



All Guns Blazing!

Newsletter of the Naval Wargames Society
No. 278 – December 2017



“Ho Ho Ho! Merry Christmas everyone. I hope you have all been good boys and girls this year. Perhaps it’s time to give yourself a little treat on the wargame front”.

During the 1914 Christmas truce, German troops put up a sign that said, “Gott mitt uns”. (God with us). It was not long before the British Tommy displayed his well-known sense of humour and a sign went up over the British lines, “We got mittens too”.



HMS MEDWAY, the second of five (stretched) River Class offshore patrol vessels. The first is HMS FORTH, with TRENT, TAMAR and SPEY to follow. They will replace, TYNE, MERSEY, SEVERN and CLYDE.

A Seasonal Sea-Quiz.....

By Rob Morgan.

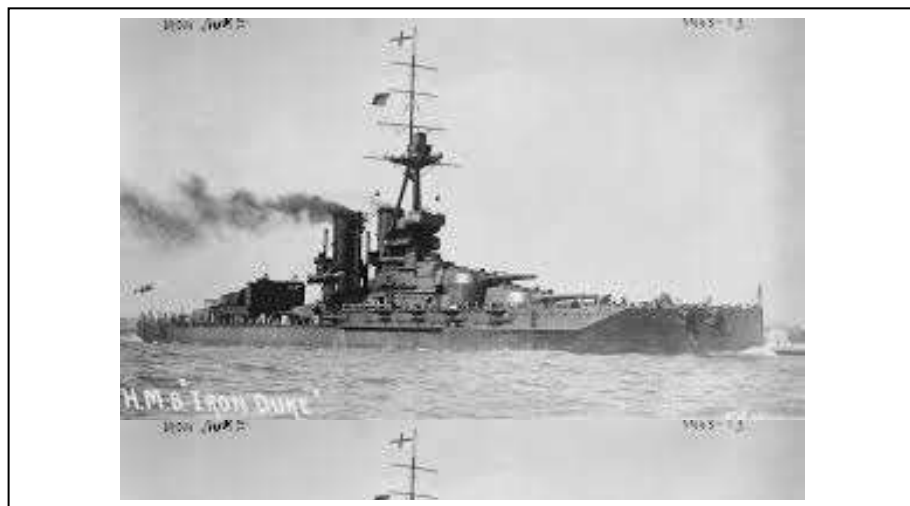
A slightly larger set of questions for this the festive season. If my Christmas wish list bears fruit then it will be a 1/600th scale USS Galena, USS Dunderberg and a 1/300th Medieval Nef...unlikely, but I did write to Santa!

1. What did General U.S.Grant, General Robert E.Lee, Admiral Farragut and General Stonewall Jackson become?
2. What began on 12th May 1797?
3. What surrendered and what was scuttled on Christmas Day?
4. On 3rd December 1945 the first landing of a jet on an RN Warship took place. Name the ship and the type of aircraft.
5. Which Empire came to an end aboard HMS Glow-worm, and where?
6. The first sea battle in which the RN used wireless?
7. When was the term Grand Fleet first used?
8. The Monitor General Wolfe achieved what in September 1918 off Ostend?
9. What opened its doors on 27th April 1927?
10. Which force was disbanded on 28th February 1810?
11. Where was the Auxiliary Patrol Boat Li Wo (1x4in) lost?
12. Whose nickname was 'Old Dreadnought'?
13. What warship carried the names Staerkoder and Olinde to disguise her true destination?

14. Originally classed as a torpedo boat, what was the first US Destroyer launched in 1898?
15. What was the first Dutch ironclad?
16. Which German warship was scuttled as a result of Brazil entering WWI on the allied side?
17. What sank *Tosa* (Japan) and *Indiana* (USA)?
18. Which navy acquired the 'Battle' Class Destroyer *HMS Sluys* in 1965?
19. What did *Junyo*, *Ryuho* and *Katsuragi* have in common?
20. *Togo* (commissioned 1943) was unique in the Kriegsmarine. What was she?

Well, that should help you digest the pudding. No prizes as usual, but I hope you got the ship models you wanted!

Rob Morgan.





USS Minneapolis after the Battle of Tassafaronga Dec 1942.

