



All Guns Blazing!

Newsletter of the Naval Wargames Society

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EDITORIAL

Every so often, something brings home just how old I am getting. Back in the day I remember the political arguments for and against a “through deck cruiser” (the term “Aircraft Carrier” was deemed to not be acceptable at the time) which led to the Invincible Class vessels – they have long gone now. I also remember the development of the Tornado aircraft. It was called the M.R.C.A. at the time and I had the Airfix kit which needed a bit of care with the glue so that the swing wings did in fact, “swing”. The MRCA became the Tornado which had several updates and versions over the years including the stretched fuselage Air Defence Variant (ADV) and the Interdictor/Strike Version (IDS). Just the other day I read that the Tornado is being phased out and the last major maintenance of a Tornado GR4 has been completed.



The replacements for the Tornado are the Typhoon and the F35 Lightning II aircraft. I think I will be phased out before they are.

Welcome to new Members, Antony Swift and William Wiseman.

There is just time to submit an article to Stuart Fieldhouse for inclusion in the next edition of “Battlefleet”. Email to Stuart immediately - fintactica@googlemail.com

Somewhere in the World, the Sun is over the yardarm.

Norman Bell

The Answers to last month's (picture) Quiz 59 are as follows:

1. Bois Belleau, France.
2. Banff Class, ex US Coastguard Cutters.
3. HMS's Mansfield and Mentor.
4. Aristocrat.
5. Brecon Class frigates.



'War Machine' Magazine.....The Naval Issues?

For me the 1980's were a lean time, as a war-gamer. Marriage, the kids, moving house, twice, all took a toll of my serious interests. That's why I didn't buy "War Machine", the 25 page themed colour magazine, described as a guide, from 'Orbis' Publishers, it was only 80 pence, but it passed me by, at least until I began to come across second hand copies in book shops and in the hands of other wargamers. My collection now only stands at around thirty five or so, but they are very, very useful 'starts' in terms of research. I can often dip into one and find something which will provide an odd, unusual weapon, or maybe suggest that a country I didn't expect used a particular weapon, or bought a warship. Plenty of useful information. The warship issues are magnificent, at least those I've seen. Number 140 is on 'Commerce Raiders of WWI', very sound and there are other issues dealing with most of the warship types of the century, all with plenty of potential for the wargamer. Model ship makers seem to have missed out the Spy Ships, covered in Number 100, yet the Soviet '*Cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin*' would be the pride of any table top fleet. Stuart probably sells one, on second thoughts! Number 134 dealt with military hovercraft (well, I see them as naval!), and 122 on Seaplanes, brief but excellent, and with good illustrations and plates and photos. A particular favourite of mine is Number 7, on Amphibious Assault Ships. I've never, come to think of it, seen a model of *USS Grayback*, the SEAL Sub either, and the short notes on Soviet amphibious assault tactics always interested me. Number 90 on WWI Armoured Cruisers-excellent, and 117 on WWII Coastal Forces introduced me to the tiny *Kriegsmarine* LS and KM boats. Each issue of course gave a brief back page

introduction to the armed forces of a particular nation or state, up to date for the eighties.

The 143 subject issues, number 144 was the Index, are not all known to me. In fact I don't know of a list of the titles or subjects of each one, beyond what I own, and the information given in the 'forthcoming issues note' found in many of them. I don't suppose any member could furnish a list 1 to 143? Or a list of the naval titles?

Rob Morgan.

SEA QUIZ 60.

1. Name Rooke's flagship at the taking of Gibraltar.
2. Which nation's fleet did Duncan fight at Camperdown?
3. At which 17th century sea-fight did the sloop Fan Fan achieve glory?
4. Who gave 'The Dragon's tail a damned good twist?
5. What was the first Ark Royal renamed in 1608?

Good Luck
Rob Morgan

WWI on the Beaches?

I suspect that 'Current Archaeology' isn't the first choice of reading matter for the bulk of NWS members, but I tend to take a swift glance into the pages of this and several other 'fringe' publications on the off chance.....

