



All Guns Blazing!

Newsletter of the Naval Wargames Society
No. 284 - JUNE 2018

EDITORIAL

Hello everyone. You should have all received the latest "Battlefleet" by email or in the post by now, if you have not, then you need to re-subscribe to NWS. PayPal via the NWS website is the easiest way. Cheques are acceptable too.

Welcome to new Members, Gary Graber and Bruce Davidson. Only a few more and AGB email distribution will be through the 200 barrier.

Cheers
Norman Bell

The Imperial War Museum has more than 10 million photographs which can be viewed or purchased. www.iwm.org.uk/collections/photographs
tel: 0207 416 5309.

Designed to be smaller and cheaper alternatives to Navy destroyers, destroyer escorts weren't designed to slug it out in a fleet battle like their bigger brothers. Instead theirs was the dreary but vital duty of escorting convoys of slow merchant ships across the oceans.

The world's record for sinking submarines belongs not to a destroyer or an aircraft carrier, but a humble destroyer escort. The USS *England* sank 6 Japanese submarines in just 12 days in May 1944. At first glance, the *England* (named for John England, a sailor killed at Pearl Harbor) was not an impressive vessel. A *Buckley*-class destroyer escort, the *England* had a crew of 186 and weighed in at 1,400 tons, or about one-quarter less than a Fletcher-class destroyer.



The *England* bristled with anti-submarine weapons, including two depth charge racks that rolled depth charges off the stern of the ship, and eight K-guns that shot depth charges out to 150 yards. It also had a deadly British-designed 24-barrel Hedgehog anti-submarine mortar. The Hedgehog fired shells that looked like potato mashers; unlike depth charges, which exploded at a pre-set depth and disrupted sonar contact, Hedgehog grenades only exploded when they hit a hard surface such as a submarine hull.

Abridged from an article in “The National Interest”.

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With the Cold War over, Missouri decommissioned in March 1992. The cost of maintaining the battleships in service, which required large crews and specialized training, was simply too much for the Navy to bear. It was struck from the Navy List in 1995 in anticipation for conversion into a museum ship. Its sisters Wisconsin and Iowa remained on the Navy List until early 2006. The viability of returning the ships to service was debated for much of the 1990s and early 2000s. The Marine Corps argued that the battleships were necessary for the provision of amphibious gunfire support, a concern that the promise of the Zumwalt-class destroyers would only partially allay.

The North Carolina– and South Dakota–class battleships were designed with the limits of the Washington Naval Treaty in mind. Although much more could be accomplished in 1938 with thirty-five thousand tons than in 1921, sacrifices still had to be made. As had been practice in the first round of battleship construction, U.S. Navy architects accepted a low speed in return for heavy armor and armament. Consequently, both the South Dakotas and the North Carolinas had speeds a knot or two slower than most foreign contemporaries. The Montanas, the final battleship design authorized by the US Navy, would also have had a twenty-eight-knot maximum speed. In any case, Japan’s failure to ratify the 1936 London Naval Treaty bumped the maximum standard tonnage from thirty-five to forty-five thousand, giving the designers some extra space to work with. The result was the Iowa class, the most powerful and best-designed battleships ever built.

From “The National Interest” website.

SEA QUIZ No.71. From Rob Morgan.

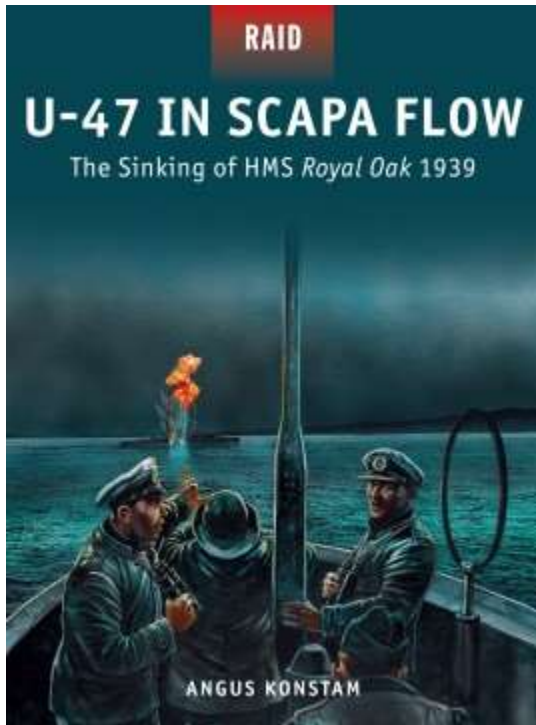
In almost every 1950’s monthly quiz in ‘The Navy’ there appeared what many of us would call ‘the obscure question’. These usually brought a short correspondence from an aged reader or two, loaded with reminiscences. Question 5 in today’s selection is a typical example. The ‘Flowers’ brought a dribble of respect, much to my surprise.