<http://www.modelwarships.com/index1.html>



1/600 DKM Graf Spee (Airfix)

Being the first warship sunk at the outbreak of WW2 I have tried to depict her in her final camouflage scheme of December 1939 as she presented in the river Plate at Montevideo. As always with Airfix kits there was a little scratch-building involved and use of photo etch to finish the model off and try to make her more realistic. Another enjoyable build thanks to AIRFIX.

Brendan Morford

Many of you will have played David Manley's "Cod War" Game. Whether you have or haven't, the following from Rob Morgan will be interesting.

Cod Wars.

Back in the far off days when 'Military Modelling' made the occasional stab at publishing wargames material, and naval wargames at that, a series of four articles appeared, written by A.J. Ambrose, and entitled "Wargaming the Cod War". This was late in 1981, but of course a slightly 'warmer' war at sea took centre stage soon afterwards, and I believe led to the side-lining of what could have been an excellent wargame scenario with weather prevailing, and no gunfire!!!

I suspect many of our grey-bearded readers will recall the articles, the first provided background, next the ships involved and then in two parts, the wargame, which had and still has a good deal to offer Cold War warriors-though there were no subs involved at all (Or so the Admiralty said!), and no aircraft to speak of. In one of the pieces, A.J. Ambrose (too much to hope he was an NWS member, or known to someone in NWS?) considered the models required for his tactical game.

Involved there were several Frigates, *Leander* and *Rothsay* classes, a *Ton* Class Minesweeper acting as a patrol boat. A mass of varied British trawlers obviously, a couple of big Ocean-going salvage tugs, and somewhere about in the background an RFA. The Icelandic vessels were four Coastguard gunboats, *ICGV's Thor, Baldur, Aegir* and *Tyr*. All that A.J. Ambrose could offer was the 1/600th Airfix *Leander*, and the possibility of scratch-building almost everything

else! Later on many of the ships became available, broadly speaking, in 1/3000th, and of course a few are to be encountered in 1/1200th.

Thoughtful and forward looking for the time, Ambrose provided 1/600th scale drawings for *HMS Lowestoft* of the *Rothsay* Class, a '*Ton*' class and one of the Icelandic vessels, *Aegir*, *Tyr* seems to have been identical to her.

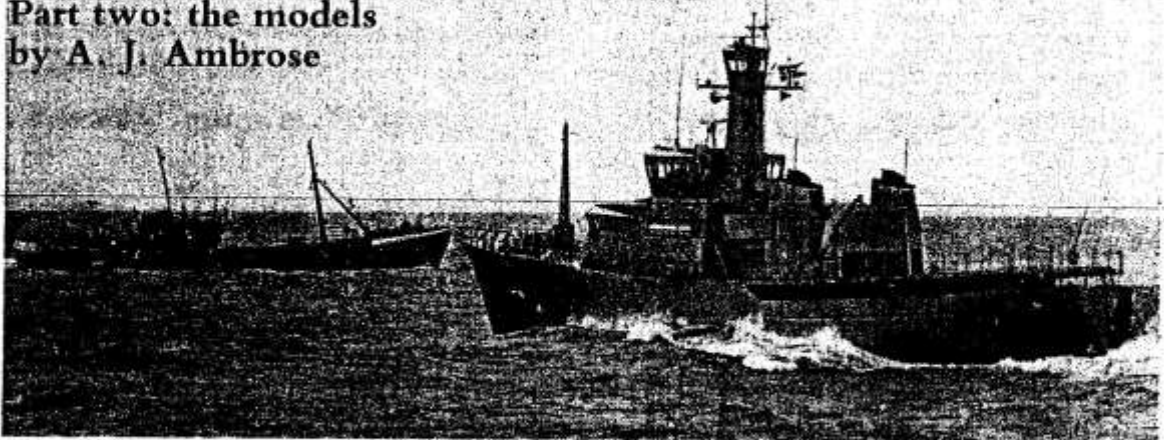
A war without gunfire or the use of weapons, a war entirely of movement and speed and the effects of weather is one still worth examining and playing for that matter. The larger scale of 1/600th, with absolutely no need for range and firing effects seems to me far more useful for playing out the 'Cod Wars' than tiny ships on big tables. My days of serious scratch-building are long gone, but I wondered if anyone knew of a source or potential source of fishing vessels, salvage tugs and what could pass for, or be converted into ICGV ships? *Baldur*, Ambrose tells us, started life as a stern trawler in fact.

