

Signs & Portents

WARGAMER

BATTLEFIELD WARRIORS

Variant Brit MICVs For Battlefield Evolution!

LONE WOLF EVOLUTION

The Famous Fantasy Setting Gets A Workout On The Tabletop

THE COMING OF THE FORTH

Preview Details On The Fourth Race For Starship Troopers!

Plus... VaS Surcouf submarine, New ACTA ships, Second Battle of Trafalgar VaS report and much, much more!

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Hi everyone, Ian's passed the lofty responsibility of the editorial down to me this month. Being assistant editor of *S&P Wargamer* has some great perks, such as getting to see the magazine in advance and finding out all about the new goings-on at Mongoose Towers early (more about that in a bit). Of course, there's also the downside of having to actually assist with the editing... an old saying about eating cake comes to mind.

We've got another packed issue this month, with yet another batch of new ship stats for *A Call to Arms* this month, variant Warriors for *Battlefield Evolution*, tactics for using the ISA, rules for using Lone Wolf miniatures... if there's one thing you have to say about S&P it's that we give you plenty of content every month. For those who want two things to say, you could always mention our amazing cover price, too!

Anyway, as I've got this little podium to speak from I figured I'd take the opportunity to reveal an upcoming project to you all - we're currently hard at work putting together the first ever worldwide Battlefield Evolution campaign, where the fate of a nation will be decided by you, the players. There'll be more information in upcoming issues of *S&P Wargamer* as well as on the Mongoose website, but with waves one and two out and wave three on the way soon now is a great time to start the game, if you haven't already. One of my early comments during playtesting was how the BF Evo rules give a great balance between realism and playability, with a game that both plays fast and "feels" as if the units really are what they say they are, rather than suffering from "arbitrary stat syndrome".

Speaking of BF Evo, watch out next month for the concluding part of the Hiroslavian War series. We've decided to hold this one back a month to coincide with the release of wave three (which you'll need to play it!), which wasn't such a bad thing as we're running short on space this month anyway. Those same space restrictions have caused the next part of *Death in the Cursed Earth* to be bumped to next month too, but all you GoMC-1 players out there needn't worry - we've got even more planned for you in the future!

- Matt

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EYE ON MONGOOSE

This Month's Releases and Gaming News

BATTLEFIELD EVOLUTION WAVE THREE PREVIEW



The first run of production quality sets from the third wave of Battlefield Evolution has just hit our office, and promise to be exciting additions to any growing army!

The Tunguska is the first armoured vehicle for the Middle Eastern Alliance, and MEA players will find it capable of dealing with infantry/light vehicles, or the forthcoming aircraft in wave 4 with equal ease.

The PLA can now enjoy the same benefits as the EFTF with a new Command Squad, and will be able to engage in sweeping flank attacks with their FAV. Armed with a machine gun and 23mm cannon, it is fast and deadly.

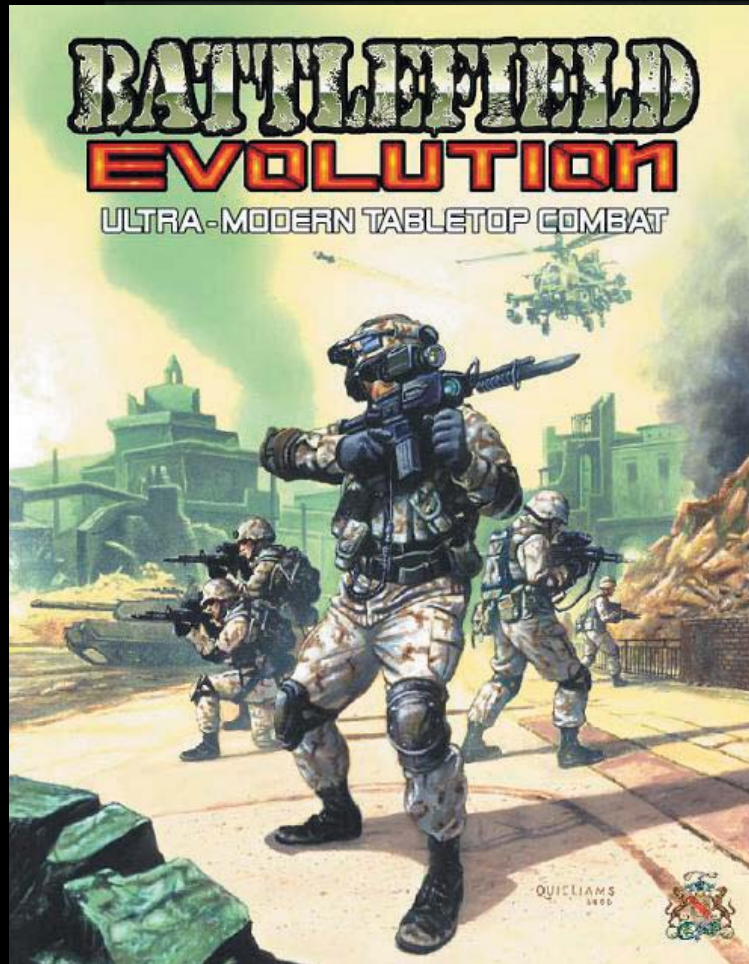
Finally, the USMC and British Army can now both engage in special operations with the addition of the USMC Force Recon Team, and the renowned SAS section. With a multitude of special rules for these very special squads, your opponent will not know where your attack is coming from until it is far too late!

The wave 3 releases for Battlefield Evolution are expected to hit your local stores at the end of May/beginning of April.

BATTLEFIELD EVOLUTION

ARMIES OF THE FUTURE

BATTLEFIELD EVOLUTION ADVANCED RULEBOOK



Welcome to the battlefield of the near future!

Battlefield Evolution is a fast-paced and easy to learn miniatures game, with enough tactical depth to keep you hooked for years. You will command small forces based on real world armies of the near future, and attempt to overwhelm your opponents with tactical skill and a healthy dose of luck!

Based on supposition and projection of real world armies in the near future, this game features new technologies that are just around the corner – you will be among the first to experience how such weapons and equipment can affect the modern battlefield from the point of view of a soldier. There are several different armies to collect, each with a wide range of units and tactical abilities.

This rulebook provides many advanced rules such as battles involving emplacements, air units, artillery, minefields, lots of new scenarios to test your tactical capabilities, army lists, and a complete campaign system.

STARSHIP TROOPERS SALE

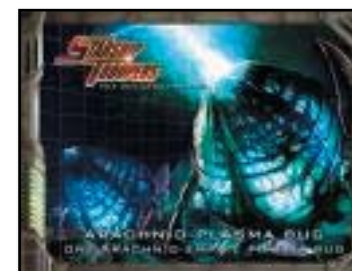
Have you done your part?
If not, now is a better time than ever to join the fight.

EFFECTIVE FROM FEBRUARY 12TH THE RETAIL PRICE OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WILL BE REDUCED BY 25%

PRICE REDUCTIONS WILL REMAIN IN EFFECT ONLY UNTIL THE RELEASE OF STARSHIP TROOPERS EVOLUTION LATER THIS YEAR



MGP 9100 STARSHIP TROOPERS MAIN GAME
 MGP 910001 MOBILE INFANTRY CAP TROOPER SQUAD
 MGP 910002 ARACHNID WARRIOR BUGS
 MGP 910004 ARACHNID TANKER BUG
 MGP 910007 MARAUDER APE SUIT
 MGP 910008 MARAUDER CHICKENHAWK SUIT
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 MGP 910014 SHINNIE RAIDERS BOXED SET
 MGP 910019 ARACHNID BLISTER/BLASTER BUGS
 MGP 910020 ARACHNID PLASMA BUGS
 MGP 910026 ARACHNID RIPPLER BUG SWARM
 MGP 910048 ARACHNID WARRIOR BUG MEGA SWARM



Basic Tactical Manual - ISA



Alan Oliver

This covers the complete Interstellar Alliance fleet, comprising the ships in the basic game and both hardback supplements.

The Interstellar Alliance

The Interstellar Alliance is a late period fleet that has few real options when it comes to building a fleet, with two ships in the basic game, a third in Sky Full Of Stars, and three new classes in Armageddon. However many of these ships are not available until the later years of the period, which leaves you with a single class of ships at the start of the Alliance. This makes it not a choice for the faint hearted, as you will be putting all your faith in a single class of ships in most of your battles. The up side to that is this ship is the White Star, which is certainly in the running for the best Raid priority ship anywhere in space.

Being a late period fleet means that you won't be facing some races, at least if you keep to historical battles. Of course the temptation to use the White Star fleet against the Shadows is very strong, and more or less justifiable, and at a stretch you could argue the same for the Vorlons, protecting innocent victims from the gods gone mad, however to keep it 'historically' accurate you would have to leave the Victory behind. As for the Dilgar, they were long extinct before the Alliance was even an idea.

But then there's a long history in wargaming of fighting battles that couldn't have occurred, and A Call to Arms is no exception.

There are several other aspects to the Alliance that deserve special mention.

Firstly there are the Rangers that make up the key elements of the crew. This gives you a better crew quality than your opponent, enabling you to perform special actions more easily and gives your fighters the advantage in dogfights, especially as fighters are all on the same level with regards to crew quality. Over a campaign of course this advantage will lessen, as your enemies' lower crew qualities will improve more easily than yours, but it is particularly useful in one-off battles.

Secondly there are the allies that you can bring to the battle. In a standard engagement you can spend a single point on a ship or ships from the Earth Alliance, Minbari Federation, Narn Regime or any race from the League of Non-Aligned Worlds. Your choice here will depend upon a number of factors, the most important being the Priority Level of the battle and enemy that you face. I'll include hot options at each Priority Level alongside the Alliance ships. Whatever your choice, you should never take an Interstellar Alliance fleet out without bringing an ally along.

Thirdly you have the good initiative of the Alliance. However there are those out there with better, and the lack of scout ships in the Alliance armoury doesn't help matters. The Victory will improve things in battles where it's there, but at those Priority Levels your enemies are likely to have command ships of their own. The use of allied scouts will obviously help here.

Patrol Priority Options

Within the Alliance list you only have fighters available at this priority, the Earth Alliance Starfury and Thunderbolt fighters and the Minbari Nial heavy fighter.

While each fighter has its uses, the Thunderbolt and the Nial will be your first choices here. Of these the Thunderbolt is the better fighter for attacking ships, having more Attack Dice and greater range to attack with, as well as getting three flights for each single flight of Nials. However the stealth on the Nial does make it more difficult to kill. Assuming straight Attack Dice without anti-fighter or AP traits, and an average spread of dice rolls, nine AD will kill a Thunderbolt, while it takes eighteen to kill a Nial, although this drops to thirteen-and-a-half when they close within eight inches. Against anti-fighter weapons the odds are more even, both need only three AD to

kill a flight. Ancients only need twelve AD to kill a Nial flight without anti-fighter, and only one-and-a-half AD with it. This makes Shadow scouts the worst threat to Nial flights.

When it comes to allies, if fighting a Patrol game, your range of options are limited as you will only have a single ship available. Of those available several have obvious advantages: The Earth Alliance Hermes provides jump engines, and also carries a missile rack which can be loaded with specialist missiles to provide long range firepower otherwise unavailable. The other option well worth considering is the Abbai Tiraca attack frigate. It carries an effective combat laser, has reasonable amounts of secondary AD that are twin linked, and is the toughest patrol ship around with interceptors and higher damage and crew ratings than any other. If your looking for a solid ship for your fighters to work around, this is a good choice. The Vree Vaarl scout saucer provides both scout function and jump engines, but is a very fragile ship, useful in some circumstances. The Abbai Shyarie jammer frigate offers another scout option, but without the jump engine. Its comms disruptors also offers a useful additional weapon for the Alliance fleet.

