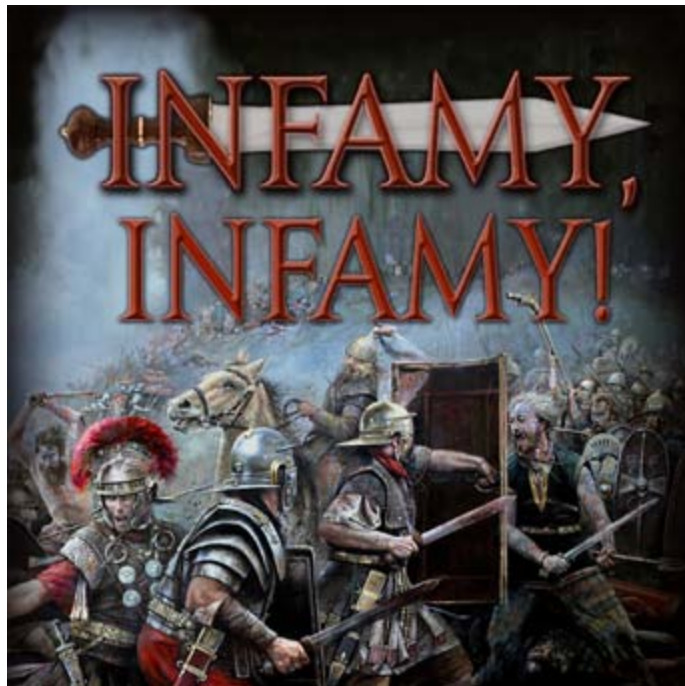


## Hidden Gems Worth Digging Up

Rather than a comprehensive list, what follows is a cross-section—rules that do something distinctive, even if they've never been algorithm-friendly.

### Infamy, Infamy! – Roman Britain Without the Heroics

Too often, Roman-era games are about disciplined legions steamrolling disorganised foes. *Infamy, Infamy!* flips that assumption.

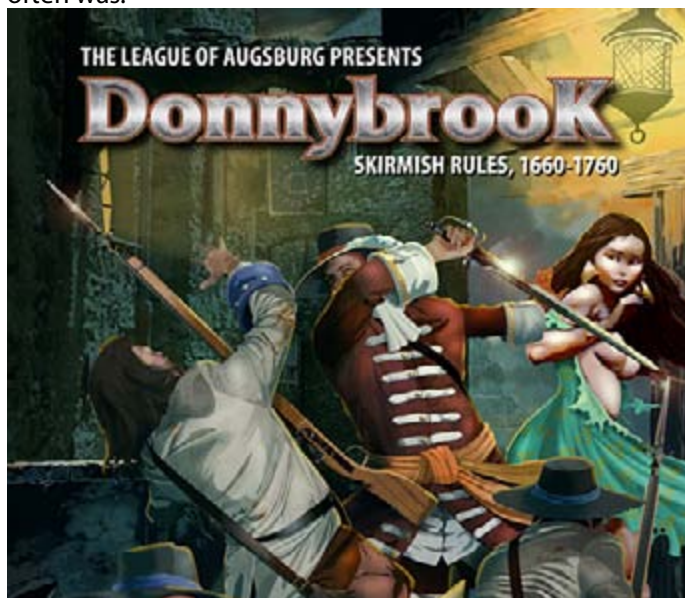


This is small-unit warfare in a hostile province, where Romans are competent but brittle, and native forces rely on speed, aggression, and local knowledge. The emphasis is on morale, disorder, and command friction rather than body counts.

It's not flashy. It's not symmetrical. And it feels right.

### Donnybrook – Early Modern Chaos Embraced

Pike-and-shot warfare is usually treated with reverence. *Donnybrook* treats it like the dangerous, unruly business it often was.



Loose formations, unreliable troops, and sudden violence dominate play. Commanders struggle to impose order, and momentum matters more than perfect planning. If you've ever felt that early modern warfare is too often sanitised on the tabletop, this is a bracing corrective.

### Mortal Gods – Mythic Greece at Human Scale

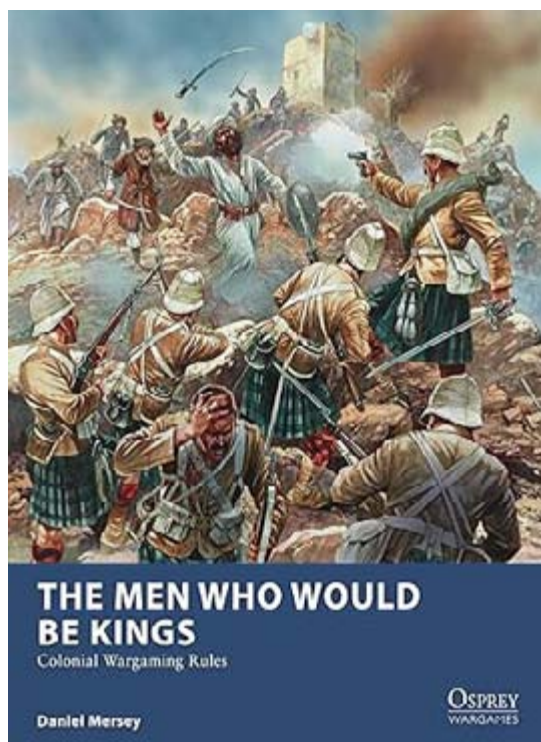
*Mortal Gods* sits in an interesting space between history and myth. Rather than mass hoplite clashes, it focuses on small warbands where heroes matter—but not too much. What makes it stand out is how it handles leadership and divine favour without turning the game into fantasy. The result feels rooted in Greek storytelling traditions rather than modern game design trends.

It rewards narrative play and restrained collections.

### The Men Who Would Be Kings – Colonial Warfare Without Apology

Colonial-period games are difficult to get right. *The Men Who Would Be Kings* doesn't pretend the conflicts were fair—or that the forces involved were equivalent. Instead, it builds the game around imbalance: discipline versus numbers, firepower versus motivation. Victory is contextual, not absolute.

It's a ruleset that trusts players to handle uncomfortable history with maturity—and that alone makes it unusual.



### What a Tanker! – WWII as Crew-Level Drama

World War Two gaming often zooms out. *What a Tanker!* zooms in.

By focusing on individual tank crews rather than formations, it turns familiar hardware into fragile, temperamental machines crewed by stressed humans. Randomness isn't a bug—it's the point.

It's a reminder that even well-trodden periods still have room for genuinely fresh perspectives.