Anyone any ideas?

Rob Morgan.

WARGAMING THE COD WAR

Part two: the models
by A. J. Ambrose



The Icelandic Coastguard Vessel *Tyr* approaches a side trawler trying to haul its nets. The net cutting grapple cable can be seen projecting from the gunboat's stern. The frigate, from which this photo was taken, managed to prevent *Tyr* from interfering with the trawler. Photo: MOD.

THE exact number and specific models to be constructed to form part of the fleet required to enact the Cod War Saga, will really be dictated by personal choice, and available time. The wargame (which appears in the next part of this series), can be played with almost any amount of trawlers, and escorts, etc. In order to keep things fairly simple to start with, however, one can commence with just two or three models and gradually build them up as the game progresses, or, again, to personal choice.

Basically, the game calls for a minimum of three players, one taking the part of the Icelanders, one the British element, and the third player assumes the role of umpire, but more about this in the next part. For the time being, however, it is sensible to decide which parts individuals will play, in order for them to set about the construction of their own pieces for use in the game.

The British player will, undoubtedly, have the most work to do, so he may well wish to recruit some assistance to control the fishing fleet, and furthermore, to assist in its construction. The umpire need not be idle in the construction stage either, he can assist one of the players with construction, or he may decide to build one or two merchant vessels and trawlers himself; the game is often made more interesting by the addition of a few neutral vessels, which help to confuse both the British and Icelandic players respectively.

Of necessity, certain models must be limited in quantity, in order to achieve a realistic appraisal of the action and results. Firstly, we shall deal with the British contingent, and the Royal Navy in particular.

The RN must be limited to certain vessels, as, for the purpose of the game, we shall say that the other RN forces are tied up with their normal duties and operations, and so are prohibited from taking part.

The RN player is allowed a maximum of seven frigates, preferably (for the sake of realism) these should consist of five *Leander* class vessels, and two *Rothsay* class. Namely, HM ships; *Diomedé* (F16), *Juno* (F52), *Scyllia* (F71), *Bacchante* (F69), and *Andromeda* (F57) of the *Leander* class, and HMS *Yarmouth* (F101), and HMS *Lowestoft* (F103), of the *Rothsay*, or "Town" class frigates. In addition, he is allowed one Royal Fleet Auxiliary such as RFA *Grey Rover* or similar,

and one "Ton" class minesweeper/patrol boat, such as HMS *Monkton*.

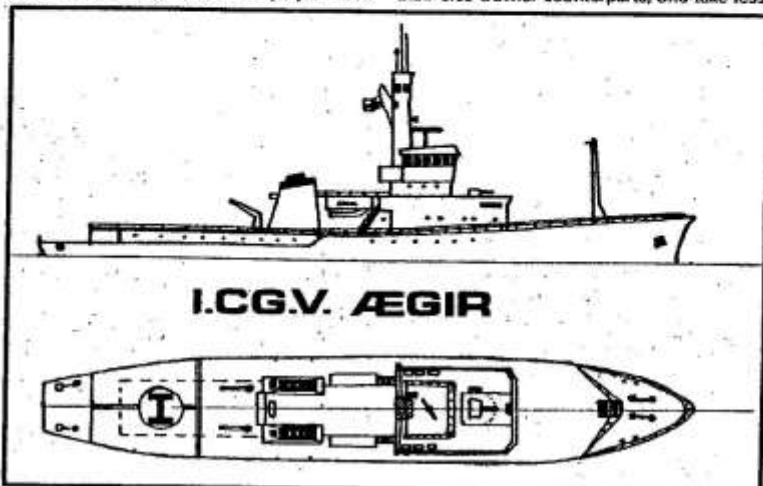
The remainder of the British contingent can consist of two, large ocean-going salvage tugs, such as *Lloydsman* and *Statesman*, one fisheries supply vessel and a combination of various British fishing boats. There is no minimum or maximum number of fishing vessels allowed, but players must remember that the more fishing vessels there are, the more highly pressed will be the frigates trying to protect them! The less fishing boats used will be easier to protect, but will catch less fish, and the quantity of fish caught decides the outcome of the game, so players should think carefully about this fact.