Skirmish Priority Options

The Alliance has one option here, the White Star fighter introduced in 2270. The simple view here is don't use it. Compared with any of the other fighters available to the Alliance the White Star fighter is by far the easiest to kill, and its weaponry, while better than an individual flight of any of the others, isn't as good as the number of them that you'd get for a single one of these underfed White Stars. However, the one really useful thing about these fighters is that they mount advanced

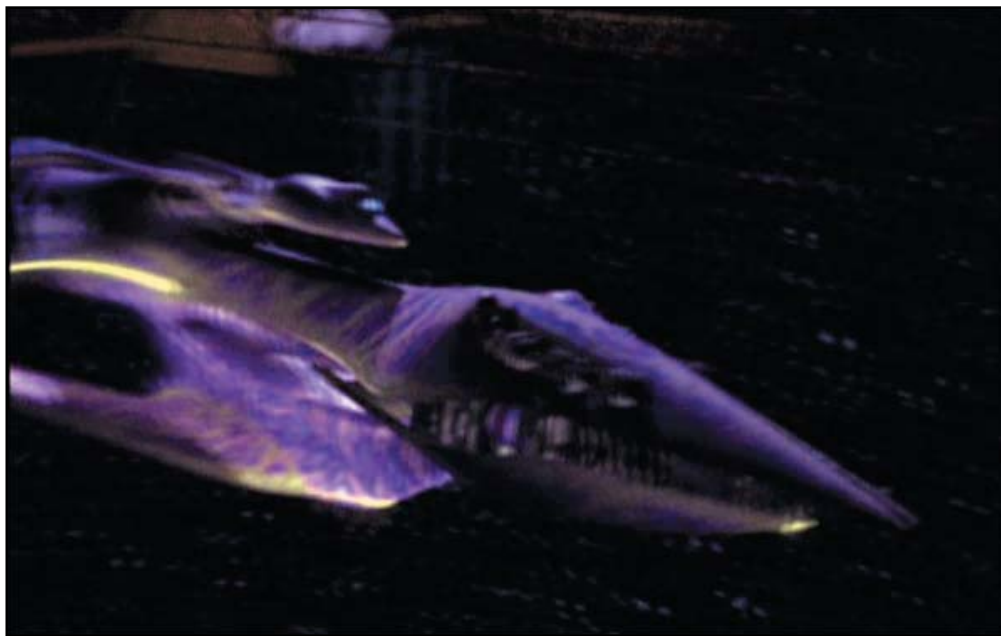
jump engines, which does enable massed jump point bombing by these cheap ships. This is an innovative and viable tactic, which can surprise an unprepared opponent. Of course the other use is to have one or two leading a force of other fighters, one to provide the entry jump point, the other to provide the exit, again creative enough to outfox the less cerebral out there!

From the allies you have a number of potentially good ships to choose from, depending upon what you need them to do.

Firstly the Narn provide you with a scout in the Sho'Kar light scout cruiser; if domination of the initiative is what you are after, this is the ship you need. However it's not a front line fighting ship so will be a drain on your strength. The Vree Vaarka escort scout also provides scout facilities, has excellent stealth and some anti fighter protection, plus jump engines.

For ships to fight along side the White Stars, there are two obvious choices, the Narn Ka'Toc battle destroyer and the Drazi Warbird cruiser. Both ships are limited by having some boresight weaponry, but the White Stars themselves will be moving to keep the enemy in front of them anyway. The Warbird is among the toughest of the Skirmish level ships out there with a hull of six but its weaponry is inferior to the Ka'Toc.

Other ships worth considering are the Narn G'Karith patrol cruiser, as it has baby energy mines, the Earth Alliance Olympus corvette as it will soak up a lot of damage before it dies, or the Minbari Torotha if you need its advanced jump engines, however White Star fighters also do so without taking up your ally slot.



Raid Priority Options

At this priority you have the beating, bloody heart of the Alliance fleet, the totally awesome White Star. At first glance it looks fragile for a Raid priority ship, with only ten damage compared to as much as sixty on the Narn T'Loth. However the combination of Adaptive Armour, Dodge, Flight Computer and Self Repair means that it takes far more firepower to kill a White Star than anyone expects. The self repair may not seem like much, being only one point per round, however that is still 10% of its damage capacity. This means that a White Star fleet is actually capable of pulling out of a fight for a few rounds, which they have the speed to do, and during that time returning to effectiveness ships that would otherwise die quickly. You should always look to play the long game with the White Stars, stringing the battle out as long as possible to take as much advantage of this as possible.

White Star weaponry is as good as it gets out there. The improved neutron laser is as powerful as any other weapon around, the only weakness being each White Star only has a single Attack Dice. For a secondary weapon the molecular pulsar is above average, but still has the range problems found on most races' secondary weapons. However it also provides you with anti fighter firepower, and when used on ships the Precise trait is a definite bonus – doubling the number of critical hits scored with a double damage weapon is always good. The main weakness to bear in mind is that all your firepower is in a single arc, which can bite if you get the wrong critical, and also means that the enemy's fighters can safely attack your flanks if caught alone, and remember that fighters are still capable of out manoeuvring you.

The combination of speed and agility on the White Star is unequalled in any other fleet. OK, the Shadow ships are Super Manoeuvrable, but they are not as fast as the White Star. In fact nothing is as fast as the White Star, which has a 25% advantage over the bulk of most fleets, and 1" of movement over the fastest ships of other fleets, the Centauri Vorchan and Liati, and the Minbari Teshlan. This enables you to conduct the hit and run tactic that is central to using the White Stars, the battle pass.

A classic battle pass should go something like this. On the first turn of a battle pass, you should look to get into improved neutron laser range. On the second turn you can attempt to Concentrate All Fire (CAF) on elements of the enemy, your full forward arc will help here. You should also be in range for the molecular pulsar as well. On the third turn you break contact by putting all power to engines and getting outside of secondary weapons range again to allow your ships to start to repair. You can then circle around for a turn or two as your ships repair and line up the next battle pass. If you took minimal damage, you may not need to put all power to engines on the third turn, and may be able to come around for another immediate pass, but if any of your White Stars took more than a scratch on turn two, get them out of the firing line to repair. If there are more than one or two damaged White Stars you may be better off pulling the whole lot out rather than sending in the undamaged ones alone, as they will be outnumbered and the enemy will be able to concentrate their fire on them.

If fighting a large battle you may want to consider investing in a Victory-class destroyer to be the heart of your fleet. However the cost of these ships in a Raid priority game will be extortionate as an Armageddon priority ship, and they are still vulnerable to a lucky critical.

As for the allies, you have a dozen different ships to choose from. Some standout choices include the Narn T'Loth simply due to the massive amount of damage that it can absorb, not to mention a massive amount of all round firepower.

If you want a scout there are two available, however the Minbari Leshath is definitely the better ship, and is a fairly capable warship in its own right. This fact is often overlooked by its enemies who simply dismiss it as a scout.

If you will need energy mines, there is the Narn Dag'Kar missile frigate, which can operate on the fringes of the battle providing energy mine support. Just remember that the White Stars will be particularly vulnerable to energy mines, so don't drop a load onto your own ships to clear off the fighters – chances are the mines would hurt you more than the fighters would.

And lastly there is the Earth Alliance Nova Dreadnought, which can be used as a firebase for your White Stars to drive the enemy onto. It also carries fighters, and would be likely to be loaded with Thunderbolts for service with the Interstellar Alliance.

That is not all the possible choices available, and the other ships are not to be ignored as there will definitely be circumstances where you will need other capabilities. However for a standard five point Raid priority engagement, you could do a lot worse than five White Stars, but I would probably go for four White Stars and a Minbari Leshath scout as ally.

Battle Priority Options

You have one option available at this priority, the White Star WSC-2. This suffers from the same

problems that always beset heavy variants that are at a higher priority than the original ship, in that they are rarely worth two of the original ship. This is true of the WSC-2, however it does have a role in Battle and War priority actions due to the way points split post Armageddon. Consider splitting a point at War priority to get White Stars. Normally you would get three White Stars when you split a War point down to Raid priority ships. However if you split that point down to two points at Battle priority, take a WSC-2 for one of them, then split the other down to Raid and take a pair of White Stars, suddenly the WSC-2 looks much more appealing.

Each point at this priority level gives you a pair of White Stars, which will enable you to field them in sufficient numbers to overwhelm most enemies. This is generally a much better investment than the WSC-2, for the reasons discussed above. You may even have enough to divide your White Stars into two or three battle groups, one engaging the enemy while another recovers from a battle pass.

You can invest points in the larger White Star ships or even the Victory destroyer. The White Star gunship or carrier only costs you two points at this priority, so could make a good core of your White Star fleet, but the Victory costs four points at this priority, too much to take unless fighting a very large battle. If using the White Star gunship or carrier they are fast and agile enough to be in among your normal White Stars, although the carrier may struggle to come around quickly enough for an immediate second pass.

Lastly you have a Battle priority ship from your allies. There are many different ships to choose from, depending on whether they will be fighting

with the White Stars, the Victory, or providing their own assets elsewhere.

There are three different carriers available, however the Brakiri Brokadoss operates different fighters to your own fleet, so cannot support your fighters as effectively as the Avenger or Morshin. Of the latter two, the Morshin probably has the edge, as it brings eight flights of Nial as opposed to Starfuries or Thunderbolts, a much better bargain. In addition the Nial flights in your fleet are your top dogfighters, so being able to recycle them is to your advantage.



If supporting the White Star fleet, the Minbari Tinashi war frigate is the fastest option, and packs very considerable firepower. The other option, and only slightly slower, is the Narn Var'Nic long range destroyer. Either ship could work with the White Stars performing a battle pass, although they wouldn't need to pull away to repair.

If looking for a wingman for the Victory, I would recommend either the Earth Alliance Omega destroyer or the Narn G'Quan heavy cruiser. Both are limited by boresight on their main weapon, but if keeping close to the Victory, they are unlikely to

be operating at all ahead speeds anyway. Between them, the G'Quan has the energy mines and the tougher ship, while the Omega has more fighters and mounts interceptors for defence. For me the G'Quan has the edge here.

For a typical five point Battle priority fleet, I would go with the following. Firstly a White Star gunship as the centre of the White Star squadron, followed by four White Stars, with a Minbari Morshin carrier to improve the Nial fighters carried by the White Stars and provide massive fighter superiority.

War Priority Options

You have two ships available at this priority, the White Star gunship and the White Star carrier. Both of these are White Stars on steroids and are capable of engaging the enemy directly, and are very fast for War priority ships.

The White Star gunship is a pure combat ship that is intended to fight in the same way as the Raid

priority White Stars. Its speed is only 80% of the White Stars, but equal to the WSC-2, so the three ships will operate well together. All three ships are able to come about completely in one turn, even without using come about special actions, and this agility is unmatched out there. The gunship mounts more improved neutron laser firepower than you would get from White Stars as War priority, or equal at Battle and lower priority. It also mounts missile batteries which, combined with those of WSC-2 will enable some long range sniping, possibly useful during turns where the ships are self repairing. Speaking of which, the gunship can repair itself completely in four turns

with good dice rolls, and even average results will repair approximately 15% of the ship each turn. This makes pulling out of combat after a battle pass a worthwhile option for the gunship.

The White Star carrier is a full fleet carrier for the White Star fighter, and is the only way that you should field this fighter design. As a warship it is fast enough to keep pace with a White Star attack squadron, however its manoeuvrability is not up to the standard of the rest of the White Star fleet, which could leave it cut off from the rest of the fleet. However the carrier has another option, in that its weapons have greater range, and it has molecular pulsars in every arc, so that it can operate as a more traditional warship, possibly with an allied ship of similar capabilities.

Both the gunship and the carrier are very usable warships (personally I would aim for two or three gunships per carrier) but I wouldn't neglect the White Star fleet. An example of a five point War priority fleet would be a White Star carrier, two White Star gunships, two WSC-2 White Stars

and four White Stars. If adding an ally, I would probably drop one of the gunships in favour of the allied ship.

Of the fourteen different ships available as allies, there is one obvious choice. That is the Minbari Sharkaan advanced war cruiser, which should be your default choice for an ally. However there may be circumstances where another ship may be more useful to you.

For example, the Narn Bin'Tak Dreadnought for its energy mines although a pair of G'Quan heavy cruisers would do the job better.

The Brakiri Tashkat is the most agile War priority ship around after the White Stars themselves, and also mounts the gravitic shifters, which could prove pivotal in a battle, but might prove completely worthless of course.