On we go.....

1. HMS Agincourt was the last RN warship to carry what armament?
2. What was the name of the first WWII ‘Flower’ Class Corvette, launched in 1940?
3. The largest loss, outside war, of which Class of RN warship took place in July 1946?

4. Who or what 'came on board' on 1st February 1946?
5. What were 'Grant's Guns'?

See below for the Answers.



At the outset of World War II, Scapa Flow was supposed to be the safe home base of the British Navy - nothing could penetrate the defences of this bastion. So how, in the dead of night, was Gunther Prien's U-47 able to slip through the line of protective warships to sink the mighty Royal Oak? This book provides the answer with an account of one of the most daring naval raids in history. Drawing on the latest underwater archaeological research, this study explains how Prien and his crew navigated the North Sea and Kirk Sound to land a devastating blow to the British. It reveals the level of disrepair that Scapa Flow had fallen into, and delves into the conspiracy theories surrounding the event, including an alleged cover-up by the then First Sea Lord, Winston Churchill.

From the Osprey Publishing website.
<https://ospreypublishing.com/store/military-history/series-books/raid/u-47-in-scapa-flow>

Osprey Publishing has many high quality books which would be of interest to NWS Members. There must be a game here, sneaking a submarine into Scapa Flow and seeing what targets are available and can they be attacked. Check out the Osprey website for this book and the naval entries in the "duel" series.

Rob Morgan sent to me an interesting newspaper cutting about the not well known exploits of X-Craft 20, a midget submarine which spent 4 days undetected off the Normandy beaches in January 1943, on the seabed during the day and sending a frogman ashore each night to measure the tides, depth of water, seabed gradient, currents, map sandbanks and survey the beach defences. Sand samples were brought back which confirmed that the beaches could support the weight of tanks. The submarine, about the size of a broom cupboard, i.e. not much bigger than a coffin, held two crew, a hydrographic expert and two frogmen. The multiple X Craft's attack on the Tirpitz in the Norwegian Fjord is more well-known.

Ships in 'The Works' Store.

I was looking for a birthday present, when I found a pile of little red boxes on the 'games' table of the shop. There were four of them, WWII Battleships, labelled as 'Hood', 'Tirpitz', 'New Jersey' and 'Missouri' (these two possibly identical models?), priced at £3 for a 1/2000th scale full hull and waterline model. The boxes, shown in the first photo are small and easily overlooked.

Hm?