To win the game, the British player must achieve a certain amount of fish landings in a given period. The Icelandic player must

prevent this by chopping nets with his gunboats' graples, and to win the game must stop a defined quantity of MFVs (motor fishing vessels) from reaching their fishing quota. It can be seen, therefore, that the quantity of MFVs modelled by the British player must be carefully thought out. However, more of this next time, as now we are primarily concerned with constructing the models.

The Icelandic player is allowed a maximum of only five patrol boats. These should be the ICGVs *Thor*, *Tyr*, *Argir* and *Baldur*, and if the full five are to be used, he may also construct the ICGV *Odin*. In addition, the Icelandic player may also choose to make up some trawlers of his own, in order to use them during the game for blocking or hiding, or just getting in the way of other boats.

Whilst on the subject of trawlers, which come in various types and sizes, their different roles should be noted. There are the conventional side trawlers, which haul their nets aboard over the side, having to stop and lie beam-on to the sea in order to do so, and there are the more modern stern trawlers, which haul their nets up a ramp at the stern. The stern trawlers are usually more efficient than their side trawler counterparts, and take less



A Monitor.

These days, my 1/1200th ACW River and Coastal fleets don't see much action. I prefer the larger 1/600th models of 'Peter Pig' backed by a few of the more unusual warships and auxiliaries from 'Thoroughbred' in the USA.

They came out of the boxes last weekend, when I had a cousin visiting, we used to play naval games years ago. We decided on a quick game, involving a row of monitors on each side, and the obvious choice was the '*USS Passaic*' Class, of which there were ten of course. Powerful and simple designs, overall a success in Ironclad terms. As a 'fleet' all with similar firepower, fine.

Now, the opponents were Russian single turret Monitors, of which there also ten in service in the 1860's. Almost exact copies of the *Passaic*, the Imperial warships of the '*Bronenosets*' Class (it means 'Armadillo' in translation) were built from plans provided by the Federal Government, to what was a *de facto* ally, should the French or British become involved in the war between the states. The firepower of the Russian ships was also copied from the Union arsenals, and though not tested to the same degree as the *Passaics*, showed apparent similarity in performance.

Back in the days when metal models in 1/1200th cost well under a pound each, I built up the US Class, and then, with a few slight additions to the decks, ships boats from the Airfix *HMS Cossack* kits for instance, and a 2mm small round deckhouse from sprue right aft, the Russians came too. This isn't intended to be an account of a fairly straightforward wargame between two hefty fleets of the early Ironclad era, but a question. Oh, yes, we used the basic, but lovely and fast rules to be found on pages 108 and 109 of Don Featherstone's '*Naval War Games*'; a decent game in an hour or two and an early enough finish to get to the pub before midnight chimes. The only alteration we made was that the Russians were slightly more vulnerable to hits as most of their Monitors had unarmoured decks. Not that it mattered as the vessels of his Imperial Majesty, Tsar Alexander II, triumphed when one of the two Federal Squadrons ran into a minefield.

The question is this. My cousin asked me why among the black and dark sea grey monitor fleets of both sides (the Russians have a yellow band on the

funnels for identification, by the way, and some of the Yankees, broad white turret bands), there was a single white monitor, shown here. Hm? It's marked as *USS Camanche*, that is the right spelling, and I do have a dim memory that this was the last of the *Passaic*'s to be commissioned, and after the ACW had ended. I can't recall the source, but someone with a monitor- mind might, a source which suggested that *USS Camanche* was assembled in San Francisco as guard ship for the American West Coast, and that given the climate and that it was peace-time, a coat of white paint was added to her. I also think she was a deterrent in the troubles originating down south in Maximilian's Mexico.

Can anyone add to this?

Rob Morgan.



In Britain during WWII it was illegal to send knitting patterns abroad in the post; just in case enemy spies were sending coded messages.

A Nazi Board Game?

This illustration appeared in almost all the national newspapers a few weeks ago. You'll notice the Reich's swastika flag is 'blacked out' at centre right. It's described in all of the captions I've seen as a Second World War board game, but can this be correct? The game's playing positions do show Britain surrounded by German attackers, in the air and on sea, but...France, the Low Countries, Norway and Denmark are all shown as decidedly 'neutral' The attacks all come out of German harbours! Is it in fact pre-war? I wonder if any reader has come upon more information about this game, maybe in a trade or specialist journal? It was auctioned in Shropshire. No game pieces are shown, and the rules must be 'interesting'! Ambitious too.

Rob Morgan.



