



All Guns Blazing!

Newsletter of the Naval Wargames Society

No. 303 – JANUARY 2020

EDITORIAL

Happy New Year to all NWS Members. Perhaps you received models, games or rule sets for Christmas or maybe you will be treating yourself in the January sales? Either way details or reviews of anything of interest to Members can be included in AGBs and longer articles can go into the next edition of "Battlefleet".

Welcome to new Members Hadrien and Martin.

Please take a good look at Simon's words in the "Signal Pad" section below.

NEW YEAR SEA QUIZ...2020. From Rob Morgan.

Most of the following questions come from the 1956 issues of *'The Navy'*, a year which ended with the Suez Crisis of course. Here's a comment to ponder over, from March of that year... *'As it nears completion, the extent and significance of the minesweeper programme becomes clear. Today the Navy has 254 ships of this category. Sixty are the ocean-going type of WWII vintage, all the others have been built since the war. A further 70 are under construction.'*
Hm?

1. In which year were navigating orders for HELM changed to WHEEL?
2. In which year did LARBOARD become PORT?
3. Name the last surviving British River Gunboat.
4. What were *Narana*, *Engadine* and *Ben My Chree*?
5. Name the first Class of Destroyer to mount quintuple torpedo tubes.
6. What are 'Mickey Mouse' ships?
7. Which type of warship has the pennant letter 'N'?
8. Where will you find *HMS Compass Rose*?
9. What's the march past tune of the Fleet Air Arm?
10. What is the role of *HMS Girdle Ness*?
11. Which Aircraft Carrier is described thus...Length 860'; Displacement 62,000 tons; Speed 27 knots; Aircraft; 42; Complement 2,400.
12. Where would you find Queen Mary, Queen Anne, King William and King Charles together?

Answers below.

HMS ILLUSTRIOUS, Invincible Class Carrier, was decommissioned in 2014 after 32 years' service. One Ship's Bell is in the RN Museum. The second Ship's Bell is on long term loan to the Oval Cricket Ground in London where it will be rung by an ex-officer of the ship's company at 10:55a.m. at the start of every day's play in a Test Match. The first to ring the bell was Admiral Sir Jock Slater at the start of the fifth Ashes Test Match in September 2019.

HMS AGAMEMNON



Rob Morgan brought to my attention an article in "The Times" about the illegal salvaging of war grave sites. HMS EXETER, HMS ENCOUNTER, HMS ELECTRA, USS PERCH, USS HOUSTON, HNLMS DE RUYTER, HNLMS JAVA, HNLMS KORTENAER and probably more have all been desecrated. The wrecks of the Battles of the Java Sea and Sunda Strait are protected by international law. The USA, United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Australia have pressed Indonesia to take action against the scrap metal scavengers.

The guided-missile destroyer USS Gridley (DDG 101) fires its Mark 45 5-inch gun during a live-fire exercise.





Some of Rob Morgan's fleet. HMLMS DE RUYTER 7,500 tons, HMLMS JAVA 6,500 tons
And two Evertsen Class Destroyers (1/1200th scale).

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I'm just reading *Clouds Above The Hill*, the Japanese writer, Shiba Ryotaro's four volume novel about the Russo-Japanese War. It took me the first volume to really get into it, but it is very good. I'm currently reading the account of the Battle of Tsushima in Vol 4 and this has raised a question.

Ryotaro mentions that the Japanese *Fuji* was hit by a Russian shell on her after turret. He writes:

".....The turret had been struck by a 12" shell, which had ripped through the embrasure, exploding inside the gunhouse and breaking off the right-hand gun at its breech. Because the gunners had been in the process of loading a shell just at that moment, their own gunpowder charge was ignited by the flames and the chamber was instantly turned into an inferno....."

Does anyone know how true this is, or whether it's just the author's artistic licence. If it is true, why didn't flash travel down to the handling room and magazine and destroy the ship, as

happened to the British battlecruisers at Jutland? Did pre-dreadnoughts have flash doors? I thought they were a later innovation.