## What These Games Have in Common

Despite covering wildly different periods, these rulesets share some striking traits:

- They are unapologetically narrow in focus
- They accept that history is often unfair
- They favour narrative consequences over mathematical balance
- They reward players who engage with the context, not just the mechanics



They're not trying to be everything to everyone—and that's exactly why they work.

## How to Find Your Own Hidden Gems

If you want to move beyond the mainstream, a few habits help:

- Look for rules written by historians first, designers second
- Pay attention to games described as “not for tournaments”
- Explore older PDFs and out-of-print titles



- Listen to what smaller clubs and niche events are playing

The best discoveries rarely come from the front page.

## Playing the Hobby, Not the Algorithm

The historical wargaming hobby thrives on curiosity. Yet it's easy to let visibility dictate taste.

Unearthing lesser-known rule sets isn't about being contrary. It's about reclaiming the experimental, personal side of the hobby—where rules are tools for exploring history, not products to be consumed on release schedules.



Some of the most rewarding games you'll ever play won't be the most popular ones.

You just have to dig a little.



# Konflikt '47: Festung Europa

## When the War Refuses to End



There's a particular kind of alternate history that doesn't just ask "what if?"—it insists the answer is stranger, darker, and far less stable than we'd like. *Konflikt '47: Festung Europa* sits firmly in that space, taking the exhausted stalemate of late World War II and twisting it through the lens of rift energy, occult experimentation, and technological desperation.

This is not a rulebook in disguise. It's something more atmospheric—and, depending on what you want from your gaming supplements, more divisive.

At its core, *Festung Europa* is a study in escalation. The European theatre is no longer simply contested territory; it's a scarred landscape shaped by the aftermath of the Dresden Rift, where reality itself has begun to fray. The familiar geography of WWII becomes something uncanny—front lines feel brittle, victories temporary, and every faction seems to be racing toward something they don't fully understand.

What the book does exceptionally well is tone. This is a world where science fiction doesn't replace history—it infects it. The result is a setting that feels less like pulpy adventure and more like a slow, grinding slide into something irreversibly altered.

Physically, *Festung Europa* makes a strong first impression. It's a handsome volume: full-colour, dense with artwork, and clearly designed to be lingered over rather than skimmed.

The imagery leans heavily into contrast—recognisable WWII iconography colliding with walkers, mutations, and

experimental horrors. Miniature photography reinforces the point: this is a game that thrives on spectacle, and the book understands that visual inspiration is part of the hobby's appeal.

It's the kind of supplement that invites you to pause mid-page and think, "I could build an army around this idea."

Where *Festung Europa* draws a clear line is in its priorities. This is a campaign book first, and unapologetically so.





Inside, you'll find narrative operations, evolving battle contexts, and scenario frameworks that encourage players to think beyond isolated matches.

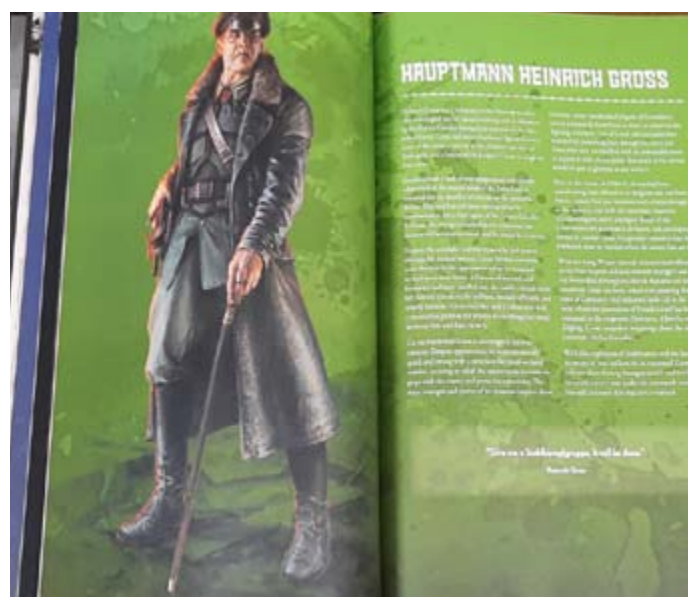


There's a sense of continuity running through it all—a suggestion that your tabletop clashes are fragments of a much larger, unraveling war.

What you won't find is a wealth of new rules or unit profiles. Those looking for mechanical depth or competitive tools may come away frustrated. The book assumes you're here for the story, not the spreadsheet.

This divide—between narrative richness and mechanical restraint—is where Festung Europa becomes most interesting.

For narrative players, it's a gift. There's enough here to fuel entire campaigns, hobby projects, or themed events. It encourages you to treat your army as part of a living theatre of war, not just a list of optimised choices.



For others, it may feel insubstantial. Without significant rules expansion, its value depends heavily on how much you care about context and immersion.



Konflikt '47: Festung Europa doesn't try to be essential in the traditional sense. It doesn't redefine the game mechanically or flood players with new options. Instead, it deepens the world—adding texture, mood, and a sense of narrative weight to every engagement fought within it. That makes it a slightly unusual proposition: less a toolbox, more a lens.



If you're willing to look through it, what you'll see is a war that feels bigger, stranger, and far more alive. If not, you may find yourself wondering where the rest of the book is. Either way, Festung Europa knows exactly what it wants to be—and commits to it without compromise.



# Dragons at War

## A Survey of Conflict in Wales

Wales is often framed through poetry, industry, and landscape — mountains, choirs, coal, and castles. But its history is equally defined by conflict. Not constant warfare in the continental sense, but recurring struggles over sovereignty, identity, faith, labour, and political voice.

From medieval resistance against Norman expansion to industrial-era uprisings and modern constitutional debate, Wales has been shaped by confrontation as much as culture.

### The Age of Conquest: Norman Expansion and Welsh Resistance

After the Norman Conquest of England in 1066, William I turned his attention west. Rather than a single decisive invasion, the Norman push into Wales was a rolling frontier conflict.

Powerful Marcher Lords were granted lands along the border and given extraordinary autonomy to subdue and control Welsh territories. Castles sprang up rapidly — Chepstow, Pembroke, and Cardiff becoming fortified anchors of Norman authority.

The Welsh response was not unified submission, but resistance — fragmented, regional, persistent. Welsh princes fought back through guerrilla tactics, shifting alliances, and intermittent campaigns. The frontier between Norman and Welsh control fluctuated for generations. This era cemented Wales as a land of castles — but those castles represent both conquest and defiance.