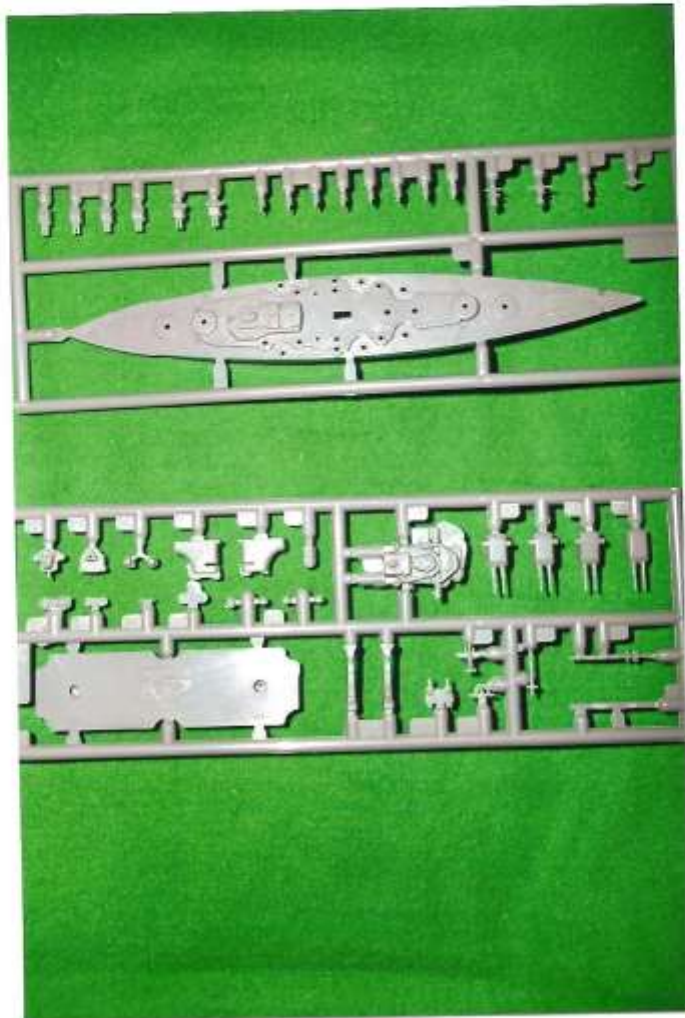
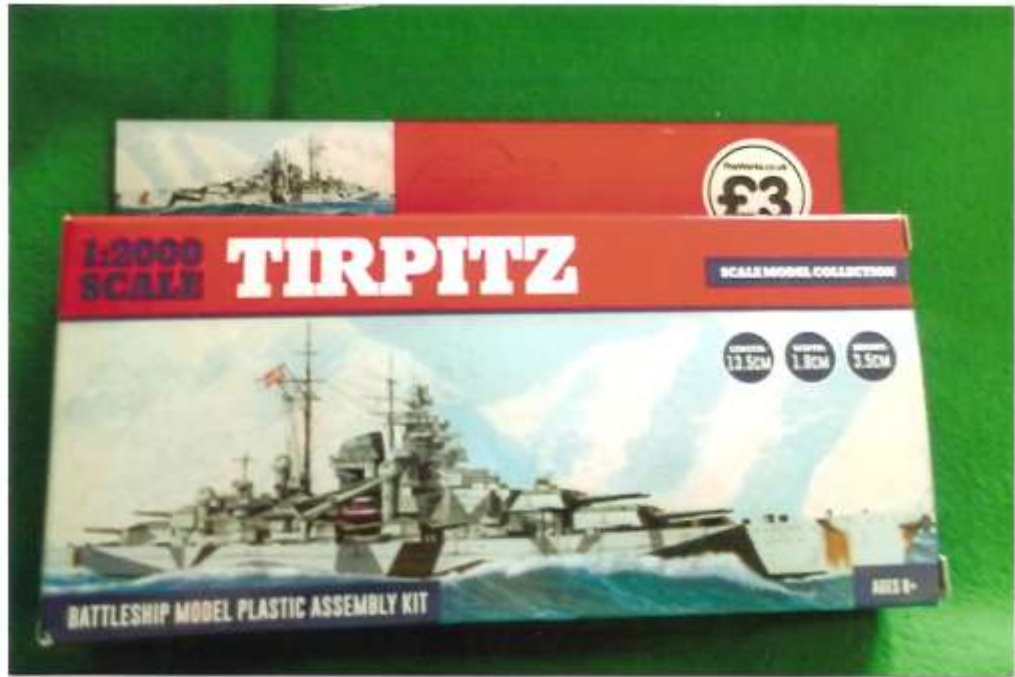
Unusual to say the least. The scale isn't one I've ever used apart from a few now very old 'Knight Designs' Armada period warships. Anyway, I decided to buy one of them and chose 'Tirpitz'. Assembled it's around 13cm long, and the hull is good, no warping. The plastic is hard and grey, so my initial doubts were being settled. This is a very basic package. The instructions on the back of the box are small and hard to see clearly, and there are no other instructions.

To assemble the 'Tirpitz' is no easy matter, there are over thirty pieces in all, and attached to sprues, so cutting them away is a task for the steady handed. The secondary turrets, directors and seaplane in particular require skill just to separate from the sprue, as you can see here, these are very small parts.