.....and this month, March 2017, the magazine has an eight page well illustrated and very interesting article on 'Britain's Coastal Frontline 1914-1918', by a group of nine researchers (pp 24-31), and it's worth a second closer examination. The

research is conducted by CITiZAN (Coastal and Intertidal Zone Archaeological Network). I'd never heard of it, but this group are examining a range of defence systems around the North Sea coasts, and beyond, many were originally attributed to the Second World War. Pillboxes, 'sound mirrors', and Seaplane bases are all included. The article, which I would describe as more of a taster than a full account, deals with U-Boat wrecks and RN sub losses around the coast (including G11 the day after war ended!).

Its well worth reading, and one brief comment in particular is worth far more NWS consideration. A group called the Thames Discovery Programme (TDP) has discovered what may be the last surviving WWI U-Boat chaser, ML286, found at Isleworth! The story of this is clearly going to be important, as the ML served at Dunkirk as 'Eothen' a civilian motor cruiser. A truly historic vessel which London based members may know far more of from local media. Maybe some NWS member is in the TDP?

What I wondered will happen to this survivor of two wars? There's a decent photograph, which makes ML286 look sad, but not, I would think unsalvageable. Someone reading this must know more!

Rob Morgan.

"Byzantine Naval Forces 1261-1461.".....Raffaele D'Amato. Illustrations by Peter Dennis and Igor Dzis. Osprey Men-at-Arms 502.

No. It's not exactly what I expected either! In fact it's the sub-title 'The Roman Empire's Last Marines' which is the true subject matter. Mind you it's naval or warship illustrations (just six in the book) which are in short supply, but there is a little detail in the text on the warships of the Emperors. In wargame campaign ideas it has more to offer than for the table top naval wargamer I think. The volume begins with the re-conquest of Constantinople from the barbarous Latin Crusaders, and on pages 4-5, there's a short chronology, a sad chronology too, as it indicates the steady decline of Byzantine naval power down to a mere two galleys in the Morea in 1460. The text deals with the manning of the fleets, the early ie1260-1290AD operations and what proved to be the beginning of the decline. Yes, there is a description of the ship types too, but all far too brief. The description of the 'Regiments' of soldiers aboard the Empire's warships was new to me, and quite interesting; as was the comment on the character (?) and social status of the naval personnel. The account of the fleet's organization and its intended strength are perhaps better known, and the notes on armament, including 'Greek Fire' are a very basic introduction to the matter, indeed shipboard ordnance is dealt with in a mere hundred words. On Page 21, D'Amato moves into the heart of his work, the dress and equipment of the sea

soldiers of Byzantium, thorough if short in length, it deals with weapons, and defensive gear, I liked the comments on shield blazons, useful and with potential for ship models perhaps! As was the note on naval flags, which is more naval wargamer oriented. This all shows beautifully in the plates, which are of a standard reminiscent of Angus McBride. Do note Plate G3, the Imperial Fleet standard bearer by the way. A few of the plates, like A3 a 'marine' officer, and C2 and C4 show very elaborate costume. While *the* plate, is G2, is a posed Greek fire specialist, which may well cause some serious thought among late land gaming Crusaders, about the nature of this weapon in action. From the naval point of view a little more lethal than a crossbow when closing for action. Plate D2 intrigued me, as it shows a c1275 sea soldier armed with a long hafted double bladed axe, with no explanation given at all. Do take a careful look at the illustration on page 33 of a group of bladed polearms, several of which defy description and are to say the least thought provoking in terms of their use and handling in combat. Others are easily identified as destroyers of rigging or as longer ship-to-ship versions of 'land' staves with known names, glaive, boar-spear, fork and trident for instance. D'Amato gives his source for these splendid, and often exotic blades as ex-Babuin. The Bibliography tells us this is from a volume published in 2009, but the title is in Greek only, and leaves another mystery. There are some 50+ titles in this section, incidentally, but apart from four well known David Nicolle Ospreys, and two older Ian Heath titles they are all well out of the naval wargamers mainstream of reading. This is the most academic title I've ever read in an Osprey format, and it will I suspect sell far beyond the wargames world. Naturally, reviewing a title of this nature means that I have to mention the point which has cropped up so often when Byzantine forces at any point in the long life of the Empire is concerned- the complexity of the Byzantine terminology. From 'Megas Dukas' to 'Gasmoulos', from 'Tzakones' to 'Toxotes', it's the names which, arguably, cause the problem in persuading gamers that this is a force worth adopting. The ship names are even worse! 'Monirai', 'Akatia' and 'Katargon' among them. I'm intrigued (again, twice in one review!) that the 'Karavion' (page 7) is in fact a Cog. The book ends with four short descriptions of 'representative actions' of the fleet, Demetrias in 1275; the Likarios Campaigns of 1275-80; the relatively well known Battle of the Echniades islands in 1427, and in one short paragraph Galata, perhaps better known again. All arguably wargame friendly, but no plan or map provided. A sensible and fine way to finish the book, and one which could well and valuably be adopted by other periodically long Osprey volumes in the future.