### Llywelyn and the Struggle for Welsh Sovereignty

In the 13th century, Welsh resistance coalesced under leaders like Llywelyn ap Iorwerth (Llywelyn the Great) and later Llywelyn ap Gruffudd.

For a time, Welsh independence appeared viable. Llywelyn ap Gruffudd was recognised as Prince of Wales under the Treaty of Montgomery in 1267.

But the rise of Edward I of England changed the balance. Edward's campaigns in 1277 and 1282–83 ended native Welsh rule. Llywelyn was killed in 1282. Edward responded not only with military victory but with infrastructure: an "iron ring" of castles — Caernarfon, Conwy, Harlech — designed to dominate and symbolise English authority.





The conquest of 1282–83 remains one of the defining turning points in Welsh history.

### Owain Glyndŵr's Revolt

If Edward's conquest marked the end of native princely rule, it did not extinguish Welsh resistance.

In 1400, Owain Glyndŵr launched a rebellion against English rule that would become one of the most significant uprisings in British medieval history.



Initially sparked by a local land dispute, the revolt grew into a national movement. Glyndŵr was proclaimed Prince of Wales and established a parliament at Machynlleth in 1404. He sought alliances with France and even proposed the establishment of Welsh universities and an independent church hierarchy.

For a time, much of Wales was effectively under his control. Ultimately, the revolt faltered due to English military pressure and the withdrawal of foreign support. Glyndŵr disappeared from the historical record around 1415 — never captured, never formally defeated. He remains a symbol of Welsh national resistance.



### The Acts of Union and Cultural Conflict

The Laws in Wales Acts (1535 and 1542), passed under Henry VIII, formally incorporated Wales into the Kingdom of England.

On one hand, this brought administrative integration and parliamentary representation. On the other, it abolished Welsh legal systems and established English as the language of governance.

The conflict here was less military and more cultural. Over centuries, pressure on the Welsh language intensified. The infamous "Welsh Not" practice in 19th-century schools punished children for speaking Welsh. While not a battlefield conflict, this linguistic suppression formed part of a long struggle over identity and autonomy. Resistance shifted from swords to cultural revival.

### The Rebecca Riots

Fast-forward to the 19th century. Between 1839 and 1843, rural west Wales saw a series of protests known as the Rebecca Riots. Farmers and labourers, angered by high tolls on turnpike roads, disguised themselves — often in women's clothing — and destroyed tollgates. The movement drew its name from a biblical reference: "And they called her Rebecca..."

Though not a large-scale rebellion, it represented economic frustration boiling over into direct action. The British government eventually reformed the toll system in response.



This was conflict rooted not in nationalism but in rural hardship and class grievance.

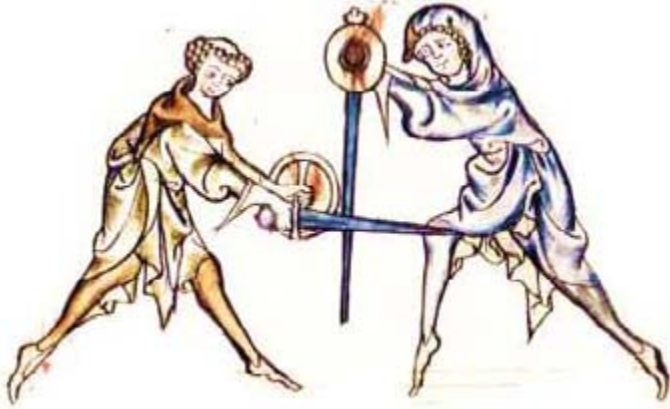
### Industrial Wales and Labour Unrest

The 19th and early 20th centuries transformed south Wales into an industrial powerhouse — coal mining, iron-works, steel.

With industrialisation came labour conflict. The Merthyr Rising of 1831 saw workers protesting wage

cuts and unemployment. It was suppressed, and one protester, Dic Penderyn, was executed — later becoming a martyr figure in Welsh working-class history.

In the early 20th century, the Tonypandy Riots (1910–11) during a miners' strike brought troops into the Rhondda Valley. Disputes over pay and conditions escalated into clashes between workers and police.



These were not nationalist uprisings — they were class conflicts. But they profoundly shaped Welsh political identity, contributing to strong labour traditions that persist today.

### 20th Century Nationalism and Political Conflict

By the 20th century, conflict in Wales had shifted again — toward constitutional politics.

Plaid Cymru, founded in 1925, advocated for greater Welsh autonomy and cultural preservation.



Tensions occasionally manifested in direct action. In the 1960s, protests erupted over the flooding of the Tryweryn Valley to create a reservoir supplying Liverpool — a decision imposed despite unanimous opposition from Welsh MPs. The village of Capel Celyn was submerged, becoming a symbol of powerlessness and grievance.

The slogan “Cofiwch Dryweryn” — Remember Tryweryn — remains a touchstone of modern Welsh political consciousness.

### The Nature of Welsh Conflict

Wales has rarely been a theatre of large-scale interstate warfare. Instead, its conflicts tend to fall into three categories:

1. Resistance to external domination
2. Struggles over cultural identity and language
3. Labour and economic disputes

Military conquest gave way to cultural suppression. Armed revolt gave way to political negotiation. Industrial unrest reshaped political allegiances.

The battleground shifted — but the underlying themes endured.

Conflict in Wales is not a continuous story of violence. It is a recurring story of assertion.

Assertion of sovereignty under Llywelyn and Glyndŵr.  
Assertion of economic justice in Merthyr and Tonypandy.  
Assertion of cultural survival through language revival.  
Assertion of political agency through devolution.

Wales' history of conflict is less about empire-building and more about maintaining identity under pressure. And perhaps that is the defining thread: not conquest — but persistence.





# Kings Mountain 1780

Publisher: Osprey Publishing

Author:

There's a temptation, when looking at the American War of Independence, to focus on its grand set-pieces—Saratoga, Yorktown, the sweeping campaigns of regular armies. *Kings Mountain 1780: The Tide Turns in the South* deliberately shifts that focus. It tells a smaller story, but one with outsized consequences—and, in doing so, captures something essential about how wars are actually won.

Written by David Smith, this entry in Osprey's Campaign series zeroes in on the October 1780 battle between Patriot militia—famously the "Overmountain Men"—and Loyalist forces under Major Patrick Ferguson. The wider context is crucial: by late 1780, British strategy in the South appeared to be working, with Charleston captured and American forces defeated at Camden.