The kits are Chinese origin, and directly imported by 'The Works', but at the price and given their complexity, I can't see them selling in quantity. So keep an eye open for discounts in the not too far distant future! It crossed my mind that these had appeared under another label in the past?

I'm going to turn my model into a Science Fiction warship, and use the small gun turrets, etc, on 1/1200th scale models. However, I don't doubt that in the NWS there's someone who knows of a decent range of WWII models into which these may fit, possibly they would slip in to one of the smaller 1/2400th ranges? Will the group expand from these four capital ships? Possibly, a carrier or two might add some value to them, but these as a group are as diverse as the old Pyro's were thirty odd years back. Not enough for a game, or a collection.

Rob Morgan.



The following is from Phil Dunn.

Admiral Jellicoe's Worst Day

It is late January 1915. The disparity between the Grand Fleet and High Seas Fleet is at its lowest ever, with a just one advantage in Dreadnought numbers for the Royal Navy, of 21 to 20! There are other such periods notably December 1914 with a +2 British superiority, and Jellicoe was convinced the enemy would steam out to give battle in this critical period. He also believed the Germans would pick a day when all their Capital ships were available. See his book "The Grand Fleet" pages 31 and 200 if you have a copy. He could be right! In 1916 at the actual battle of Jutland, just one ship was in dock. Of the ten British Battlecruisers only three were in the battlefleet at the end of January 1915. Two Battleships were also missing. collisions, sent abroad, refits, repairs, and so on had reduced the the numbers. Surprisingly he also has but 44 destroyers compared to 88 German types.

It is possible to wargame the situation with simple rules and I give here my own fast-play set which to myself at least has proved very entertaining, and either side can win. There are no tactics. It is a simple big-gun fleet action without cruisers which played but a minor role in the real thing anyway. Abstract torpedo attacks can be included or left out as desired.

Two white and one coloured dice are used. If the latter is "evens" double the score on the other two with modifiers included. HMS "Ajax" no 19 down the list, is firing at SMS "Kaiserin". She rolls a 2 and 3 on the dice and adds +3 for 13.5in guns and +1 for having a 10 gun broadside. = "9" or "18" if doubled.

"Kaiser" would be crippled when 50% of her value (38) is lost. "Ajax" has not achieved this in either round. A crippled ship (circle in pencil to denote), reduces hits scored in the second round by half. Note damage scores as shown on the list example in pencil (9-22 is both round scores.)

Two examples of play, (1) British lose 3 Super Dreadnoughts and 1 Dreadnought. 10 are crippled.

Germans lose 2 Dreadnoughts and 14 crippled

(2) British suffer 2 Super-Dreadnought losses and 4 others with 10 crippled

Germans lose 1 Battle-Cruiser and 5 Dreadnoughts, 11 crippled.

In both cases, the Royal Navy is left with more non-crippled ships than the High Seas Fleet, so who won?

Statistics: Grand Fleet has 106/ 13.5in guns and 78/ 12in v H.S.Fleet 120/ 12 in and 60/ 11in guns.
Royal Navy = 696 defence points. Germans = 702 points.

If Destroyers are to be included (not done so in above 2 games), the British side can make one attack during the 1st or second round, Germans in both.

Roll 6d for No of hits per attack, Then 3-6d for damage per hit. Next randomly assign each hit with A 20d. i.e P.Royal is number 1, Benbow is 16,

Gunnery: Work down the list, firing at ship directly opposite, or one on each side. See the modifiers below the list of ships. Note that for example, HMS "Ajax" would be crippled if 18 hits were scored in Round One or in the Second Round if the score was 10-8 or higher as her point value is 38. The list can be re-arranged as desired as they are in no particular order here.

Of course, there are many other ways to wargame the great contest, with or without the use of models, but 41 ships are present here, so do not be overly ambitious.