While the Poseidon super carrier may look appealing on the same basis as the Minbari Morshin

did at Battle priority, I wouldn't recommend it. You are looking for your ally to provide front line warships, which the Poseidon isn't, and at this priority it has proved itself extremely fragile in the past. In fact I've yet to see one survive an engagement.

Armageddon Priority Options

Your other ship is the Victory class destroyer, which is a real monster of an Armageddon ship. On a quick examination of the different Armageddon ships available, the Victory destroyer is the most powerful ship out there, with the possible exception of the Vorlon heavy cruiser. Let's start with the speed, which is approximately double that of any other Armageddon ship, and while the Shadow ship can double its speed, the Victory has afterburners. Manoeuvrability isn't up to fighting with the White Stars, but isn't any worse than any other Armageddon ship.

Its defences are monstrous, making it almost certainly the toughest kill in space. Hull six to start with, on a par with most Armageddon ships and better than the Minbari Naroon or Vorlon heavy cruiser. This covers a damage rating of one hundred, less than many, however the ship has adaptive armour, effectively doubling this and putting it over everything. And as an outer layer of defence it has six interceptors. These won't stop dedicated attacks, but will cut back the secondary firepower coming in quite dramatically.

It is in weaponry that it really shines, having two primary weapons and two turreted secondary weapons.

The most important of these is obviously the mighty and imposing lightning cannon. This is



nearly twice as powerful as the Vorlon lightning cannon found on the heavy cruiser, making it the most powerful weapon in space outside of the Ancients. However despite this it does have two drastic drawbacks. The first is that it is a boresight weapon, which will make it difficult to bring to bear on the enemy when you do decide to use it. The second is the massive power drain that takes place after you fire it, which basically leaves the Victory powerless in space on the following turn. It is for this reason that I recommend that you save the lightning cannon for special occasions and instead rely upon the Victory's real main armament, the neutron lasers.

The best way to use the lightning cannon is when you have a pair of these ships. You have two options, either you fire one Victory each turn, preferably with a scout to redirect fire. This will be gutting a ship each turn. The other option is to have one ship operating its lightning cannon, while a second stays with it and operates the rest of its weaponry and protects the lightning cannon ship. This method offers the advantage that where necessary you can fire both lightning cannon and really make a mess.

The neutron lasers are the same weapons as found on Minbari ships and have all the same advantages, range, additional critical hits, beam weapon and the rest. The Victory mounts a forward battery of these equal to a Minbari Sharlin, which is quite capable of taking out a ship in a single volley. But what is most important is that you can keep firing them turn after turn without impinging on the other operations of your ship. Over the course of any battle the neutron lasers will rack up much more damage than the lightning cannon is capable of.

Secondary weapons come in two flavours, the heavy pulse cannon and the fusion cannon. The

latter provides excellent anti fighter cover, as well as having the range to reach out to the enemy at eighteen inches. The pulse cannon provides enough Attack Dice to wear down a target. However here you have to remember that you don't operate like the warships of other races. Most mount banks of secondary weapons in every arc, so want to get in among the enemy to bring as many of these weapons to bear as possible. The Victory doesn't work that way. Instead you want to keep as much of the fight in a single arc as possible, preferably the front of course.

At Armageddon priority each point broken down into smaller ships will give you either a gunship or carrier, a WSC-2 and two White Stars, which is a nice selection of ships to work with. I would personally split the points evenly between Victory destroyers and the White Star fleet, possibly with the odd point going to the White Stars

As for the allied ships available at Armageddon priority, the choice is somewhat limited. There is the Minbari Naroon, the Brakiri or Abbai Brivoki, the Narn Ka'Bin'Tak super dreadnought or either of the Earth Alliance advanced destroyers. Although I would think it unlikely that the Interstellar Alliance would fight alongside the Nemesis advanced destroyer with its open use of Shadow technology. The most useful of these are going to be the Naroon and Ka'Bin'Tak, the Minbari ship for all the usual Minbari advantages and the Narn for the scale of firepower that it can provide at long range. However one thing to consider is that no allied Armageddon ship can keep pace with the Victory, let alone the White Star fleet, which may make taking a number of smaller allied ships more useful. For example a Sharlin (or Sharkaan), a Morshin, a Leshath and a Dag'Kar, all for one point at Armageddon would be a useful addition to any fleet.

Enemies of Peace

The Interstellar Alliance is set up to promote peaceful coexistence, and what does it end up doing, having to fight everybody, now what were the chances of that happening?

The Earth Alliance

The Earth Alliance fleet's weapons break down into three basic types, heavy bore sight beams, missiles and heavy short range weapons. For the White Star fleet this makes them a relatively easy opponent. The White Stars should be able to avoid giving the humans bore sight, circling in to attack from the flanks, although going for CAF on the second turn of a battle pass may be a mistake. The long range missiles may be more of a problem, but lack the double damage to be effective White Star killers. It may be to your advantage to stay out of molecular pulsar range and so avoid the heavy secondary firepower of Earth Alliance ships, at least for a while. This is particularly true on the larger Earth Alliance ships that have large banks of interceptors that will be effective against the molecular pulsars, making close range attack runs that much less effective.

One thing to bear in mind are the large numbers of EA fighters that will be present in an EA fleet. Thunderbolts that get in on the flanks or rear of your White Stars could make things painful for you, so this is obviously something to avoid. Each Thunderbolt will do a point of damage to a White Star on average – get two or three of them on you, and you'll be in trouble very quickly.

As for allies, you might be well served taking Narn ships for their energy mine capability to help with the fighter imbalance, also Narn ships are tough and could easily be used as boresight bait to draw the fire of the enemy ships, and still be able to

take it on the chin and survive. Obviously this is more useful at higher priority when the really tough Narn ships are available.

Another alternative are Minbari ships, as obviously the Minbari always give the humans conniptions. However the Minbari are only really an option at Raid priorities or above, as they are lacking in small ships.

The Centauri Republic

Now the Centauri Republic are a very different enemy to the Earth Alliance. For a start their main weapons are full forward arc rather than boresight, so in a long range exchange you will find it much more difficult to avoid their arcs, although with White Stars you may still be able to manage it some of the time. However while their main beam weapons are stronger, their secondary weapons are weaker by comparison, certainly weaker than the molecular pulsar in range and special traits, although they do mount them in considerable numbers on some ships. In addition many of the larger ships mount some interceptors, which again reduces the effect of the molecular pulsars.

The interceptors on Centauri ships are more common on their larger ships, making the smaller ships more suitable targets for the molecular pulsars of the White Stars. The main weapon is more suitable for hitting their capital ships, having the armour penetration to get through the thick hulls of Primus battlecruisers and other big Centauri ships.

Centauri fleets come in two types, either fleets of larger ships mounting batteries of battle lasers, or hordes of smaller ships operating in packs.

Against the first you will want to get in on the rear of their ships where you can use the agility of the White Stars. Most Centauri ships are weak in rear firepower giving you the advantage if you can get there. If they take divergent courses so that one ship's rear arc is covered by the flank weapons of another ship, this will be to your advantage as their ships will then spread out allowing you to pick off the straggler.

If they have gone for the large packs of ships, you will be outnumbered, but your ships will be capable of killing a target with each battle pass, so go in at high speed, hit a different ship with each White Star, the ships you don't kill are likely to be hurting at least.

Centauri Senti fighters are better dogfighters than your human fighters, but not up to the standard of the Minbari Nial heavy fighters. The White Stars carry some Nial fighters, but you will still be outnumbered. However only the Centauri Maximus has dedicated anti fighter weapons, so using the EarthForce fighters to attack their ships, while the Minbari Nial deal with the Senti is a valid option. Use of an EarthForce fleet carrier to increase the dogfight capabilities of Starfuries and Thunderbolts is another option, however this uses up your allocation of allies.

As for allies, you have two obvious choices here other than the EarthForce fleet carrier, either the Minbari for their advanced technologies or the Narn for their hatred of the Centauri. The Minbari are probably the better option at high priorities, as their big ships are very powerful,

at War priority for example much as I'm a fan of the Narn Bin'Tak dreadnought, the Minbari Sharlin is definitely the better option. At Raid priority both the Narn and the Minbari have some interesting options, but no really powerful ships. At Skirmish and lower priorities the Narn ships become more attractive. Narn Ka'Toc battle destroyers should work quite well alongside a White Star fleet for example.

The Narn Regime

Given the Narn involvement in the orbital bombardment of Centauri Prime combat against the Narn is always a possibility, so knowing how to deal with them is a good idea.

The greatest problem you will face in fighting the Narn is the simplicity of their ship designs. They don't rely upon stealth or interceptors to defend their ships, just very tough ships. This makes them more difficult for the advanced races to damage. An example is the T'Loth assault cruiser,



which is the same priority as the White Star but has six times the damage rating, and 7.5 times the crew of the White Star. You have the weapons to damage them, but it will take time.

Another problem you will have are the energy mines of his larger ships. These will prove quite effective against the fragile hulled White Stars, part of their defence is the Dodge ability, which reduces their damage taken by two thirds. Energy mines are unaffected by this, and will be chipping away at your ships from long range. There is not much that you can do about it, other than getting out of their arcs. Self repair will help but does little to replace crew killed by mines.

However you have the advantage in other areas. For a start your ships are much faster and more manoeuvrable than the Narn ships, allowing you to both avoid their heavy bore sight laser cannon and choose the range of the engagement. Aiming to be between eight and ten inches away from the closest Narn ship is a good bet, as it puts you within molecular pulsar range but outside of the range of the large batteries of secondary weapons on many Narn ships. This is obviously a good thing.

On the fighter front you have the advantage, as all your fighters can out-dogfight the Narn Frazi with ease. However the Frazi fighters pack enough anti ship firepower to be a real threat to a White Star if they get on your flanks and rear, so you will need to kill them. A further complication is that the Narn will be targeting your fighters with their energy mines to clear the way for the Frazis, to avoid this engage his fighters quickly, at least then he'll kill his fighters when he kills yours.

For allies, for once you might be better served looking elsewhere than the Minbari. While the

Minbari are always scary, the Narn are probably the best race for engaging them. At low priorities the Drazi are worth a look, as they work in a similar way to the White Stars. Having a Drazi Warbird cruiser as wingman to each White Star may be a good bet. At Raid priority one option might be the Abbai Bimith defender, with its defences it can absorb a lot of damage and draw fire away from your more fragile ships. At higher priorities the Brakiri offer very tough ships that will take everything that the Narn can throw at them. They are lacking in firepower to some extent, but between high hull, massive damage rating and even interceptors on the Tashkat advanced cruiser, it will give you something durable at the heart of your fleet.

The Minbari

The Minbari are a major supporter of the Interstellar Alliance so you are unlikely to be fighting against them very often. However their support does mean that you will have the opportunity to train against them on a regular basis, and you should take advantage of this. After all, the warrior caste do things their own way and who knows when honour may become a question.

Fighting against the Minbari will involve getting up close to them. This is to your advantage for several reasons. Firstly the Minbari secondary Fusion cannon have a range nearly double your molecular pulsar. Secondly, once within range of the molecular pulsars you are almost within range to reduce the Minbari stealth. The wide arcs of the main Minbari weapons means that getting out of arc at range will be difficult, but this is easier when up close and personal with them.

While Minbari ships are generally fast and fairly agile, they don't get anywhere close to the speed

and agility of the White Star fleet. This means you will be able to control the range of the engagement pretty well.

Their stealth will obviously be a problem, and you will need to close the range as previously stated. The two other methods of countering stealth are scouts and fighters. The scout option isn't available within the ISA fleet so you will need allies for the scouts. Fighters, however, can be used to reduce the stealth of Minbari ships, however you will have to pick and choose your targets as the fighters who do it are unlikely to survive. Additional Starfuries will be good for this, although Thunderbolts will be able to fire on the Minbari ships more effectively, if they survive which is unlikely.