What follows is not a grand campaign, but a collision of local forces driven by urgency and fear. Ferguson's attempts to secure the backcountry provoke a rapid, almost improvised Patriot response—men marching hundreds of miles to confront a threat that feels immediate and personal.

The result, as the book makes clear, is decisive. The Loyalist force is effectively destroyed, and with it the illusion of British control in the region.

As with most Osprey Campaign titles, the book is tightly organised: origins, opposing forces, plans, and then the battle itself. It's a format that prioritises clarity over narrative flourish, and here it works to good effect.

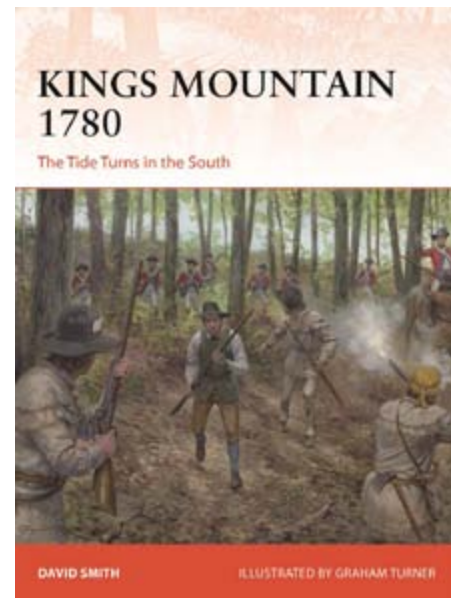
Smith's real achievement is making the battle intelligible at multiple levels:

- Strategic, in explaining why Kings Mountain mattered
- Operational, in tracing the movements of both forces
- Tactical, in breaking down the fight on the ridge itself

The inclusion of detailed maps and 3D diagrams—standard for the series—does more than decorate the page. It allows the reader to follow a battle that might otherwise feel chaotic, especially given the irregular nature of the forces involved.

What sets *Kings Mountain 1780* apart from many other campaign studies is its emphasis on militia warfare. This is not a clash of polished European armies, but a fight shaped by:

- Local loyalties
- Frontier experience
- Decentralised command



The book leans into this, presenting the Overmountain Men not as romanticised figures, but as a product of their environment—adaptable, motivated, and capable of acting independently. Ferguson, by contrast, represents an attempt to impose structure on a volatile region, with ultimately fatal results.

It's here that the book finds its most interesting angle: the idea that control of the South was never just about armies, but about who could mobilise people fastest—and with the strongest sense of purpose.

At 96 pages, *Kings Mountain 1780* inevitably operates within constraints. The political and social complexities of the southern campaign are present, but only in outline. Readers looking for a deeper exploration of Loyalist motivations or the broader civil-war dimension of the conflict may find the treatment necessarily brief.

*Kings Mountain 1780* is a reminder that pivotal moments in history are not always the largest or most famous. Sometimes they are fought on wooded ridges, by men who would never have described themselves as soldiers in the traditional sense.

As a Campaign volume, it does exactly what it sets out to do: deliver a clear, visually rich, and tactically focused account of a crucial engagement. It won't satisfy those seeking a full-scale history of the southern war, but it offers something arguably more valuable—a sharp, concentrated look at the moment when momentum began to shift. In that sense, the subtitle says it all: *The Tide Turns in the South*.

# Solo Skirmish Secrets

## Designing Engaging Campaigns for 1 Player with Any Ruleset



For much of its history, tabletop wargaming has been framed as a social activity first and foremost. Clubs, tournaments, and game nights dominate how the hobby is discussed. But for many players—whether due to time, location, confidence, or simple preference—gaming alone isn't a compromise. It's a feature.

Solo skirmish gaming has quietly grown from a niche curiosity into one of the most flexible, creative, and sustainable ways to engage with the hobby. It removes scheduling friction, lowers social pressure, and opens the door to deeply personal narrative play.

The real secret? You don't need a bespoke solo ruleset. With the right mindset and structure, almost any skirmish game can become a compelling solo campaign.

This article explores how to design engaging solo skirmish campaigns using any ruleset—focusing on narrative tools, decision systems, and campaign structure rather than mechanics.

### Why Solo Skirmish Works So Well

Skirmish gaming is uniquely suited to solo play.

- Low model counts reduce cognitive load
- Individual fighters encourage narrative attachment
- Games resolve quickly, allowing multiple sessions in one sitting

More importantly, solo play reframes the experience. You're no longer trying to "win" against another person. You're discovering what happens next.

Think of solo skirmish not as competitive play without an opponent, but as interactive storytelling with dice.

### The Core Shift: From Opponent to System

The biggest mental hurdle in solo play is replacing a human opponent.

The solution isn't to simulate a player perfectly—it's to create decision pressure.

A good solo system does three things:

1. Forces you to make imperfect choices
2. Produces uncertainty you didn't plan
3. Pushes the game forward without constant intervention

If those conditions are met, tension emerges naturally.





## Designing a Solo AI Without Writing One

You don't need complex flowcharts or pages of behaviour tables. Start simple.

### The Behaviour Priority Method

For each enemy type, define a short priority list:

1. Attack the closest visible enemy
2. Move toward the nearest objective
3. Seek cover or advantageous position

At the start of each activation, the enemy follows the first valid option.



This keeps behaviour consistent, predictable in concept, but unpredictable in outcome.

### Randomised Intent

When priorities conflict, let dice decide.

For example:

- 1–3: aggressive action
- 4–5: objective-focused action
- 6: defensive or cautious action

Random intent prevents you from subconsciously optimising against yourself.



## Asymmetry Is Your Friend

Solo campaigns work best when forces are not evenly matched.

Instead of balanced fights:

- Give the enemy superior numbers but worse morale
- Give your warband better gear but fragile bodies
- Use environmental hazards instead of raw damage

Asymmetry creates interesting decisions without requiring perfect AI.

## Campaign Structure: The Engine of Engagement

A single solo game can be fun. A campaign is what keeps you coming back.

### Keep the Loop Simple

A strong solo campaign loop looks like this:

1. Mission
2. Consequence
3. Choice
4. Next mission

After every game, something changes—even if you “won”.



## Persistent Consequences Over Power Growth

Uncontrolled progression breaks solo balance quickly.

Instead of constant stat increases, focus on:

- Injuries and scars
- Limited-use equipment
- Reputation or threat levels
- Environmental changes to the campaign map

These add narrative weight without runaway power.

## Tools for Generating Uncertainty

Uncertainty is the lifeblood of solo play.

### Event Tables

A simple d6 table at the start or midpoint of a game can introduce:

- Reinforcements

- Environmental shifts
- Civilian interference
- Unexpected objectives

You don't need many entries—just outcomes you wouldn't choose yourself.