The UK's Minister for the Armed Forces, Mark Lancaster has met Gibraltar Chief Minister, Fabian Picardo and Deputy Governor, Nick Pyle OBE, in the UK overseas territory as part of a visit to discuss Brexit and the role of the UK's military in Gibraltar.

Gibraltar is of great importance to the UK, the Armed Forces and the UK's allies. It has provided vital assistance to operations and exercises over the years, perhaps best demonstrated by the recent support to the UK's hurricane relief effort in the Caribbean. HMS OCEAN docked in Gib to load humanitarian aid and disaster relief stores and equipment before sailing to the Caribbean Islands to assist those devastated by the hurricane. (The RN gave assistance in the British Virgin Islands and the USN gave assistance to the US Virgin Islands after Hurricane IRMA). The UK is committed to upholding Gibraltar's sovereignty as well as ensuring that Gibraltar's priorities are taken properly into account as the UK prepares to leave the EU.



Commando Helicopter Force Merlin Mk3 helicopter and HMS Scimitar in British Gibraltar Territorial Waters
[Crown copyright]

The Gibraltarians have always massively rejected rule by Spain and are unlikely to change their opinion in the future. Could the UK and Spain ever come to blows over Gibraltar? (After all, who predicted the UK/Argentina conflict of 1982?) Perhaps those near future war-gamers could play out a scenario or two? Trafalgar Mk II and write a few words for AGB or Battlefleet. Rory Crabb's "Naval Command" (available from Wargame Vault) is one possible rule set to use.

China will now be able to move ahead with its third aircraft carrier, after it announced a breakthrough on technology for launching aircraft.

The new technology could be the most advanced jet launch system in the world on an aircraft carrier that doesn't use nuclear power. The new developments on its integrated propulsion system would create more power for an electromagnetic catapult. Aircraft would be launched more quickly and in less time than the alternatives, steam-catapult and ski-jump systems. The country's two prior carriers, the Liaoning and the Type 001A, are ski-jump launch systems.



China's aircraft carrier Liaoning departs Hong Kong earlier this year.



1/72 U-123 Type IXB U-boat (Scratchbuilt)

This is a scratch built 1/72 scale model of the U-123 type IXB U-boat the way she was outfitted in 1942 during Operation Drumbeat (the German U-boat offensive off the east coast of the USA). I had some leftover Styrofoam from my USS Gar sub project, so I decided to scratch build this model. After the hull was shaped, I skinned it with file folder cardstock and built all the details- guns, rudders, hatches and so on.

U-123 was skippered by Reinhard Hardegen during Operation Drumbeat and she was one of the first five boats in the offensive. As of September 2017, Hardegen is still living and, at 104 years of age, is the last surviving U-boat commander from WW2.

[Damian Petro](#)

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Operation Drumbeat Part 2. (See November's AGB for Part 1). Using "Operation Drumbeat" by Peter Schweighofer, Griffin Publishing Studio; available from Wargame Vault with a few house rules to beef up the basic game.

U-123 has been enjoying picking off a few easy targets off the coast of the USA between New York and Philadelphia. A destroyer made a persistent but amateurish depth charge attack resulting in a few crew injuries (2 serious) and some damage to the diesel engines, limiting maximum speed. With torpedoes and deck gun ammunition still available and the prospect of more easy targets, it is too early to return to France.

28 Jan 1942. Cloudy. Wednesday and the Cook's birthday; somehow he managed to produce a cake for the crew. Patrolling Grid CA54. Chf Eng says that the diesel engines will be O.K. working at 75%. Radio report from U-xxx Tanker heading for Philadelphia and straight for us! Intercept course, Tanker estimated to be 3,500 tons spotted. 2 torpedoes – one hit amidships and the tanker is listing. ALARM! Destroyer closing from the south. Crash dive. Depth charge attack resulted in additional damage to diesel engines before the Destroyer was evaded. The Chf Eng says the damage will need major repairs. Decide to return to Lorient.