They obviously have Nial fighters identical to your White Star-based Nials, and superior to your Starfury and Thunderbolt fighters. In addition they can easily field a Morshin carrier which will give them the advantage in dogfights, probably the only enemy where you will face this problem. To counter this you will probably have to look to allies, which I'll come to in a moment. If allies are not an option then you will have to gang up your fighters against the Nials. For this I would recommend a Nial to dogfight the enemy Nial, and a Starfury or Thunderbolt to support it, providing a counter to the Morshin if it's present, or gaining superiority if not.

For allies the most obvious option are the Narn, as they are the most effective race against the Minbari due to the combination of technologies. In particular their energy mines will be great for clearing away enemy Nials, as well as weakening their ships by bypassing their stealth. They also mount massive batteries of secondary weapons which will cause respectable damage if they get in

close to the Minbari, which they will want to do to counter stealth anyway. The Narn don't offer good scouts however, which is a weakness.

The EarthForce Oracle scout is a relatively solid option for scout support for the ISA fleet. Not only does it have the scout capability to reduce stealth on a selected target, but it also mounts good all round anti fighter weaponry to help deal with the Minbari Nials. After the Narn, this may be the best bet for an allied ship.

At low priorities the Vree offer some useful ships, having good anti fighter weaponry and offering cheap scouts. Most of these scouts are easy kills, however if he's wasting shots on the scouts, which have stealth, he's not shooting up the White Star fleet.

The League of Non-Aligned Worlds

When it comes to the League you face a mixed bunch. The Drazi with their reputation for unprovoked aggression, the Brakiri and Vree with their ruthless drive for business opportunities, and just when you think that the Abbai are reliable, they launch a crusade against the Drakh. It's a certainty that you will have to deal with one or more of these races.

The Drazi have fast ships with forward and bore sight firepower, however their ships are not as fast or agile as the White Stars and are small enough to die quickly under White Star firepower. If just facing the Drazi they will outnumber you, so you are likely to get bore-sighted by some of their

ships, which will do damage but between dodge and adaptive armour they are unlikely to kill you.

The Brakiri ships are big and tough and you will not kill them quickly, you will need to concentrate your firepower to take them down. Fortunately the Avioki heavy cruiser and Tashkat advanced cruiser both mount main weapons that are slow loading, so the Brakiri ships are likely to only get



the one shot at you as you close. They do mount good all round firepower with secondary weapons that are armour piercing and in large numbers. In large battles against the Brakiri you will have sufficient points to field gunships, carriers or even Victory destroyers, which have the firepower to take on the tough Brakiri ships.

The Vree ships are equal to or smaller than the White Stars and are notoriously fragile, and the Xorr war saucer is likely to fold or be at least crippled from the first pass. The Xill will take more than one pass to kill, but it will still go down. The Vree have the manoeuvrability to match yours

and their weapons are turreted so you will not be able to avoid the firepower from the Vree ships, and they will constantly whittle your ships down, a break after the first battle pass to repair may be necessary.

The Abbai ships are strong on defence but their weaponry is short ranged and will be avoidable for the most part, although they do mount weapons in every arc so you will have to stay at range rather than dodge out of their arcs. When you get up to the Lakara cruiser, it actually mounts offensive weaponry that can be dangerous, and is still only a Battle priority ship. The concentrated firepower of a gunship may be required to take them out, and as the most dangerous ship the Abbai can field, other than the monolithic Brivoki, it should definitely be targeted first.

Across the League they have five different models of fighter, however the Abbai Kotha and the Brakiri Falkosi are very poor quality fighters, unsuited for assaulting ships and unable to dogfight your fighters. The Vree Tzymm and

Drazi Sky Snake are heavy assault fighters that can make a mess of your White Stars. However the Tzymm is not found on any carrier other than the Z'Takk command saucer, so will either be rare or independent. These heavy fighters will need to be countered either by dogfighting them with your own fighters or using an ally that provides good anti fighter cover.

Individually you should be able to handle any of the league fleets, however when combined they might be more of a problem. Given the disparity of speeds within the league fleet, fighting a mobile battle to spread out the league fleet will enable you

to pick off the faster ships that keep up with you while the slower ships, the Brakiri and Abbai for example, are out of range.

The Vorlon Empire and the Shadows

You will never encounter either one of these powers in a historical setting, as they leave the galaxy before the ISA is formed. However on the table top, strange things can often happen.

Against the Shadows you will have to deal with the fact that you are no longer the most manoeuvrable ship in space, as the Shadow ships will be able to pick and chose where they engage you. The Shadow scout is limited to the forward arc, but its weapons are designed for shooting down fighters, which negates your Dodge and makes your White Stars that much more vulnerable. The match up between the Shadow scout and the White Star is a classic, but you should be able to come out ahead.

However Shadow ships are vulnerable in their turn, so use the greater numbers of ships that you have to concentrate your fire and kill off one ship at a time, as this negates their self repair, which while not massive is enough to tip the balance on occasion if you don't finish them off. Certainly against them you don't want to spread your fire out across the entire enemy fleet.

Against the Vorlons you will have the manoeuvre advantage and have a decent chance to get out of their forward arc, which you will definitely want to do as the Vorlon ships mount dangerous weapons that will kill a White Star in one shot if they hit. Also, all the Vorlon ships are tough and are unlikely to die quickly, so a long running game of cat and mouse will evolve as you whittle down the large Vorlon ships while avoiding getting your ships blown out from under you.

And a word of warning, while fighter assaults against the Shadow ships are definitely worthwhile, against the Vorlons they are a complete waste of time. The energy output of the Vorlon ships means that any fighters conducting an attack run are likely to die before they get a shot off. Instead you should use your fighters to hunt down any Vorlon fighters that are out there, as the Vorlon fighter is the only fighter to mount a beam weapon.

The Drakh

This is a classic match up, and more than any other race the Alliance will find the Drakh to be their natural enemies. Both forces have advanced technology given to them by the Ancients before they departed, and they are from opposite sides of a battle whose initiators have left the field.

The first thing to bear in mind is that the Drakh fleet has no fighters, and instead relies upon its light raiders to provide anti fighter cover, while its heavy raiders perform the function of assault ships. At first this appears a flawed theory as the light raider mounts its anti fighter weaponry in a single arc, which fighters will always be able to avoid. This is true, however the Gravitic Energy Grid on Drakh ships makes most fighter attacks irrelevant anyway, as few attacks will do any damage to a ship covered by it. Basically it is only the raider and scout ships that fighters will have any real chance of damaging. The larger ships will not be damaged by the weapons of the fighters, although there is always the chance of a critical hit.

This is actually a time when the White Star fighter will come into its own. It mounts three Attack Dice of double damage precise weaponry, which is enough to get through the gravitic energy grid of any ship and do a little damage, and the critical hits caused by a third of hits, with double damage

on top, will seriously hurt the relatively fragile Drakh ships.

Carriers and motherships are worthwhile targets for immediate destruction if it can be achieved before they have launched their payload. If you are able to line up a mothership for Victory destroyer lightning cannon fire on turn one, definitely take the shot – if you can destroy it while it still has half a dozen raiders hanging from its belly, it's going to be worth it. Once they have launched all their payload of raiders, these ships should drop to the bottom of the target selection list, as they are not powerful warships in their own right.

To summarise, target carriers or motherships on turn one to kill the assets that have yet to launch, after which target the cruisers and destroyers with your White Star fleet. Nials and starfury flights should engage the raiders, starting with the light raiders unless the heavy raiders are in position to attack your ships. White Star fighters should ignore the raiders and go directly for the capital ships of the Drakh fleet, they will be especially useful in finishing off any carriers or motherships crippled in the initial volleys of the battle.

The Dilgar Imperium

This is obviously not a battle that ever took place, as the Dilgar were long dead before the first design sketches for the White Star were drawn. However you never know what might happen on a wargames table.

Their ships divide into two types, fast and dangerous ships, and slow and dangerous ships.

The fast and dangerous ships make up most of the fleet, and operate in a similar way to the White Star fleet, high speed ships with lots of firepower, but fairly fragile construction. However the White Star fleet does it better.

The slow and dangerous ships are the assault ships and the carrier. These can generally be avoided as their speed is too slow to keep pace with the fighting. To negate them all you need to do is move the battle away from them once they have deployed. They might still get the occasional shot in at your ships from long range, some of them mount some long range weapons, but in general they will not be a factor.

The Dilgar fleet has one advantage that will really hurt the White Star fleet, which is the Masters of Destruction effect on critical hits. This can easily mean that White Stars are dying from the critical hits caused by Dilgar weaponry rather than being whittled away. Unfortunately there is little you can do about this other than not being shot in the first place.

In conclusion, like most non-historical battles this one will be somewhat unpredictable. Technologically you have the advantage, and your speed should enable you to apply your firepower with greater force than your enemy. The real unpredictability factor is the effect on critical hits that Dilgar weapons have.

One last comment, be thankful that the Victory automatically moves after firing the lightning cannon rather than just sitting there, otherwise you'd be mass driver bait!

The Raiders

Normally I wouldn't even bother with this, however the Raiders are one of the 'forces' that the Interstellar Alliance will be seeing 'action' against most often, so a few words is required.

Basically, just kill them. You are unlikely to get to use gunships or carriers, let alone the Victory destroyer, against a Raider fleet, they just aren't

that powerful, so most of your actions against them will be White Star only affairs, with the occasional allied guest. Against the Battle Wagon you should have no difficulty controlling the engagement due to its slow speed, the Strike Carrier will fly apart under a strong wind let alone an improve neutron laser, and the standard Delta V fighters are just pathetic.

However there are a few dangerous ships in the Raider fleets. The Raider-modified Nova dreadnought is actually quite a powerful ship, however it's as slow as a Dilgar carrier so can be avoided for much of the battle till the rest of the Raiders have been exterminated, then quickly finished off. Assuming that it hasn't run away by then anyway. The Delta V2 fighter is a halfway respectable fighter, although still no match for a Nial, of course.

Victory should be assured, move the battle around to spread his faster units away from his slower ships, then kill them off as you choose.

Conclusions

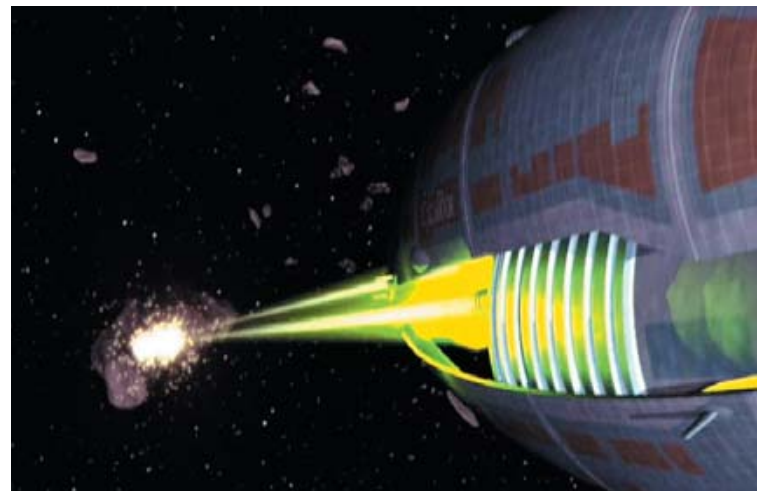
The Interstellar Alliance fleet is based around one original design, four variants of that design, and a huge monster of an Armageddon priority ship that is one of the most powerful ships in space.

Almost all engagements will be centred on the use of the White Star fleet, as the presence of allies or the Victory destroyer will not significantly change the shape of the battle. If you

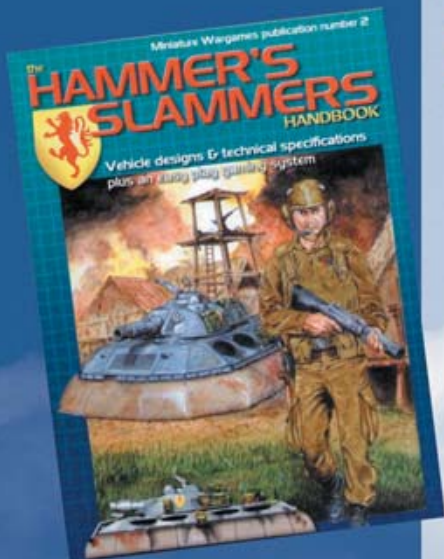
enjoy hit and run tactics, the sweep of fast and agile ships across the skies, and glory in playing the good guys, then this is definitely the fleet for you. Besides, it has two of the most powerful ships in the game in their respective classes, and any fleet that has ships this good should do well.