### Fog of War

Hide information from yourself.

- Use face-down tokens for objectives
- Randomise enemy deployment zones
- Reveal parts of the battlefield as you move



Solo play becomes far more engaging when discovery replaces certainty.

### Designing Missions That Work Solo

Avoid missions built around perfect balance or symmetrical deployment.

Solo-friendly objectives include:

- Extraction and escape
- Delaying actions
- Investigation and discovery
- Survival against escalating threats

Success doesn't need to mean total victory. Partial success is often more interesting.



### Keeping Yourself Honest

One of the biggest fears around solo play is cheating—consciously or unconsciously.

The answer isn't discipline; it's procedural trust. If the system tells you what happens, you don't need to justify it.

Write things down. Roll in the open. Accept bad outcomes. The story is better for it.



### Any Ruleset, Any Setting

These principles work whether you're playing:

- fantasy or sci fi
- historical or weird war
- indie skirmish games or household-name systems

The rules handle resolution. Your solo framework handles meaning.

Solo skirmish gaming isn't a fallback option for when opponents aren't available. It's a powerful, flexible mode of play that rewards creativity, reflection, and narrative thinking.

You don't need new miniatures, new terrain, or new rules. You need:

- clear decision structures
- uncertainty you didn't design to favour yourself
- and a campaign that remembers what happened last time

Master those, and any skirmish game becomes a living, solo-friendly world—ready whenever you are.

Solo play isn't about replacing other players. It's about discovering what your games can do when you stop waiting for permission to play.



# Seleucid Armies 312–63

Publisher: Osprey Publishing

Author:

There is something inherently unwieldy about the Seleucid Empire. Stretching at its height from the Mediterranean to the edges of Central Asia, it was less a unified state than a vast, shifting mosaic of cultures, loyalties, and military traditions. In *Seleucid Armies 312–63 BC*, William Horsted takes on the challenge of distilling that complexity into Osprey's compact Men-at-Arms format—and, perhaps surprisingly, emerges with something both coherent and evocative.

The book's central achievement lies in how it frames the Seleucid military: not as a single, standardised force, but as a layered system of armies within an empire.

From the Macedonian-style phalanx to eastern cavalry contingents, from war elephants to scythed chariots, the Seleucid army appears less like a traditional force and more like a coalition bound together by royal authority.

Horsted leans into this diversity, showing how Seleucid kings drew on a wide pool of manpower and traditions to field armies capable of operating across radically different theatres. The result is a portrait of flexibility—but also fragility. These were armies that could be formidable, but not always cohesive.

Covering nearly 250 years of history in just 48 pages is no small task, and the book wisely avoids trying to tell every campaign in detail. Instead, it focuses on:

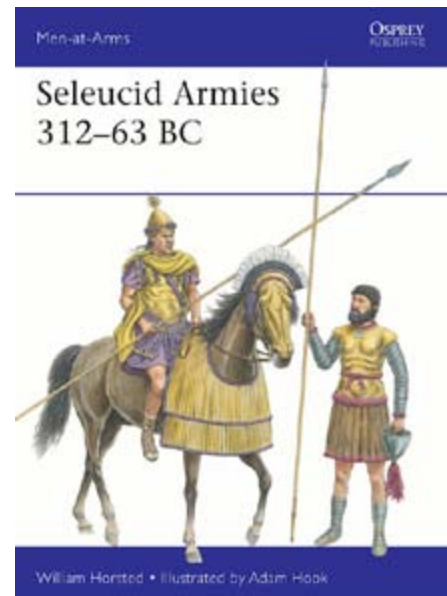
- Organisation and recruitment
- Unit types and battlefield roles
- Equipment and tactical function

This keeps the narrative tightly controlled. The Seleucid Empire's turbulent history—its expansion, fragmentation, and eventual eclipse—is present, but always in service of understanding the army itself.

The effect is less a chronological history and more a structural study, one that asks how such an army worked rather than simply what it did.

As with many Osprey titles, the artwork does much of the heavy lifting. Adam Hook's plates are particularly important here, reconstructing troops for which evidence is often scattered or ambiguous.

Seleucid armies are notoriously difficult to visualise—drawing as they do on Greek, Persian, and local



traditions—and the illustrations provide a clarity that text alone could not achieve. Combined with photographs and diagrams, they give the reader a tangible sense of an otherwise elusive military system. ([ospreypublishing.com](http://ospreypublishing.com)) For hobbyists, this is arguably the book's greatest strength: it doesn't just inform, it inspires.

The deeper political tensions of the empire—the balancing act between Macedonian elites and local populations, the pressures from Parthia and Rome—are only lightly touched upon. Similarly, the evolution of the army over time can feel compressed, with major developments passing quickly.

Perhaps the most valuable thing this book does is simply shine a light. The Seleucid Empire remains one of the less widely understood Hellenistic states, often overshadowed by its rivals and successors. By focusing on its armies, Horsted provides an accessible entry point into a world that is both familiar—echoing Alexander's legacy—and distinctly its own.

*Seleucid Armies 312–63 BC* is not definitive, nor does it attempt to be. Instead, it offers a carefully constructed snapshot: a way of understanding how one of the ancient world's largest and most complex empires organised its military power.

For wargamers and general readers, it's an excellent primer—clear, visually rich, and full of ideas. For specialists, it may feel like an introduction rather than a destination. But perhaps that's the point. The Seleucid Empire itself was never simple, never tidy—and this book, in its concise and layered way, reflects that reality rather well.

# Warhammer Historical

## When the Old World Met the Real World



Before the grim darkness of the far future dominated tabletops, and before Age of Sigmar reshaped fantasy battlefields, there was a fascinating side-path in the hobby: Warhammer Historical. It was where the familiar rules DNA of Warhammer collided with real-world history—Romans instead of Reiksguard, samurai instead of Skaven, pike blocks instead of Chaos Warriors.

For many hobbyists, it was the gateway drug from fantasy into “proper” historical wargaming—without losing the cinematic flair that made Warhammer famous.

### What Was Warhammer Historical?

Warhammer Historical was a publishing arm of Games Workshop that adapted the core mechanics of Warhammer into historical settings. Rather than inventing new systems from scratch, it reworked familiar rules from Warhammer Fantasy Battles and Warhammer 40,000 to represent real-world conflicts.

The result? Rank-and-flank battles with medieval knights, ancient legionaries, samurai clans, conquistadors, and even World War II paratroopers—all using mechanics Warhammer players already understood.