Many thanks
Andy Field

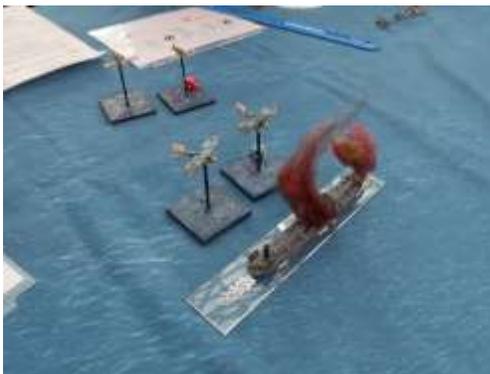


Laurent Iris' model for Warlord Games' Black Seas.

East China Sea December 2019.



Capt. William Blodgett, commanding officer of the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Barry (DDG 52), looks over the bridge wing of the ship as Barry conducts divisional tactics exercises with the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Shiloh (CG 67). Barry is underway conducting operations in the Indo-Pacific region while assigned to Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 15.



The Swordfish get a tanker, but the MC.200s tailing them knock down both torpedo bombers. David Manley's unpublished Air War 1940 rules used for the game. 4 British players flying Blenheims IVs, Beauforts, and Swordfish out of Malta up against 4 Italians flying CANT 1007 patrol bombers, CR.42s, and MC200s. The Italians had a lot of ships and area to cover, but the British didn't have a lot of weapons (bombs and torpedoes) to take out the ships.

2019 NHMGS Game Day at the Museum of Flight.

Peter Robbins running David Manley's - Form Line Of Battle 5th edition (David we've used them since the 3rd edition book for our convention games). This is from our triangle simulation society's Southern Front 2018 convention. Models are I believe a mix of Langton and GHQ. (Borrowed them for play) Historical scenario was The Battle of Cape Henry, March 16th 1781.



The Royal Australian Navy – Serving Australia with Pride.

The first evacuees-by-sea from the fire-affected Victorian seaside town of Mallacoota, Victoria arrived at the Bluescope Steel Wharf in Hastings, delivered to safety by the Royal Australian Navy training ship MV Sycamore. Evacuation of residents and visitors has commenced with over 1000 civilians embarking in HMAS Choules and MV Sycamore on 3 January.

NEW YEAR SEA QUIZ Answers.....

Happy New Year to you all, and if the opening comment on the number of Minesweepers, or Mine Counter Measure Vessels, in the RN fleet in 1956 made you look up today's numbers, yes it is just 13.....Responses to these questions were, as so often, reminiscences, the change of helm to wheel brought several humorous letters. Question 12 was fondly remembered.

1. These orders were changed on 1st January 1933.
2. Larboard vanished on 23rd November 1844....Yes, I wondered why that date was chosen, but no-one responded.
3. This was *HMS Locust*, of the Dragonfly Class, she survived some interesting war service, and was extant at the time of this question being set...she was an RNR training ship. Sadly broken up at Newport in 1968.
4. All of these ships were of course Seaplane Carriers.
5. This was the 'I' Class from 1936.
6. These were the Motor Minesweepers.
7. Minelayers.
8. The fictional Corvette is found in the pages of Monsarrat's *'The Cruel Sea'*....good film too.
9. 'Wings over the Navy' was the title of the tune. I searched for it on 'You Tube' and frankly I don't ever recall hearing it played.
10. Originally a repair ship, she was at the time the question was set the Navy's Guided Weapons Training Ship, 'Seaslug' was developed aboard

her. *Girdle Ness* also served as an accommodation vessel at Rosyth. Broken up in the 1970's.

11. This question was set by 'Octopus' and the carrier was one of four described. It was *Shinano*, the vast conversion of the third *Yamato* hull- 'Octopus' gives 42 aircraft, but other sources suggest slightly different numbers, all under fifty.
12. One of those 'letter trawling' quiz questions. They were buildings at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich. Closed in 1998.