GRAND FLEET V HIGH SEAS FLEET JAN 1915

P. Royal 35	Von Der Tann 29
Q. Mary 35	Moltke 33
N. Zealand 25	Seydlitz 36
	Derrflinger 38
Bellerophon 29	Helgoland 35
Temeraire 29	Ostfriesland 35
St. Vincent 30	Thuringen 35
Vanguard 30	Oldenburg 35
Neptune 30	Nassau 30
Colusus 31	Westfalen 30
Herculese 31	Rheinland 30
Collinwood 30	Posen 30
Agincourt 36	
Thunderer 34	G.Kurfurst 39
Centurion 35	Konig 39
Marlborough 38	Markgraf 39
Benbow 38	Kaiser 38
Emp of India 38 9-22*	F. D. Grosse 38
Canada 38	P. R. Luitpold 38
Ajax 35	Kaiserin 38
Erin 35	K. Albert "
Iron Duke 38	

14 guns +3	13.5 in guns +3
10 guns +1	12 inch guns +1
8 guns +0	11 in guns +0
6 guns -1	

Switch Target No coloured dice
Two ships at one target No coloured dice
Firing Ship not fired at +5

*Hits scored on 1st and 2nd round

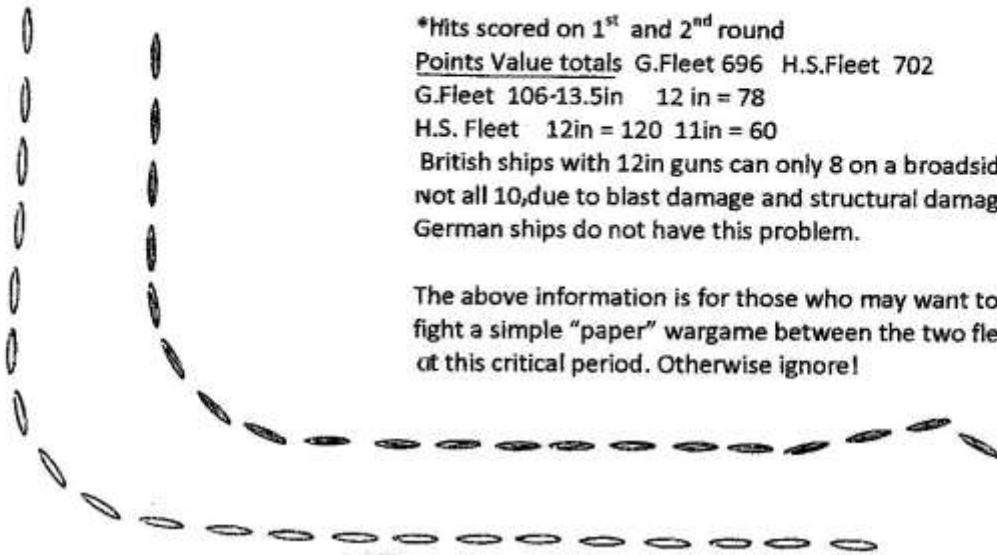
Points Value totals G.Fleet 696 H.S.Fleet 702

G.Fleet 106-13.5in 12 in = 78

H.S. Fleet 12in = 120 11in = 60

British ships with 12in guns can only 8 on a broadside, not all 10, due to blast damage and structural damage. German ships do not have this problem.

The above information is for those who may want to fight a simple "paper" wargame between the two fleets at this critical period. Otherwise ignore!



Quiz

Number 71 answers.....

Well, HMS Agincourt revived a few memories, and in particular the fact that her 7 turrets were named after days of the week! If anyone knows more about the astonishing MTB losses, please share the information. In 'The Navy' it brought nothing in response. The guns of number 5 did. The answer was expanded to explain there were 4 x4.7in, 4 x4pdrs, and there was a dispute over the presence of heavy machine guns.

1. She was the last Battleship to carry 12in guns.
2. The first was HMS Gladiolus, not, as I suspected Rose, Thistle, Daffodil or Shamrock.
3. The loss was of 11 MTB's in a sudden storm in the Med.
4. The WRNS, though not as many respondents pointed out disparagingly, subject to the Naval Discipline Acts! Well, they'd never go to sea, would they, as one old salt pointed out.
5. These were the guns of the Naval Brigade ashore in the Boer War, 1900.

Coming to a location near you.

2nd June. Little Wars, Melbourne, Australia.

10th June. Broadside, Sittingbourne, Kent, UK.

16th June. Phalanx, St Helens, UK.

14-15th July. Battlegroup South, Bovington Tank Museum, UK.

15th July. The Joy of Six, Sheffield, UK.