The ability to take allied ships from a range of different fleets is a nice bonus to the Alliance, as it means that the lack of a scout or other specialist ships is less of a problem. Whatever size battle you are playing, the use of allies is almost essential. They certainly add flexibility to a fleet that might otherwise be short on options. Although having four different classes of fighter available, as well as five different ship classes gives them a fair range to choose from, certainly more than the Ancients get.

As the heroes of the original series, you would hope that the Interstellar Alliance would be good, and they are.



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BATTLEFIELD WARRIORS



Variants of the British Army Warrior for Battlefield Evolution

Matthew Sprange

It is quite common for manufacturers of science fiction miniatures to use core models of vehicles to produce many different variants on a theme. Mongoose's own Marauders in Starship Troopers, for example, spawned the Nighthawk and Bigfoot variants (and more are on the drawing board!). Why do we do this? Because it is a relatively efficient procedure to give gamers variety without the costly need to redesign from scratch every time.

The same thing happens in the real world. Look at all the variations of the M-16 and G-3 rifles, each tailored to a specific purpose without the need for an entirely new weapon. You see it with aircraft, armoured vehicles, and for the same reasons as us miniatures manufacturers – because it is cheaper and more efficient to produce an effective weapon or weapons platform using an existing hull or airframe, then to waste tax payers Pounds, Dollars or Euros in reinventing the wheel.

Which leads us nicely to the British Army Warrior. We have already produced the section vehicle, allowing you to scoot your infantry across the battlefield in relative safety. Now, we provide you with the unit cards for the Artillery Observation Post Vehicle (OPV), Command Post Vehicle (CPV) and the Warrior 2000. The latter was a design originally intended for the Swiss Army but, given the general mood of open warfare in the Battlefield Evolution world, we can safely assume

that there would be interest in bringing a similar vehicle back into production, a blend of the 2000 specifications and the Lethality Programme.

These variants are provided for you to experiment with and try out in your own games. Let us know what you think of them (our forums are always a good place to address feedback), and we may make them an official addition to the game!



WARRIOR OPV

	BRITISH ARMY WARRIOR OPV	175												
														
The Presence of the Warrior OPV on the battlefield guarantees the accurate delivery of long-ranged artillery														
Material	Warrior w/40mm Cannon and Chain Gun													
Options	None													
Statistics	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Size</th> <th>Move</th> <th>Close Combat</th> <th>Target</th> <th>Armour</th> <th>Kill</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>7"</td> <td>3xD10</td> <td>8+</td> <td>3+</td> <td>10+</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Size	Move	Close Combat	Target	Armour	Kill	3	7"	3xD10	8+	3+	10+
Size	Move	Close Combat	Target	Armour	Kill									
3	7"	3xD10	8+	3+	10+									
Support														

Weapons	<p>40mm Cannon Range: 40" Damage: 2xD10</p> <p>Chain Gun Range: 30" Damage: 3xD6</p>
Special Rules	<p>40mm Cannon: This weapon causes a -2 penalty to Armour rolls.</p> <p>Chain Gun: This weapon causes a -1 penalty to Armour rolls. In addition, every Damage Dice this weapon rolls will count as two for the purposes of Suppression only. If every model in the target unit is assigned two or more Damage Dice when this weapon is used, the unit will lose two actions from Suppression, rather than just one. It may be fired in the same Shoot action as the 40mm Cannon, but it must use the same Fire Zone.</p> <p>Armoured: The Warrior will ignore all terrain 1" high or less for the purposes of movement. It is also immune to Suppression but only has an Armour score of 4+ to the Side or Rear facings. The Warrior may never make any reactions. It will also ignore the effects of smoke (see main rulebook).</p> <p>Tough: The Warrior will ignore the first two failed Armour rolls. An attack that rolls its Kill score will destroy it as normal.</p> <p>Artillery Observation Post: The Warrior may call Supporting Artillery, as described in the Advanced Rulebook. If the Warrior has Line of Sight to the target point of the Supporting Artillery and has not/does not take a Move action in this turn, your opponent will only roll 1D6 when moving the centre of the artillery's Fire Zone.</p>

WARRIOR CPV

BRITISH ARMY WARRIOR CPV		225												
														
<p>Safely protected by the Warrior's thick armour and surrounded by the digital battlefield, an officer can exercise finesse in the control of his forces.</p>														
Material	Warrior w/40mm Cannon and Chain Gun													
Options	None													
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Weapons	<p>40mm Cannon Range: 40" Damage: 2xD10</p> <p>Chain Gun Range: 30" Damage: 3xD6</p>													
Special Rules	<p>40mm Cannon: This weapon causes a -2 penalty to Armour rolls.</p> <p>Chain Gun: This weapon causes a -1 penalty to Armour rolls. In addition, every Damage Dice this weapon rolls will count as two for the purposes of Suppression only. If every model in the target unit is assigned two or more Damage Dice when this weapon is used, the unit will lose two actions from Suppression, rather than just one. It may be fired in the same Shoot action as the 40mm Cannon, but it must use the same Fire Zone.</p> <p>Armoured: The Warrior will ignore all terrain 1" high or less for the purposes of movement. It is also immune to Suppression but only has an Armour score of 4+ to the Side or Rear facings. The Warrior may never make any reactions. It will also ignore the effects of smoke (see main rulebook).</p> <p>Tough: The Warrior will ignore the first two failed Armour rolls. An attack that rolls its Kill score will destroy it as normal.</p> <p>Command: So long as the Warrior remains on the table, one friendly unit per turn may be given a bonus third action. A unit can only take one bonus action, no matter how many Warrior and Lieutenants are on the table. Only one Warrior CPV or Command Section may be purchased for every 2,000 points or part of in the army.</p>													

WARRIOR 2000

	BRITISH ARMY WARRIOR 2000	210												
														
Combining the Lethality Programme with a more powerful engine and heavier armour, the Warrior 2000 forms the core of the next generation British Army.														
Material	Warrior w/40mm Cannon and Chain Gun													
Options	None													
Statistics	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Size</th> <th>Move</th> <th>Close Combat</th> <th>Target</th> <th>Armour</th> <th>Kill</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>7"</td> <td>3xD10</td> <td>8+</td> <td>3+</td> <td>11+</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Size	Move	Close Combat	Target	Armour	Kill	3	7"	3xD10	8+	3+	11+
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**OFFICIAL RULES
UPDATE**

Blue Stars, Brakiri and Project: LCV



Three New Ships for A Call to Arms

Matthew Sprange

In our run up to the Second Edition of A Call to Arms, to be released this coming August, we are pleased to present three new ships, ready for action! The Blue Star will be a valuable addition to the Interstellar Alliance, giving them White Star style combat abilities in Patrol level scenarios, while the Brakiri get some serious reinforcements by way of the Kabrokta, a brand new assault cruiser hot from the ship yards. Finally, the Earth Alliance has just taken delivery of the Myrmidon LCV, a Patrol level ship for Crusade Era fleets. Look out for more ships coming next month!

ISA Blue Star

Speed: 15
Turn: 2/90°
Hull: 4
Damage: 5/1
Crew: 6/1
Troops: -

Craft: None
Special Rules:
Adaptive Armour, Advanced
Jump Point, Dodge 3+, Flight
Computer, Self-Repairing 1
In Service: 2267+

The Blue Star is less intimidating than its bigger brothers, but can hold its own against raiders and would-be assassins. Using its speed and dual jump drive systems, the ship is far more comfortable running from a battle to call upon the nearest contingent of ISA ships if necessary – or the White Star fleet if possible.



Patrol

Weapon	Range	Arc	AD	Special
Molecular Pulsar	8	F	4	Anti-Fighter, AP, Double Damage

* The Blue Star may use the Skin Dancing rules.

ISA Blue Star

Brakiri Kabrokta-class Assault Cruiser**Battle**

Speed: 8
Turns: 1/45°
Hull: 6
Damage: 52/8
Crew: 64/10
Troops: 8

Craft: None
Special Rules:
 Jump Point, Shuttles 4
In Service: 2260+

Designed to enter enemy systems and launch devastating hostile takeovers, the Kabrokta requires effective escorts to complete its mission. However, it is known as a real bruiser in fleet actions, overwhelming enemies with its graviton bursts.



Weapon	Range	Arc	AD	Special
Heavy Combat Laser	20	B	6	AP, Beam, Double Damage
Graviton Blaster	6	T	10	AP
Graviton Pulsar	12	F	12	AP
Graviton Pulsar	12	A	8	AP
Graviton Pulsar	12	P	10	AP
Graviton Pulsar	12	S	10	AP
Graviton Bolt	3	T	6	Anti-Fighter, Weak

Brakiri Kabrokta

Earth Alliance Myrmidon-class Light Combat Vessel**Patrol**

Speed: 8
Turns: 2/45°
Hull: 5
Damage: 8/2
Crew: 9/1
Troops: -

Craft: None
Special Rules: Interceptors
 1
In Service: 2264+

The Myrmidon is essentially a cross between a patrol cutter and a very heavy fighter. While unable to carry large-scale weaponry, it remains very well-armed for its size. The advent of new pulse technology offered a fantastic avenue for the LCV project, streamlining the vessel and giving it adequate firepower against other ships in its theatre of engagement.



Weapon	Range	Arc	AD	Special
Medium Pulse Cannon	10	F	8	Twin-Linked
Light Pulse Cannon	8	T	6	
Particle Beams	6	T	2	Anti-Fighter



Brakiri Kabrokta

Lone Wolf Evolution

A Way of Using Your Lone Wolf Models



Matthew Sprange

The world of Magnumund, the setting behind the Lone Wolf gamebooks and roleplaying game, is ripe for exploration in a variety of gaming formats. We have already released a set of Lone Wolf miniatures for the RPG – this article links them to the Battlefield Evolution rules featured in issue 39.

Playing Lone Wolf Evolution

If you have already read the Battlefield Evolution rules (or have been lucky enough to actually play it), then you already know how to play Lone Wolf Evolution! Exactly the same rules are used for both games, with no need for modification. This, incidentally, is the strength behind the Evolution rules, as they can be turned to a variety

of different settings and genres, each with their own unique atmosphere and method of play, and yet all using the same core rules.

You will need two players, one to run the forces of Sommerlund and its allies, the other to play the Dark Lords.

After that, simply decide on a points value for your game (we recommend around 250 points for your first battles), choose your forces from the cards included in this article, and then start fighting. The first force to Shatter the other is the victor!



The forces of good take on the invaders from Helgedad

Brother of the Crystal Star

125 points

Brother of the Crystal Star

Size	Move	Close Combat	Target	Armour	Kill
1	5"	D6-1	4+	-	6+

After long study of arcane arts, the Brother of the Crystal Star is one of the mightiest magical practitioners of Magnamund.

Lightning Hand

Range: 12" Damage: D10

Unit Type: Command

Special Rules

Invisible Shield: If the Brother of the Crystal Star is ever removed as a casualty, roll a D6. On a 3 or more, he is saved by his magical defences and may ignore the attack.

Lightning Hand: This weapon causes a -2 penalty to Armour rolls. If a Ready action is taken beforehand, the Brother of the Crystal Star may either add +2 to the Damage Dice, or change the Damage Dice to 4xD6+1.

Mindshield: The Brother of the Crystal Star is immune to Mindblast.

Vigour: By performing a Ready action, the Brother of the Crystal Star may grant any friendly unit within 24" and Line of Sight a bonus action.



Crypt Spawn

80 points

2 Crypt Spawn

Size	Move	Close Combat	Target	Armour	Kill
1	3"	D6-2	4+	-	6+

Summoned from spawning pits in the Darklands, Crypt Spawn are completely insane and hostile.

Psi-surge

Range: 4"
Damage: D10

Unit Type: Support

Special Rules

Psi-surge: This mind attack ignores Armour rolls. Creatures who have the Psi-screen special rule cannot be harmed by it.