- 29 Jan. Weather clear. Making best possible speed eastwards. Grid CA55. Chf Eng working continuously on the engines. Tanker estimated at 6,000 tons crossing our bows. 3 torpedo spread and two explosions heard. Close the range and 2 torpedoes fired. One hit towards the stern of the tanker and she goes down. Resume course for home.
- 30 Jan. Weather again clear and we are slow moving on the surface while repairs to the ballast tank are made. All eyes on the sky and horizon – we are sitting ducks. No enemy ships or aircraft are seen.
- 31 Jan. Cloudy. Progress slow and crew are becoming tense. Fight between two of the deck gun crew broken up.
- Sunday 1 Feb. Cloudy. Grid CA64. Radio report of target received but we are too slow and too far away to intercept.
- 2 Feb. Storm. We are moving east submerged during the day and on the surface at night.
- 3 Feb. 2nd day of storm which is in our favour as we continue homeward. Position Grid CA66.
- 4 Feb. Weather clears and spirits begin to rise as U-123 moves into the empty Atlantic.
- 22 Feb. Arrive at Lorient after an uneventful Atlantic crossing.

REPLAY TALLY. 3 Freighters estimated at 15,000 tons in total, 2 Tankers estimated at 10,000 tons and 1 probable Tanker of 3,500 tons.

Actual cruise of the U-123: 9 Ships totalling 53,173 tons. So no Knights Cross for me for this replay; but we did get home with only one long term injured crew member. After a period of crew R and R and maintenance for the U-123 we will be ready to go again.



[Derby Worlds 2017](#) was held 7th and 8th October, just South of Leicester at the Bruntingthorpe Proving Grounds. The Battle of Jutland (on a massive table).

Extract from MOD press release.

Earlier this year UK Ministry of Defence staff spent four months working with colleagues across Defence to design and prepare an ambitious and novel dynamic political-military wargame, the first of its kind for 40 years in MOD. In September a two day wargame was “played” in MOD Main Building, Whitehall, for 50 senior players – including the Permanent Secretary, Chief of Defence Intelligence and with participation from FCO, Cabinet Office, NATO and the U.S. Department of Defense. Game control, led personally by the Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, adjudicated between Military, Political and Adversary cells; as players made fast-paced decisions under the fog and frictions of the full spectrum of challenges before them. This wargame enabled senior leaders to immerse themselves in a strategic problem, test their thinking and learn through experience in a 'safe to fail' environment.

The UK MOD is increasing its use of “wargaming” from low recent levels. More power to their elbow, I say.

In November, Secretary of the US Navy Richard V. Spencer awarded the Bronze Star Medal with V device for valor to Chief Boatswain's Mate Joseph L. George for heroic achievement while serving aboard the repair ship USS Vestal (AR 4). George, a second class petty officer at the time, saved the lives of several Sailors from the battleship USS Arizona (BB 39). He survived the war and retired from the Navy in 1955, but passed away in 1996.

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The 2018 Invictus Games will run from 20 - 27 October, and will be hosted down under as 500 competitors from 18 nations head to Sydney, Australia.

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In October 1943 Admiral Fraser, C in C Home Fleet was offered the post of First Sea Lord but he generously recommended Admiral Cunningham instead, stating that unlike Cunningham, he had not fought a battle yet. He added, “- if one day I should sink the Scharnhorst I might feel differently”. Spookily two months later, he did.

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In WWII, RAF pilots carried chocolate bars infused with garlic in case they were shot down and needed to make their breath smell French.

SIGNAL PAD!

Unfortunately our Battlefleet editor has not been contactable for reasons unknown. In the short term Simon Stokes, is stepping into the breach and is producing the next edition of, "Battlefleet". If you emailed articles to Stuart Fieldhouse for inclusion in "Battlefleet" perhaps you would be good enough to dig them out and email them to Simon. simonjohnstokes@aol.com I am trolling through emails sent to me to find members' articles. In the longer term if someone could volunteer to be Battlefleet editor that would be great. The NWS is run by volunteers and many hands make light work. AGB and Battlefleet can only be improved by as many members as possible contributing book reviews, AARs etc.

Welcome to new members David Carter and Ken Wood.

Crusade

Date:

Saturday, January 27, 2018 - 10:00 to 16:00

The annual show "Crusade" will again be held at St. Cyres School, St. Cyres Road, Penarth. After our successful move here in 2017. A big thanks for the kind cooperation of St. Cyres School, Crusade has a new home. St. Cyres School is a brand new built state school in Penarth and we hope to continue for many more years of happy association at this fantastic venue.

Coming in AGB January 2018: Roman Warships, "Mini" Trafalgar, Yuan Class attack sub, Skybirds of the 1930s and much more.

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, 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

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