It felt like stepping sideways into history rather than jumping into an entirely new hobby.

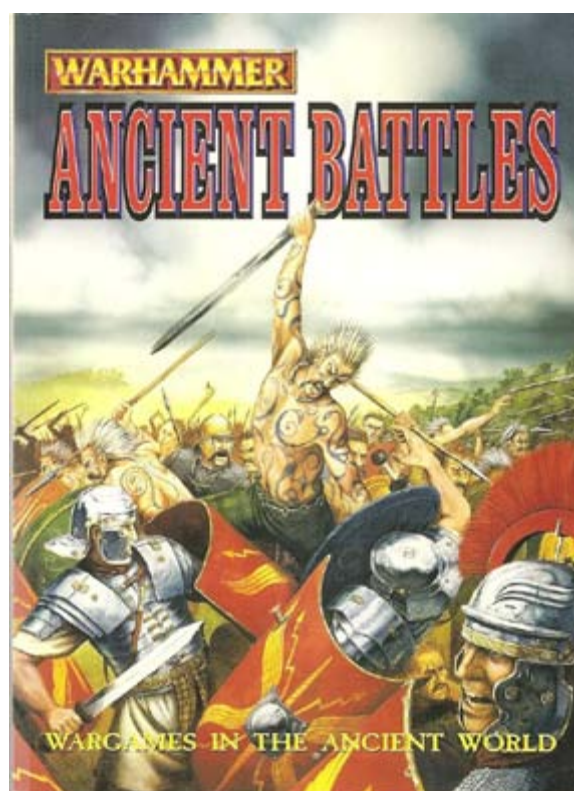
### Core Rulebooks and Settings

Warhammer Historical produced a range of self-contained rulebooks and supplements covering different eras: Warhammer Ancient Battles

The flagship system. Built on a modified Warhammer Fantasy engine, it covered ancient and classical warfare—Romans, Greeks, Persians, Carthaginians, and more. Army lists aimed to balance playability with historical flavour rather than strict simulation.

### Legends of the Old West

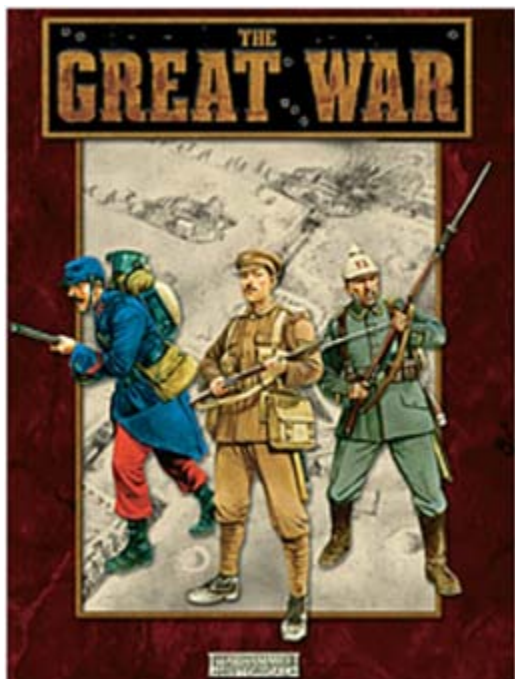
A skirmish-level system covering the American frontier. Gunfights, outlaws, and lawmen—with mechanics descended from Warhammer 40,000 rather than Fantasy.





## The Great War

A World War I adaptation that blended trench warfare with streamlined Warhammer-style mechanics.



## Warmaster Ancients

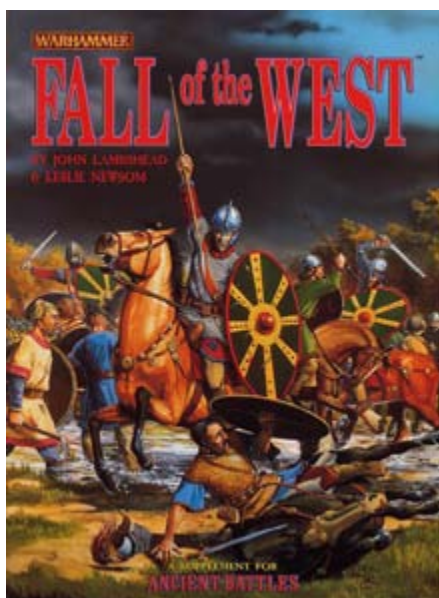
A historical adaptation of the Warmaster system, designed for 10mm armies and large-scale battles.

Design Philosophy: History, But Make It Cinematic  
Warhammer Historical walked a tightrope between two worlds:

- Historical authenticity
- Warhammer-style accessibility and drama

It was not as granular as hardcore simulationist systems like DBM or Field of Glory. Nor was it as loose and narrative driven as fantasy Warhammer. Instead, it offered:

- Familiar statlines (WS, S, T equivalents)
- Clear unit roles
- Morale and psychology mechanics
- Big, decisive melee phases



This meant historical battles felt dramatic rather than purely procedural. Cavalry charges mattered. Shieldwalls held (until they didn't). Heroes—while toned down—could still influence the flow of battle.

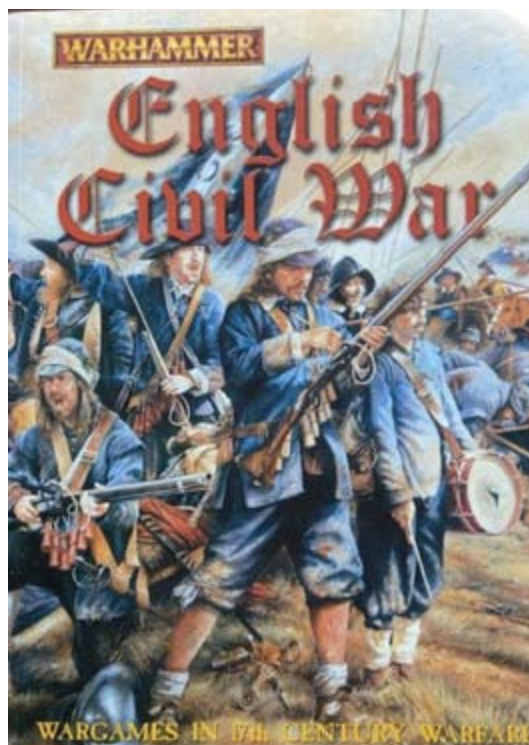
For Warhammer players curious about history, it was a comfortable on-ramp.