3-4th August. Call To Arms, Wellington, NZ.

Check their websites for latest info.

Perhaps you attended Gamex, Los Angeles, Calif, USA, or Partizan, Newark and can write a few words about your experiences for AGB?



How the next Royal Navy frigate may look. By the mid-2030s the Type 26 should be the backbone and workhorse of the RN and remain in service until 2070.

- **Anti-ship missiles:**
TBA
- **Anti-air missiles:**
48x MBDA CAMM (Common Anti Air Modular Missile - Sea Ceptor)
- **Guns:**
1x 5 inch gun (main gun)
2x Phalanx (CIWS)
2x 30mm MSI remote weapon stations
- **Anti-Submarine weapons:**
TBA



An F/A-18F Super Hornet, assigned to the "Swordsmen" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 32, approaches the USS Gerald R. Ford's (CVN 78) Electromagnetic Aircraft Launching System (EMALS) during flight deck operations in the Atlantic Ocean. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Kristopher Ruiz)



Missing Medieval Cogs?

The cogs in the photograph are 1/3000th scale, made originally by Bill Lamming. Fairly old models now, I bought them from Bill in the late 1970's after reading a short series called 'Medieval Warfare in the North Sea', published in three parts in 'Military Modelling'. The writer, Lance Railton (An NWS member perhaps?) provided a set of scenarios and some decent usable rules for medieval encounters off these shores and beyond. The 'Railton Rules' could do with a reprint now in my opinion.

He also provided information on the colours of a range of medieval cities and states, from the Hanse to Italy, and suggested that the sails of each fleet should be painted in, well, 'house' colours. Not historically, totally accurate, but it looks just right in this scale. I refined this system a little by painting each Cogs castles and fighting top a different colour. So, you could have 'The White Cog of Pisa', the 'Blue', and the 'Red' and so on. To denote flagships, I added touches of gold, or paper pennons from the mast head. Merchant ships I either left with plain buff or off white sails, and scruffier hulls.

Bear in mind the models in the photo are forty years old, and if I was attempting a fleet now, then stronger glues and thin plasticard might make pennons easier to fashion, and it would probably be possible to add a jack-staff at each stern and bow with added small pennons or banners. Using the masts and sails

trimmed from one or two of the delightful 1/2400th medieval vessels of 'Tumbling Dice', for lateen masts or foremasts would make later or slightly larger cogs. The 'Dice' pirate galley, ASC 14 makes splendid medieval galleys to accompany the Lamming Cogs to war, looking the right scale. Can I also take the opportunity of recommending a little background reading into Cog encounters in the medieval period. It's *'The White Company'* by Conan Doyle, set in the 100YW, an early chapter deals with a sea-fight between a Cog and Galleys off Gascony. Valuable background.

But... now, well, there's a problem where the models are concerned. Indeed, I'm glad I bought a hundred of the little cogs when I did. They were selling at a mere eight pence each in 1979, and the value was incredible. They are about 10mm long on chunky sea bases, and 10mm to the mast top. Mine are based on rectangles of plasticard. En masse these little cogs always look superb.

Bill's models are as attractive and useful now as they were back then, but it seems that they are no longer going to be available. When the Lamming business closed, the moulds were sold to East Riding Miniatures, and Tony Barr intended to re-issue them, he told me so several years ago (ERM did issue the Lamming Napoleonic warships, I believe). Not at 8p each cog, unfortunately, but at two for a pound. Sadly, they never appeared, and news I have is that ERM are no longer trading. Some other member may have better information of course. It would be a great shame if the Lamming Cogs vanished from the table top. Anyone know more?

Rob Morgan.

SIGNAL PAD!

Good news from Dave Sharp.

The UK Naval Wargames Weekend will take place at the Fleet Air Arm Museum Yeovilton on the 30th June and 1st July. As last year we will need to charge members attending to cover costs. This will be £5 for one day, £7.50 for both as last year. Attendees will be able to access the museum without charge (normally £13 if booked online). Please could you let me know if you are able to put on a game. Please give an indication of the theme and the number of tables you will require. The space available is ample but I will need to ensure enough tables are provided.

dave_sharp@talktalk.net (dave underscore sharp@talktalk.net)

Many thanks,
Dave

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