An excellent piece of work, by a skilled Italian academic, thought provoking and good reading. Fine art work too.

10 out of 10!

Rob Morgan.

The Doolittle Raid - seamanship and flying ability combine to produce a morale boost for the American public.



B25 takes off from USS HORNET (CV8) 18th April 1942.



B-25 Mitchells aboard the USS *Hornet*

AAF serial #	Nickname	Sqdn	Target	Pilot	Disposition
40-2344			Tokyo	Lt. Col. James H. Doolittle	crashed N Quzhou , China
40-2292		37th BS	Tokyo	1st Lt. Travis Hoover	crashed Ningbo , China
40-2270	<i>Whiskey Pete</i>	95th BS	Tokyo	1st Lt. Robert M. Gray	crashed SE Quzhou, China
40-2282		95th BS	Tokyo	1st Lt. Everett W. Holstrom	crashed SE Shangrao , China
40-2283		95th BS	Tokyo	Capt. David M. Jones	crashed SW Quzhou, China
40-2298	<i>The Green Hornet</i>	95th BS	Tokyo	1st Lt. Dean E. Hallmark	ditched at sea Wenzhou , China

40-2261	<i>The Ruptured Duck</i>	95th BS	Tokyo	1st Lt. Ted W. Lawson	ditched at sea Changshu , China
40-2242		95th BS	Tokyo	Capt. Edward J. York	interned Primorsky Krai, USSR
40-2303	<i>Whirling Dervish</i>	34th BS	Tokyo	1st Lt. Harold F. Watson	crashed S Nanchang , China
40-2250		89th RS	Tokyo	1st Lt. Richard O. Joyce	crashed NE Quzhou, China
40-2249	<i>Hari Kari-er</i>	89th RS	Yokohama	Capt. C. Ross Greening	crashed NE Quzhou, China
40-2278	<i>Fickle Finger of Fate</i>	37th BS	Yokohama	1st Lt. William M. Bower	crashed NE Quzhou, China
40-2247	<i>The Avenger</i>	37th BS	Yokosuka	1st Lt. Edgar E. McElroy	crashed N Nanchang, China
40-2297		89th RS	Nagoya	Maj. John A. Hilger	crashed SE Shangrao, China
40-2267	<i>TNT</i>	89th RS	Kobe	1st Lt. Donald G. Smith	ditched at sea Changshu, China
40-2268	<i>Bat Out of Hell</i>	34th BS	Nagoya	1st Lt. William G. Farrow	crashed S Ningbo, China

Has anyone gamed the Raid?



Crew No. 1 in front of B-25 #40-2344 on the deck of [Hornet](#), 18 April 1942. From left to right: (front row) Lt. Col. Doolittle, pilot; Lt. Richard E. Cole, co-pilot; (back row) Lt. Henry A. Potter, navigator; SSgt. Fred A. Braemer, bombardier; SSgt. Paul J. Leonard, flight engineer/gunner. (U.S. Air Force photo)

Total crew casualties: 3 KIA: 2 off the coast of China, 1 in China; 8 POW: 3 executed, 1 died in captivity, 4 repatriated. In addition, seven crew members (including all five members of Lawson's crew) received injuries serious enough to require medical treatment. Of the surviving prisoners, Barr died of heart failure in 1967, Nielsen in 2007, DeShazer on 15 March 2008, and the last, Hite, died 29 March 2015. (Info from Wikipedia)