## Why It Worked

Warhammer Historical succeeded because it:

1. Lowered the barrier to entry – If you knew Warhammer, you could play it.
2. Maintained visual spectacle – Ranked units looked fantastic.
3. Encouraged hobby crossover – Fantasy players discovered historical miniatures, and vice versa.
4. Balanced game and history – It prioritised enjoyable play without abandoning period flavour.

For clubs—like traditional rank-and-flank communities—the system provided a bridge between fantasy and historical players who might otherwise never share a table.



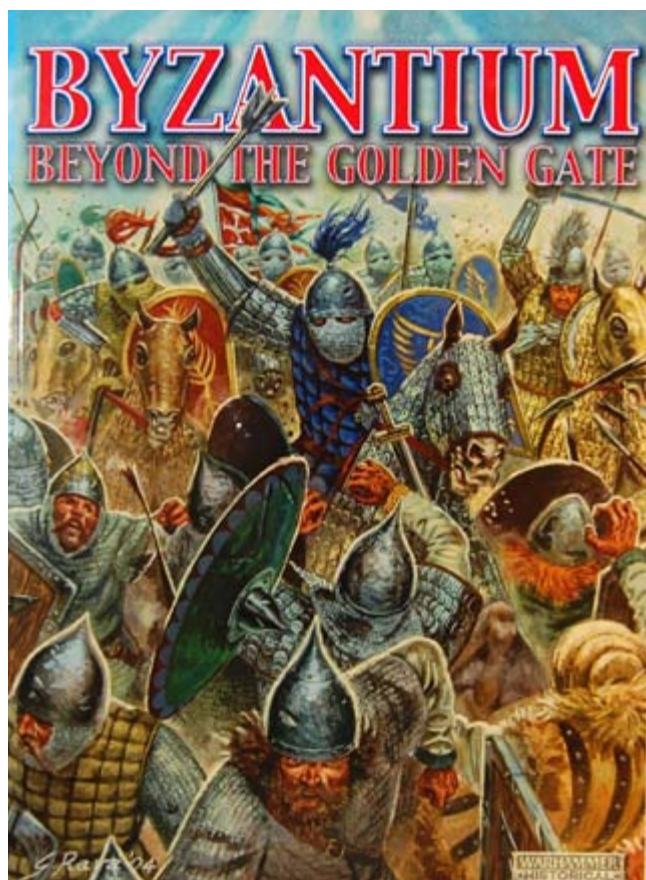
## Why It Ended

Warhammer Historical eventually closed in the early 2010s as Games Workshop narrowed its focus to core IP-driven properties. Historical gaming lacked the proprietary model range and IP control that made Warhammer and 40K commercially powerful.



Without unique miniatures lines to anchor the rules, it became less strategically aligned with the company's direction.

But the books didn't disappear from tables overnight.



## The Legacy

Warhammer Historical left a quiet but lasting mark:

- Many players transitioned fully into historical gaming because of it.
- Clubs still run Warhammer Ancient Battles campaigns.
- Its DNA lives on in the design sensibilities of hybrid "game-first" historical systems.



It also demonstrated something important: historical gaming doesn't have to mean dry or inaccessible. It can be cinematic, dramatic, and hobby-rich without dragons or daemons.

## Would It Work Today?

In a world shaped by narrative gaming and strong IP branding, a revival seems unlikely under the original banner. But spiritually? The appetite absolutely exists. There's a growing community that enjoys:

- Rank-and-flank battles
- Strong visual cohesion
- Clear rules
- Campaign play
- Historically inspired forces with personality



In other words: the same instincts that fuel both Warhammer and historical wargaming.

Warhammer Historical was more than a side project. It was a bridge—between fantasy and history, between spectacle and scholarship, between Games Workshop players and the broader historical hobby.

For many veterans, it wasn't just an experiment. It was the moment they realised that real history can be just as epic as the Old World.





# Polish Armies 1492–1569

Publisher: Osprey Publishing

Author:

Osprey's Men-at-Arms series has long thrived on filling the gaps between more familiar military narratives. With *Renaissance Polish Armies 1492–1569*, author Adrian Jamka turns his attention to a subject that has, until recently, sat in the margins of English-language scholarship—and makes a compelling case for why it shouldn't.

Between Medieval Legacy and Early Modern Identity This is a book about transition. Covering the years from the death of Casimir Jagiellon in 1492 to the Union of Lublin in 1569, it charts how Polish forces evolved from feudal levies into something recognisably early modern.

What emerges is not a neat, linear progression but a messy, contested process shaped by near-constant—against Muscovy, the Ottomans, Tatars, and neighbouring European powers.

Jamka's strength lies in making that evolution intelligible. Recruitment systems, unit structures, and battlefield roles are laid out with clarity, giving the reader a sense of how an army actually functioned—not just how it looked on paper.

Any book on Polish warfare risks being overshadowed by the iconic winged hussars. To his credit, Jamka resists letting them dominate the narrative.

Instead, he places them in context—tracing their origins as relatively lightly equipped Balkan-style cavalry before their later, more famous transformation.

This broader lens is one of the book's key achievements. Infantry, hand-gunners, and lesser-known cavalry types all receive attention, reinforcing the idea that Poland's military strength was not built on a single elite unit, but on a diverse and evolving system of arms.

One of the more quietly impressive aspects of the book is its engagement with sources. Jamka doesn't simply present conclusions; he shows how they are reached.

Iconography, muster rolls, and surviving equipment are all brought into dialogue—sometimes reinforcing one another, sometimes contradicting. The result is a subtle but important lesson: reconstructing the past is rarely straightforward.

Physically, the book delivers exactly what readers expect from Osprey:



- Crisp, full-colour plates by Raffaele Ruggeri
- Clear organisational diagrams
- Concise, highly structured text

The artwork, in particular, does much of the heavy lifting—bringing to life a period where visual references are often fragmentary or debated. ([ospreypublishing.com](https://ospreypublishing.com)) As ever with the Men-at-Arms format, brevity is both strength and limitation. The book is dense, but it cannot be exhaustive.

At under 50 pages, *Renaissance Polish Armies* inevitably compresses a complex subject. Campaign detail is minimal, and broader political context is sketched rather than deeply explored.

For some readers, this will feel like an introduction rather than a definitive study. Yet that is also the point: the book is designed to open a door, not close the discussion.

What makes this volume stand out is not just its subject, but its sense of purpose. It tackles an underrepresented military tradition and treats it with both clarity and seriousness—without losing sight of the visual and practical appeal that defines Osprey's output.