Mindblast: Crypt Spawn roll an extra Damage Dice against any opponent who does not possess the Mindshield or Psi-Screen special rule.

Mindshield: Crypt Spawn are immune to Mindblast.

Wings: If the unit takes a Ready action immediately before a Move action, it may move up to 15" in any direction, ignoring any movement penalties for terrain and firing its weapons at any point during this movement. A unit may not fly into or out of Cover.

Options

Up to 8 extra Crypt Spawn may be added to the unit for +40 points each.



Giaks

20 points

Champion, 4 Giaks

Size	Move	Close Combat	Target	Armour	Kill
1	5"	D6-1	3+	6+	6+

Pouring out of the Darklands in vast hordes, the Giaks are a slave race, bred to be merciless and capricious when unleashed in their legions.

Unit Type: Squad

Special Rules

None

Options

Up to 15 extra Giaks may be added to the unit for +4 points each.



Gourgaz

80 points

Gourgaz

Size	Move	Close Combat	Target	Armour	Kill
2	6"	2xD10	6+	3+	9+

Towering above the Giaks it leads, the Gourgaz is a fighting machine, bred to literally crush the enemies of the Dark Lords.

Unit Type: Support

Special Rules

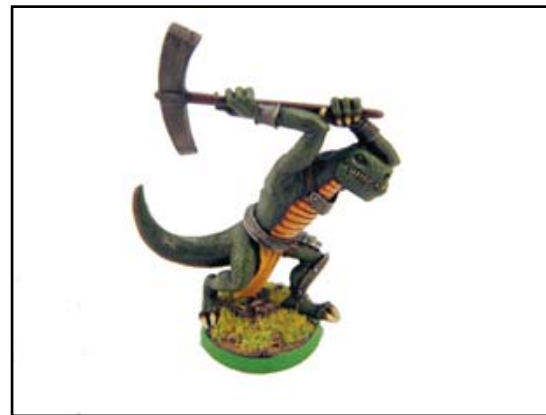
Musk: All Giaks and Mounted Giaks within 6" of a Gourgaz at the beginning of a charge action will be driven into a fighting frenzy, doubling their Damage Dice.

Mindshield: Gourgaz are immune to Mindblast.

Tough: The Gourgaz will ignore the first two failed Armour rolls. A kill result will destroy it as normal.

Options

Up to 5 extra Gourgaz may be added to the unit for +80 points each.



Helghast

95 points

Helghast

Size	Move	Close Combat	Target	Armour	Kill
1	5"	D10	6+	-	8+

A powerful undead creature, the Helghast can change its appearance to infiltrate the enemies of the Dark Lords.

Bluefire Spear

Range: 12" Damage: D10+2

Unit Type: Command

Special Rules

Bluefire Spear: This weapon causes a -2 penalty on Armour rolls, in both Shoot and Charge actions.

Mindblast: Helghasts roll an extra Damage Dice against any opponent who does not possess the Mindshield or Psi-Screen special rule.

Mindshield: Helghasts are immune to Mindblast.

Undead: Helghasts are extremely resilient. If the Helghast is ever removed from the table without an opponent reaching its Kill score, roll a D6. On a 3 or more, it ignores the attack.



Options

The Helghast may infiltrate the enemy for +145 points. The Helghast will not be deployed at the start of the game. Instead, at the start of any turn, you may replace any enemy model on the table that costs less than 50 points with the Helghast, as it reveals its presence.

Mounted Giaks

60 points

Champion on Doomwolf, 2 Giaks on Doomwolves

Size	Move	Close Combat	Target	Armour	Kill
2	8"	2xD6	4+	6+	6+

Racing on huge, malevolent Doom wolves, these Giaks form the cavalry of the Dark Lords, sweeping around an enemy to harass his rear flanks.

Unit Type: Support

Special Rules

Charge: If a Giak on a Doomwolf moves more than 5" in a straight line during a Charge action, it gains a bonus Damage Dice.

Options

Up to 7 extra Giaks on Doomwolves may be added to the unit for +20 points each.



Kai Lords

90 points

Kai Guardian, 2 Kai Lords

Size	Move	Close Combat	Target	Armour	Kill
1	5"	2xD6+1	5+	6+	7+

Guardians of Sommerlund, the Kai Lords use powerful mental disciplines to enhance their combat abilities.

Bow

Range: 24"

Damage: D6+1

Unit Type: Squad

Special Rules

Mindblast: Kai Lords roll an extra Damage Dice against any opponent who does not possess the Mindshield or Psi-Screen special rule.

Mindshield: Kai Lords are immune to Mindblast.

Camouflage: If this unit is within Cover, units beyond 20" may not draw Line of Sight to it.

Sixth Sense: Kai Lords are cunning warriors and difficult to kill. Whenever a Kai Lord is about to be removed from the table as a casualty, roll a D6. On a 5, he dodges out of the way at the last instant.

Options

Any Kai Lord may be given a Bow for +10 points. Any Kai Lord may be given a Great Hammer for +10 points. This changes his Damage Dice to 1xD10. Up to 7 extra Kai Lords may be added to the unit for +30 points each.



Kai Master

140 points

Kai Master

Size	Move	Close Combat	Target	Armour	Kill
1	6"	3xD10	6+	6+	8+

A student of the Magnakai, the Master has grown adept at the basic Kai Disciplines and now works to understand the mysteries of the Lore-circles.

Bow

Range: 36"

Damage: D6+1

Psi-surge

Range: 12"

Damage: D10

Unit Type: Command

Special Rules

Psi-surge: This mind attack ignores Armour rolls. Creatures who have the Psi-screen special rule cannot be harmed by it.

Psi-screen: The Kai Master is immune to Mindblast and Psi-surge.

Invisibility: If the Kai Master is within Cover, units beyond 12" may not draw Line of Sight to him.

Sixth Sense: The Kai Master is cunning warrior and difficult to kill. Whenever he is about to be removed from the table as a casualty, roll a D6. On a 3, he dodges out of the way at the last instant.

Weaponmastery: The Kai Master may re-roll any Damage Dice, whether they are his own, or those of an enemy who has just attacked him.

Options

The Kai Master may be given a Bow for +20 points.



Knights of Sommerlund

80 points

Knight of the Realm, 3 Knights

Size	Move	Close Combat	Target	Armour	Kill
1	4"	2xD6	4+	3+	6+



The Knights of Sommerlund are staunch defenders of the realm, and form the ultimate barrier to the predations of the Dark Lords.

Unit Type: Squad

Special Rules

Born to the Sword: Knights of Sommerlund may re-roll one Damage Dice each in a Charge action.

Options

Up to 16 extra Knights of Sommerlund may be added to the unit for +20 points each.



Surcouf



A new Submarine for your Victory at Sea Games

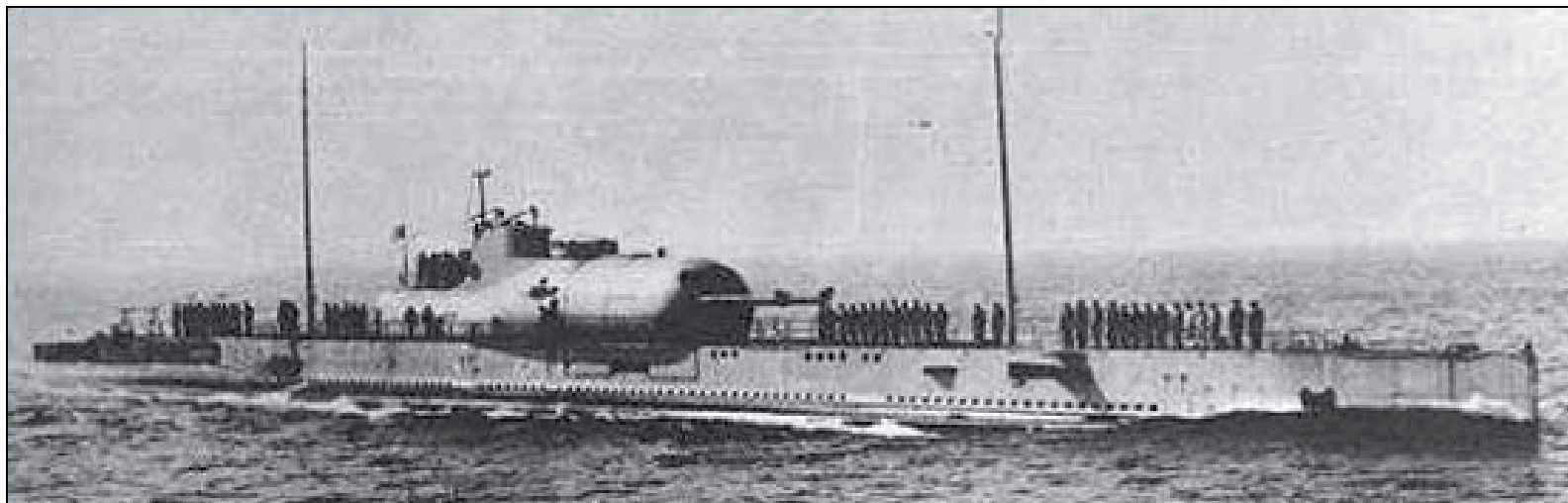
Rich L. Bax

When launched the Surcouf was the largest submarine in the world, surpassed in World War 2 by the Japanese I-400 submarines. Her intended role was that of a commerce raider and her design was intended to maximise this mission. She had a range of 10,000 miles and could sail for a 90 days. She was equipped with a Besson MN-411 floatplane in a hanger aft of the tower to scout for victims and spot for her main battery. Her torpedo outfit included four forward internal tubes, a quad trainable mount aft and a second quad trainable mount aft equipped with lightweight torpedoes. She even had a prison hold for up to 40 captives. But the most striking aspect of her design was the inclusion of a special, watertight turret forward of the tower which carried two eight-inch naval guns.

Despite her size and armaments, Surcouf was a very complex design, plagued with mechanical troubles. She was difficult and slow to dive, and rolled badly on the surface in rough seas. She was also so low to the horizon that the effective range of her 8-inch guns was greatly reduced.

When war broke out she was in the French Antilles and by the time she returned to Brest was in need of repairs. When France fell, Surcouf escaped to England, where she was seized by British sailors. She was subsequently turned over to the Free French who regarded her with pride while the British Admiralty considered her a joke.

Attempts were made by the British to use her as a convoy escort, and by the French for clandestine operations, but continued mechanical problems made her use problematic. Free French naval command then sent her to Tahiti, but she was delayed in Bermuda with renewed problems with the engines, and the realisation that she was barely able to dive. When she did finally set out for the Panama Canal, she never made it. Her exact fate remains a mystery to this day, and her wreck has never been located. The most likely, and accepted, explanation is that she sank following a collision with an American freighter.



A Free French report concluded that she was accidentally sunk by a US bomber group. Some of the wilder reasons include, the infamous “Bermuda Triangle,” or that she was caught refuelling a German U-boat and sunk by a US submarine or Coast Guard blimp. Adding to the mystery are stories that much of the gold from the French Treasury was in Surcouf’s large cargo compartment, and that the wreck was found and entered by Jacques Cousteau.

SURCOUF-CLASS SUBMARINE

Ships of this class: Surcouf

Priority Level: Patrol

Speed: 4/2”

Turning: 2

Target: 6+

Armour: 2+

Damage: 5/1

Crew: 5/1

Special Traits: Submersible, Aircraft 1

In Service: 1935

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Turret A (2 x 8 in)	12”	1	1	
AAA	4”	1	-	
Forward Torpedoes	10”	2	3	AP, Slow-Loading
Port/Starboard Torpedoes	10”	2	3	AP, One-Shot, (Surfaced Only)
Port/Starboard Torpedoes	5”	2	2	AP, One-Shot, (Surfaced Only)

Length: 360 ft.

Displacement: 4,304 tons

Speed: 18.5/10 kts.