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The word torpedo entered the English language in the 1520s as a name for the fish, the electric ray. It was coined by American inventor Robert Fuller in 1776 for his explosive charge/floating mine which was dragged into contact with an enemy vessel by a submarine. The first self-propelled torpedo was perfected in 1868 by Englishman Robert Whitehead. A cigar shaped device propelled by a compressed air engine. It proved itself in the Russo-Turkish War when on January 26th 1878, Russian torpedo boats used "Whiteheads" to sink the Turkish ship INTIBAH. (Info from the Daily Mail newspaper)

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Naval Wargames Weekend 2017

This event will be taking place in 2017 on the 8th & 9th of July from 10 am to 5 pm. The venue will be the same as usual, the Conference Room at Explosion! Museum in Gosport.

Unfortunately, this year the museum is not willing to host us for nothing so there will be an entry fee. This will be £5 for one day or £7.50 for both.

In return for this, not only do you get two days of naval wargaming, but free entry to the museum (normally £11). We are also planning, thanks to Nick

Hewitt, to have a guided tour of the reserve collection (2 buildings not normally open to the public) on each afternoon.

Could anyone wishing/willing to put on a game for the weekend please send details (nature of game, space required, which day(s)) to Dave Sharp (no spaces) dave (underscore) sharp @ talktalk.net (dave_sharp@talktalk.net).

NWS Member Phil Dunn has some books available for someone who would appreciate them. P&P could be nil in the Folkestone / London area.

Janes Fighting Ships 1940 £45 o.n.o, plus p&p
Janes Fighting Ships 1944-45 inc War losses £45 o.n.o. plus p&p
British Battleships by Dr Oscar Parkes £45 o.n.o plus p&p
U.S. Destroyer Operations by Theodore Roscoe £12 plus p&p
U.S. Submarine Operations by Theodore Roscoe £12 plus p&p

These prices are cheaper than I have seen on Amazon. If you are interested contact:

Phil Dunn
15 Christchurch Road
Folkestone
Kent
CT20 2SJ

Tel: 01303 241562



The first of the newest support ships for the Royal Navy, RFA Tidespring, has arrived in Cornwall for customisation, helping to sustain 300 UK jobs. The 39,000-tonne tanker, which can carry up to 19,000 cubic metres of fuel and 1,400 cubic metres of fresh water, will join the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, a civilian-manned fleet which provides support for warships,

helping the Royal Navy to maintain its operations 24/7, 365 days a year, around the world.
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SIGNAL PAD!

Coming in May's AGB: Sails of Glory – a review; Battle of the Coral Sea plus lots more.
Don't forget "Salute" in London and "Carronade" in Falkirk. Check out the websites.

JOINING THE NAVAL WARGAMES SOCIETY

If you have been lent this newsletter and would like to join the Naval Wargames Society, please follow this link to join our Society:

www.navalwargamesociety.org.

Membership secretary: simonjohnstokes@aol.com

NWS Events and Regional Contacts, 2017

NWS Northern Fleet – Falkirk East Central Scotland

Kenny Thomson, 12 Craigs Way, Rumford Grange, Rumford, Stirlingshire, FK2 0EU

Tel: 01324 714248

e-mail: kenny.thomson@hotmail.com - Website: <http://falkirkwargamesclub.org.uk/>

Falkirk Wargames Club meets each Monday night at 7pm with a variety of games running each evening. Naval games are popular with 2 or 3 run each month. Campaign games sometimes feature in our monthly weekend sessions. Games tend to be organised week to week making a 3-month forecast here a waste of time. Please get in touch if you'd like to come along.

- Popular periods – Modern (Shipwreck), WW1 and 2 (GQ), WW2 Coastal (Action Stations), and Pre-dreadnought (P Dunn's rules)
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Devon and the West Country

Naval Wargames afternoon/evening/all day on a regular basis.

Contact Stuart Barnes Watson to arrange the details.

stuart_barnes_watson@hotmail.com

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