For wargamers, it offers a ready-made guide to building and understanding a distinctive army. For historians, it provides a concise but thoughtful synthesis of a formative period.

*Renaissance Polish Armies 1492–1569* is, in many ways, exactly what the Men-at-Arms series does best: a small book that quietly expands the map of what we think we know.

# Wizard Turf Fight!

By Niall Christie



“Do not meddle in the affairs of wizards, for they are subtle and quick to anger.”

Gildor, The Fellowship of the Ring

“LIGHTNING BOLT!”

Gary, The Gamers: Dorkness Rising

Many things make wizards fight. They might fight over magical resources or treasure. They might fight because one of them disturbed another at a critical point in a ritual. They might fight because one of them woke the other up during the night. They might even fight because a game designer thought it would be cool to make up a game based on the idea...

Wizard Turf Fight! (a.k.a. WTF!) is a game of magical combat between wizards. Each player (henceforth called a “wizard”) is aiming to build a wall of spells to enclose their realm and defend against the others, using spells drawing on the power of six magic types. These spells may be used to attack the other wizards and create magical walls in order to support their efforts to be both the first wizard to build their wall and possibly be the last wizard standing.

These rules have been playtested but would probably benefit from further refinement. I welcome comments and suggestions at: [niallchristie@yahoo.com](mailto:niallchristie@yahoo.com)

Components:

Each wizard needs:

- A bag or pouch that they cannot see into.
- Fifty gaming tokens of the following colours: 10 red, 10 yellow, 10 green, 10 blue, 5 white, 5 black. Glass or plastic beads or cubes are a good option. They should be small enough to be held concealed in the hand.
- Some way to record Life score. Every wizard starts with 6 Life, so an 6-sided die is a good choice.

Each wizard should shake together their tokens in the bag or pouch (henceforth the Spell Pouch) and place it nearby on the table in front of them.

Each token is considered to be a Spell associated with a particular type of magic: fire (red), water (blue), air (yellow), earth (green), divine (white) and infernal (black).

Determine who will start by whatever method you prefer, be it age, rock-paper-scissors, or a good old-fashioned brawl.







### Turn Sequence:

Starting with the first wizard, as determined above, in their turn each wizard should:

- Draw tokens from their pouch up to a total hand of 5 Spell tokens, if necessary. They do not have to reveal these to the other wizards.
- (Optional, as many times as desired) Make a Spell attack by revealing a Spell token and indicating which wizard the spell is aimed at. No wizard can be targeted more than once.
- (Optional) Add a Spell to their Spell Wall by placing a token in front of them. Note that once added to a Spell Wall, a token cannot be taken back into the wizard's hand or pouch.
- (Optional) Put 1 of their remaining Spell tokens from their hand back into the pouch.

Play proceeds round the table clockwise, starting with the wizard to the first wizard's left.

### Making a Spell Attack:

To attack another wizard with a spell, the wizard should:

- Choose a Spell token and place it on the table in front of them.
- State the intended target (another wizard).
- If the target wizard does not have a Spell Wall, the target wizard may deflect the spell by revealing a Spell token from their hand of an opposing type (see below). If they do not, they must lose 1 Life.
- If the target wizard has a Spell Wall, and the attacking

Spell token opposes a Spell token in their Spell Wall, the target wizard must instead remove the appropriate token from the Spell Wall. If the target wizard does not have an appropriate opposing Spell token in their wall, the spell bypasses the wall and must be deflected as indicated above. The target wizard may not choose to allow a spell to bypass their Spell Wall in order to use a Spell token from their hand to deflect it.

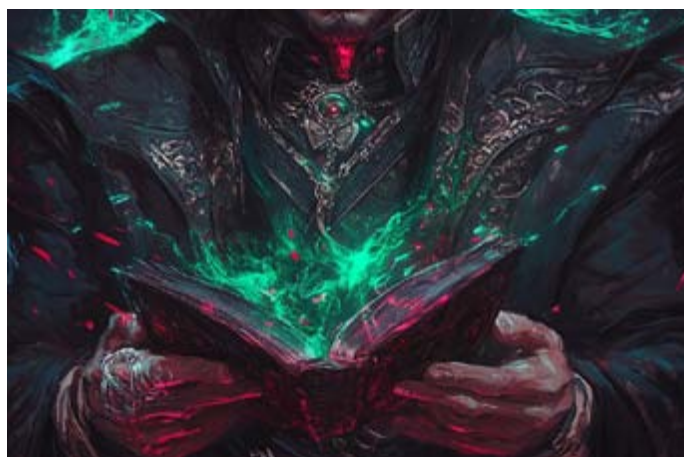
- Each wizard now places any revealed Spell tokens in their Spell Pouch.

### Building a Spell Wall:

Every good wizard knows that the best kind of defense is a great big magical wall to hide behind, which is why they are currently racing to complete theirs! Each turn a wizard may place a Spell token in front of them to act as a defence against incoming spells. This collection of Spell tokens is known as a Spell Wall, and blocks incoming spells in the way indicated above. The author recommends using cuboid Spell tokens so that you can actually stack Spell tokens and build a real (if rather small) wall.

### Spell Token Effects:

- Fire (red) opposes water (blue).
- Water (blue) opposes fire (red).
- Earth (green) opposes air (yellow).
- Air (yellow) opposes earth (green).
- Divine (white) opposes any colour, but a divine Spell token may not be used to make a Spell attack.
- Infernal (black), when revealed, must be declared to be a Spell token of any other type except divine, but may only be used to make Spell attacks. It may not be used in a Spell Wall or to deflect an attack.



### Winning the Game:

Wizards may win the game in one of two ways:

- If a wizard is able to build a Spell Wall incorporating all 6 colours, the wizard wins the game as soon as they place the Spell token of the sixth colour.
- If at any point all wizards but one have been reduced to 0 Life, the wizard who has any Life remaining is the winner.







#### Inspirations:

This game was originally inspired by a strange dream about playing something similar with Talisman spell cards. Obviously, the game also draws inspiration from Magic: The Gathering and Peter Jackson's Lord of the Rings movies (though I avoided the temptation to include a Make Wizard Breakdance spell option).

The game also draws inspiration from Ars Magica's Certamen rules and the anime Demon Slayer: Kimetsu No Yaiba. This game was originally called Wizard War Game, then Grumpy Wizard Fight!, but the final name was suggested by my wife, Steph van Willigenburg, who has a much smarter sense of humour than me. I am also very grateful to Steph, as well as Paul Regush and Harrison Scheer, for playtesting this game with me.







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