Crew: 118

Special Rules

- 1) Observation Aircraft – the plane can be launched at the start of the turn following the turn on which the submarine surfaced. If the spotter plane is in the air it can direct the 8” guns out to 33”
- 2) Gunfire – the submarine’s 8-inch guns can be fired on the same turn that the boat surfaces (the guns were loaded while the boat was submerged)
- 3) Damage – the submarine cannot submerge if it takes any damage

MERRILL'S MARAUDERS



Another M.I. Platoon from the Archives of Infamy

Matthew Sprange

Despite their name, Merrill's Marauders are a power suit platoon who gained notoriety within the jungles of the Battle of Tarthis. Though reduced to single squad strength during the campaign to hold an important colony world of the Federation, they have been permitted to retain their honours and have begun the slow process of recruiting and training replacements.

Lieutenant Franklin Merrill

Born in Chicago, a city he professes to love above all others, Franklin Merrill volunteered for Federal Service straight after High School, having dreamt of joining an elite unit within the Mobile Infantry for much of his teenage life. Throughout Boot Camp, Merrill came under the attention of Career Sergeant Zim, an instructor who nearly finished his career before it had begun. An incident involving a Fleet officer while on leave in Chicago left a TAC Fighter pilot in urgent need of a medic and Merrill in judicial custody. When the Mobile Infantry stepped in, Merrill found himself bounced from one officer to another as the pilot involved in the fracas began making a lot of noise about unruly grunts. Insisting that the Mobile Infantry always takes care of its own, Merrill was finally placed in Zim's care for punishment, who promptly did everything he could to make Merrill quit and take the walk down Washout Lane.

Instead of buckling under the pressure, Merrill knuckled down and stoically took the beatings Zim laid upon him without mercy. Gradually, he began to regain the respect of both Zim and the camp's officers who finally relented and allowed him to join the Mobile Infantry.

Merrill has never forgotten the lessons of Boot Camp and has no problem in assigning almost cruel physical punishment to discipline cases within his platoon. The aim is always the same – force the trooper to quit the Mobile Infantry altogether, or else find something within himself that will make him a better trooper. Those who have served with Merrill for any great length of time will always laugh when a new recruit suggests that he had heard the Lieutenant was hard but fair. No, they say, he is just hard.



For all his terrible reputation, Merrill nonetheless knows how to get the best results from his troopers and he runs an incredibly tight ship. In battle, this discipline pays off, with each trooper knowing with an absolute certainty what his role is and what is required of him. This has saved more lives than anyone may care to count.

Platoon Structure

Currently at half strength after the Battle of Tarthis, Merrill's Marauders comprises of just Merrill himself, a full strength first squad and a six-trooper second squad. Recruitment has been slower than it might have been as Lieutenant Merrill has proven not only exacting in his selection requirements of potential troopers but also extremely hard on those who have been inducted. The washout rate is extremely high as Merrill views the Battle of Tarthis as not only a baptism of fire, but an opportunity to create one of the most accomplished platoons within the Mobile Infantry. Before a recruit will even be considered, they must have undertaken at least a dozen combat drops with other units.

More telling is that Merrill has yet to select a Senior Sergeant to work within his platoon, and his superiors are beginning to wonder whether he will ever find someone who matches up from outside the unit. The lack of a Senior Sergeant does not impinge on the platoon's ability to function while it remains at less than half strength but as new troopers are gradually added, the strain may begin to tell on the Lieutenant.

The current favourite for promotion to Merrill's aide is Sergeant Brittany Kovolschwitz of the first squad. Having fought alongside Merrill during the Battle of Tarthis, she has the Lieutenant's trust and knows exactly what he expects from his troopers. She is an expert in squad actions, with an uncanny ability to direct the fire of troopers under her command to its most effective potential. The second squad, led by Sergeant Tom Morris, is treated as a test bed for new recruits to the platoon, and so has had a high rate of turnover.

Tactics

Now skilled in jungle warfare, Merrill's Marauders know how to approach an enemy in this unfriendly terrain, how to best preserve the power supplies of their suits and how to entrap a hostile patrol in ambush. Each squad is trained to use a variety of weaponry as the mission dictates, though a reliance on the standard Morita rifle is paramount. Despite the advances in squad support technology, Lieutenant Merrill has the firm belief that no other weapon is as versatile, particularly when troopers are trained to take maximum advantage of the underslung grenade launcher.

For most patrol missions, the Marauders will arm themselves with Triple Thud grenade launchers, a weapon superbly adapted to the close-in environment of the jungle, where its short range is of no great loss but its raw hitting power can bring down even a tanker bug when squads are co-ordinated. Hel infantry flamers are less favoured unless Arachnids are expected, as they have a tendency to announce the platoon's presence to every enemy within half a mile and leave unmistakable evidence of their passing.

The Morita Long is also a valued weapon to the Marauders, and skilled snipers from the first squad are often detached from the rest of the platoon to hound enemy units and cut off their approach. Against sentient races such as Skinnies, the presence of a single Marauder sniper can stall an advance for hours at a time, often forcing them to bring in heavy support to root out a single trooper.



The Battle of Tarthis

Upon its discovery along the Road to Victory, Sky Marshal Dienes was confident that Tarthis II would become the breadbasket of the Federation, as he called it. Colonies were created with all haste to take advantage of the planet's abundant fertility and start shipping foodstuffs to worlds less self-sufficient.

The reality was less than the Sky Marshal had hoped for. While some success was had at growing crops within sealed dome environments, the endless bounds of crop fields never came to pass. The existing plant and insect life of the planet proved catastrophic to newly introduced crops, and the jungle that covered three-fifths of the world's surface defied any attempt to tame it. Even when vast sections were cut down to prepare for foodstuffs, the colonists found it was capable of growing back inside a year. Thus, Tarthis II was to be no more productive than many other colony worlds but it was at least strategically useful on the Road to Victory and the large number of colonists that had relocated there were gradually retrained to handle Fleet operations.

With the exception of rowdy Fleet and Mobile Infantry landing parties on leave, life was quiet on Tarthis throughout the march to Klendathu, with the individual colonies slowly expanding as their inhabitants grew accustomed to their world and their role within the Federation. It was just weeks after the failed Klendathu Invasion, however, when all that changed.



How the Arachnids managed to get a foothold on the world was never properly understood but the loss of contact with several colonies within a few hours of each other forced leave to be cancelled for all Mobile Infantry present on the planet at the time, as investigative missions were scheduled. As troopers neared the silent colonies, they suddenly realised their enemy was present in huge numbers – the jungles were infested with bugs, and they were spreading quickly to other colonies.

At first, TAC Fighters were deployed to deliver a knock out punch to the advancing Arachnid columns but the bugs were able to take full advantage of the dense cover available to them, and all the Fleet craft succeeded in doing was blasting huge burning holes in the jungle with Firestorm bombs. The decision was duly made to deploy the Mobile Infantry within the jungle, to stall then annihilate the Arachnid forces. Merrill's Marauders were part of the main spearhead, with orders to blunt the advance then wait for support before rolling up the lines of bugs. Dropping during night at high altitude from Slingshots, the Marauders were part of an ad hoc regiment hastily constructed from available Mobile Infantry units.

The jungle environment was a nightmarish battlefield in which to fight the Arachnids, with warrior bugs able to dart out of the undergrowth, snatch a trooper and then retreat before an effective response could be made. The suspected (but never proven) presence of infiltrator bugs also led to several friendly fire incidents.

Placed solidly in the centre of the Mobile Infantry's formation, the Marauders were to be the anchor for both flanks, as individual platoons advanced in line, sweeping any Arachnid infestation as they discovered it. Once Triple Thuds and Hel flamers were brought to bear, the regiment began to move forward with a steady pace, only halting here and there as one platoon or another got bogged down with a particularly heavy bug offensive. However, with neighbouring platoons able to lend support, such deadlocks were brief and quickly broken, with progress continuing towards the first of the target colonies, Beta 27.

The Arachnid presence began to thin down noticeably as the Marauders began to approach a large tree-covered hill later known simply as the 'hump'. The pace of the regiment began to pick up but as the Marauders mounted the hump, the Arachnid counterattack hit the Mobile Infantry across their entire line with amazing speed. Within minutes, all platoons but the Marauders were engaged as the bugs swept around either side of the hump. Vital minutes were lost as platoon commanders tried to co-ordinate with one

another, only to find that no mutual support was possible. As losses began to mount, they were left with no choice but to give ground, using jump packs to boost themselves high above the canopy to keep ahead of the advancing bugs.

The Marauders quickly found themselves in an unenviable position. With the other platoons forced to retreat and the bugs now in their rear lines, they now found themselves near the summit of the hump, completely cut off from escape. As the number of Arachnids in the vicinity began to increase, the bugs started to climb the hump, intent on breaking every last Mobile Infantry unit. The Marauders immediately dug in and, selecting their targets as they appeared out of the jungle, began to pour fire down onto the warrior bugs.

Lieutenant Merrill could see that the rest of the regiment was in full retreat and so he called for evacuation via Slingshot. This request was cancelled when Sergeant Kovolschwitz reported sighting at least three plasma bugs on their perimeter.

Dividing the hump into quadrants, with a squad guarding each, Lieutenant Merrill ordered his troopers to hold the line at any cost, knowing that if just one squad fell, the others would soon find warrior bugs in their rear. As dawn approached, the Marauders were engaged in a continuous pitched battle as warrior and blister bugs tried to ascend the hump time and again. The vegetation of the hill was all but eradicated by the acid of the bugs and the shells of the Mobile Infantry, allowing the Marauders a clearer sight of their enemy and forestalling any possibility of the Arachnids launching a surprise attack.

As soon as the rest of the regiment learned of the Marauders' plight, they immediately tried to reverse their retreat but the weight of the Arachnid columns, estimated to have contained nearly a quarter of a million warrior bugs plus assorted other sub-species, was simply too great. Ammunition on the hump became a serious concern and several Fleet pilots volunteered to make runs across the jungle to drop supplies for the Marauders. Many were destroyed or forced to drop their supplies early as the plasma bugs began to target their Skyhooks and Slingshots but enough were dropped accurately near the summit for the Marauders to continue fighting.

As the day dragged on, Lieutenant Merrill began to realise that escape was impossible, and all that was left was to sell the lives of his Marauders as dearly as possible. He ordered the construction of makeshift bunkers, his

troopers digging into the hill itself, in order to protect the platoon from sporadic plasma bug fire, while others were stationed on the summit to ward off rippler bugs that had begun to sweep towards their position. All the while, the warrior bugs assaulted their lines, their dead carcasses piled up at the foot of the hump until blasted away by Triple Thud shells.