That's it until next month...

Rob Morgan.

SIGNAL PAD!



Instructors at Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose have designed a set of bespoke board games based around hunting submarines.

They are now being used to train the next batch of observers and aircrewman who will have to use those skills for real.

The wreck of World War One German armoured cruiser SMS Scharnhorst has been located off the Falkland Islands, where it was sunk 106 years ago. Scharnhorst was the flagship of German Vice-Admiral Maximilian Graf von Spee's East Asia Squadron. It was sunk on 8 December 1914 with more than 800 men on board, including Vice-Adm von Spee himself.

Pencil in a date for your diary: Dave Sharp is already preparing the NWS wargames weekend at Yeovilton. The planned date is the weekend of the 3rd/4th of October.

The Naval Wargames Society is changing

It has become blatantly obvious in recent years that the basis upon which membership of the NWS operates is anachronistic and increasingly so. Membership by paid subscription to the society journal (*Battlefleet*) currently

funds the production and distribution costs of Battlefleet, the society's web site (from where electronic copies of the journal are downloaded by e members) and a subsidy towards hall rent for NWS events such as the NWS wargames weekend.

Through various small measures we have been able to keep a lid on NWS costs that has allowed us to keep the subscription fee at the same level for more than 10 years, however the ever increasing paucity of articles being submitted for publication in Battlefleet means that we are way behind the scheduled publication frequency for the journal with little hope of ever getting back on track. This is now starting to impact our costs too. In light of this the way the NWS operates needs to change.

Volume 38 of Battlefleet will be the last publication of the Society journal. Thereafter the NWS will exist as an online only group using a free social media platform (the details of which are as yet to be decided). The society's "All Guns Blazing" newsletter will continue, though the way it's distributed may change to take advantage of the new platform. The NWS web site will cease to exist 12 months after the publication of the last issue of the last volume of Battlefleet and will be updated to re-direct visitors to the new social media platform we'll be moving to. Thereafter, in line with the NWS constitution, any funds remaining in the society bank account will be distributed amongst the membership and the account closed.

It is deeply regrettable that there will be a number of long standing members of the society who will be disenfranchised by the move to a wholly online presence, but sadly there is no viable alternative if the NWS is to continue.

It is clear from the plethora of new naval games and the level of activity already on social media that there is still a great amount of interest in naval war gaming, in all its guises. The NWS though has to adapt to remain relevant to the hobby.

Looking on the bright side this does though mean that there is one last chance to go down in NWS history as a contributor to the last ever volume of Battlefleet, so please do take the opportunity to put pen to paper (or more likely finger to keyboard) to write that article you've been intending to for ages but never quite got round to. Regular updates on progress will be communicated via AGB.

Simon Stokes
NWS Membership Secretary and Treasurer.

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.navalwargamessociety.org.

Membership secretary: simonjohnstokes@aol.com

NWS Events and Regional Contacts, 2020

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)

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

3 Clovelly Apartments, Oxford Park, Ilfracombe, DEVON, EX34 9JS

Tel: 01271 866637

Uruguay, SCOW: Southern Cone Orientales Wargamers • Games erupt, inquire to set one off: Bill Owen US telephone is [217-619-0202](tel:217-619-0202), Uruguay 099 834 544 WmOwen@aol.com • If Spanish speaking, email & I will get someone who speaks it better. • Soca, Canelones or in Montevideo we can arrange a "Graf Spee 3 Gun Salvo": see her 5.9" gun, anchor & rangefinder salvaged from the ship resting in the harbor, a Real English Tour conducted by British expat staff who were associated with the British Ambassador who won the post-battle diplomacy and subterfuge plus, of course, a GQ3 refight of the battle (fees for features like museum & tour). • Most of the Salvo can even be done during a cruise ship stop in MVD from a Round Cape Horn itinerary between Santiago<->Buenos Aires. • wargamecampaign.wordpress.com

THE NAVAL WARGAMES SOCIETY <http://www.navalwargamessociety.org>
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