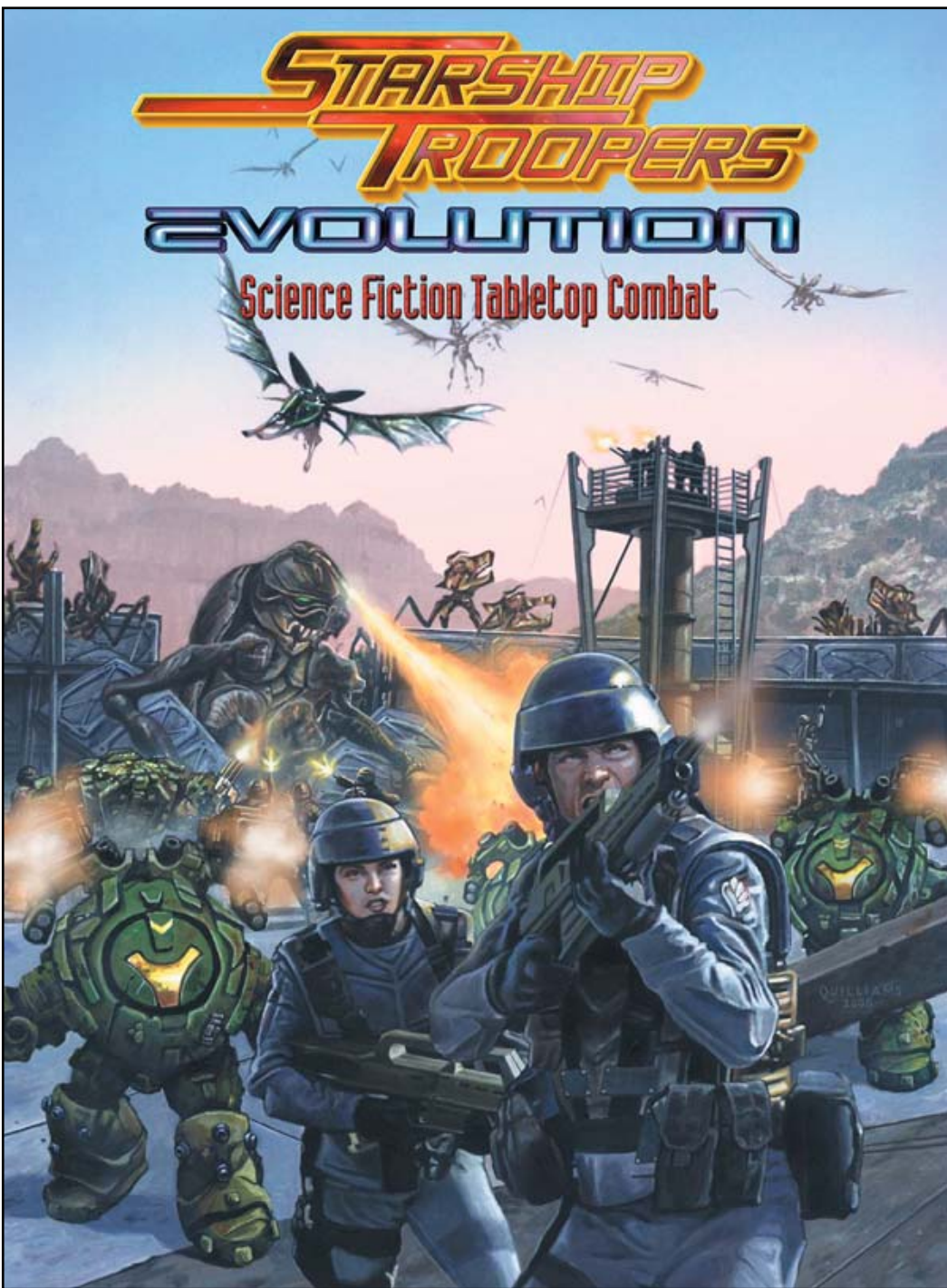
An abortive attempt was made by another platoon, Ganjin's Grenadiers, who volunteered to drop onto the hump but their Slingshot was destroyed by a plasma bug blast, despite being escorted by two TAC Fighters. Night came once again, and days stretched onwards thereafter. For nearly three weeks, the Marauders held the hump, hammering warrior bugs while conserving ammunition and food. Relying on the occasional supply drop that managed to survive the plasma bug gauntlet, now stretching across entire sectors of the jungle, no trooper managed to grab more than twenty minutes sleep at a time.

The Marauders were finally rescued when the warship *Erwin Rommel* moved into orbit, carrying a fresh regiment of Mobile Infantry, plus supporting units. Combining massed TAC Fighter sweeps with sustained orbital bombardment from the *Erwin Rommel*, huge areas of jungle around the Marauders were burnt clear, the plasma bugs lighting up like fireworks as shells found their positions. Pathfinders were dropped onto the hump soon after to reinforce the Marauders and provide them with relief until it was judged safe enough for a Slingshot to be flown in and pick them up. Only nine troopers, including Lieutenant Merrill, were left – all were awarded the Mobile Infantry Cross for their desperate fight on the hump.

The Battle of Tarthis officially ended on that day but hostilities have never fully ceased. Regular patrols of the jungle often turn up small bug nests, leading to the whole area being sterilised, usually from orbit. Though no colony has come under threat again, SICON has not been able to completely remove the Arachnid infestation from the planet and, given the density of the jungles and the complexity of the tunnel networks that now exist beneath them, it is unlikely the bugs will be forced to relinquish this world any time soon.

Battlecry/Motto

'Battle today, battle tomorrow, battle forever.'



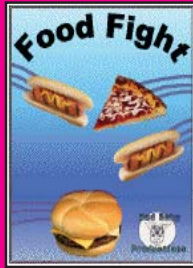
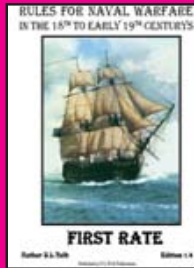
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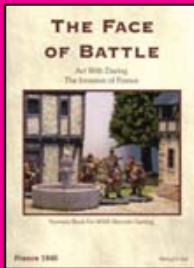
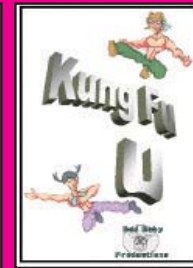
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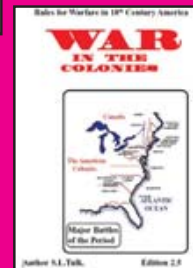
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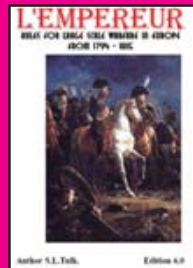


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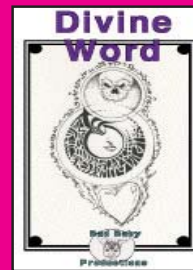


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ADVANCED WARFIGHTERS

A Peek at the Battlefield Evolution Advanced Rulebook

Matthew Sprange

This month sees the release of the advanced rulebook for Battlefield Evolution, a tome much asked for since the game's initial release. Up to now, you have been playing Battlefield Evolution using the rules sheet that comes with every box set – now you will have the chance to bring full scale ultra-modern warfare to your table.

So, what can you expect to see?

CORE RULES

For the benefit of those who like everything in one place (which, I think, is most wargamers!) the full basic rules of the game are included in the advanced rulebook. These are more or less the same as those you are used to in the rules sheet, though there are a few expansions here and there. You will now be able to create multiple Fire Zones with a single unit, for example, and destroyed tanks now officially count as terrain (though I think many players were doing this already – good for you!). Speaking of terrain, there are some modifications here that will allow you to differentiate areas on the battlefield. All of this is backed up with sumptuous photos showing each rule, step by step. There should be little room for ambiguity here, as we have even shown you the dice rolls where relevant!

ADVANCED RULES

All of that covers just the first few pages of the advanced rulebook. We have many more bits and pieces for you that will greatly expand your games to bring you face-to-face with ultra-modern warfare. The first of the new chapters covers Structures. No longer simply terrain pieces, buildings now play a key part in any battle. Infantry dug deep within them can be extremely difficult to get out, and when opposing infantry move into the same building, the fighting gets downright vicious. Grenades come to the fore in this type of

warfare and, when they fail, there are complete rules provided for destroying structures. It has to be said, buildings seem to get destroyed far more often in Battlefield Evolution than many other miniatures games we have played – which is great!

The next chapter covers Air Units, just in time for the forthcoming Future Lynx and Super Cobra helicopters. Veterans of the original Starship Troopers game will find much that is familiar here (if it ain't broke), though we have tweaked a few things to speed up play and bring focus to the interaction of air and ground units. Speed across the battlefield with the throttle to the wall in a fast jet, and you will be pretty safe from everything except the most advanced surface-to-air missiles. Go low and very slow in a gunship, and every yahoo with a shotgun will be able to take a pot-shot at you.

You will find that the combination of multi-levelled structures and aircraft really do make Battlefield Evolution a three dimensional game, greatly expanding the tactics available to you. As I have always said, you haven't played this game unless you have led a 6,000 points combined arms force with infantry, armour and aircraft!

Finally, we have lots of other advanced rules that, on their own, do not require their own chapters but, taken together, give the game real flavour.

For example, your troops (elite or otherwise!) can rappel down from helicopters, straight into the middle of the fight – think of your SAS section flying across the battlefield in their Future Lynx, then dropping the ropes down onto the enemy-held hotel while under fire. Stirring stuff!

Other rules allow you to make covered advances, take advantage of elevated firing positions to rain fire down on armoured vehicles, target enemies at extreme ranges, deploy minefields or sentries, call for supporting artillery and much more,

ARMY LISTS

The next section covers the armies of the four (current) protagonists of the Battlefield Evolution world, the EFTE, USMC, PLA and MEA. Each has its own section, covering its development and position in the world, its aims and goals, and the military it can currently field. You will find much that is familiar with our own world here, though also much that is different. Britain, for example, has wholeheartedly embraced the idea of Europe and has joined a true Federation (as I type that, I swear I can hear Mrs Thatcher in my head – ‘No, no, no. . .’). Together, the European countries have agreed common defence and foreign policies (don’t laugh) and are now beginning to flex old Imperial muscles. The United States has a whiff of isolationism returning, while China is truly riding high, combining weight of numbers with technology that has leapfrogged a generation to rival that of the West. The Middle East, perhaps taking a leaf out of Europe’s book, has seen that it is better to be together than apart and, at least on their home turf, are another credible military.

Each also includes a couple of army lists. Now, there has been a lot of talk about these forthcoming lists and what they will contain. And. . . you are all wrong. We have not listed the statistics of every possible unit each side may take, instead focussing on a more thematic approach. Every unit has a type (such as Squad, Command, Support, etc) which, up to now, you have just ignored on your cards.

The army lists build upon these. An MEA Government force, for example, forces you to take at least one Squad unit, and permits you to choose up to one Support unit for every Squad unit in your force. You can also have one Armour unit for every two Squad units, one Air unit for every 1,000 points, as many Transports as it takes to carry all your infantry, and a single Command unit. Other forces have variations on this.

So, why did we not include statistics for every unit in the game? Is it because we are mean???

No. The whole idea behind Battlefield Evolution (in fact, with all Evolution games) was to free players from having to purchase additional supplements and army books. We only released the advanced rulebook because we could not fit everything on to the rules sheet.

In addition, it means that we can safely update the armies without requiring you to buy even more books. If a unit needs changing, we can simply place a new unit card for free download. We can add new units without having to put together a new book that has little purpose other than to support them. In other words, it makes Battlefield Evolution a very efficient system for us, and a cheaper game for you.

In other words, all you will ever need to play Battlefield Evolution is your army, a few unit cards and the advanced rulebook (maybe).

SCENARIOS

The rules sheet for Battlefield Evolution includes a basic stand-up-and-fight scenario that gets you going immediately. However, given the nature of ultra-modern warfare, there were simply too many good ideas for different games for us *not* to include more scenarios in the advanced rulebook. The basic scenario is now called Engagement and its cousin, Five Card Blind, is very similar except it features truly random forces.

The rest introduce you to Victory Points and objectives in order to secure a win. Formation Ambush, for example, features an attack on a convoy, while Hammer and Anvil sees you assaulting (or defending!) a prepared position. One of my favourite, Gauntlet, has aircraft on one side flying through a hail of anti-aircraft fire while attempting to destroy an important bunker (okay, you can call it a dam if you wish!). Special forces are also catered for, as a single squad tries to infiltrate an enemy position and destroy a critical objective in Sabotage. There are plenty more scenarios, each providing you with a different set of tactical problems, whichever force you have chosen to use.



CAMPAIGNS

Campaign play is extremely popular in A Call to Arms, to the extent that, for some groups, it is the 'default' method of playing. 28mm games tend not to put the same emphasis on campaigns but, ever ones to buck a trend, we have included a full campaign system in the advanced rulebook! We recommend you give them a try, as a campaign will add an entirely new dimension to your army. . .

Players will battle over several defined territories, such as settlements, airfields, and industrial sites. The scale of the conflict is decided beforehand. If you just fancy a border clash, choose a Skirmish level campaign. You can go up to Raid or Battle level (sound familiar?) and, if you fancy a real clash of nations, the full War level campaign will see history itself pivot on your actions.

During the course of the campaign, as you launch attacks on territories, desperately shore up your own defences, and make critical alliances with other players (however short lived), you must ensure your forces do not suffer from Attrition (which can cause your army to simply give up and pull out of the war zone), and that all territories are well-supplied.

On top of that, you will come face to face with the fact that real world conflicts are not equal. We have introduced the concept of Force Multipliers which affect the points value of your forces in the battles you fight. For example, you might be due to play a 1,000 point game. However, if you have lost a string of battles and are fighting against multiple attacks at the same time, you might see this drop to, say, 900 points. On the other hand, your enemy might be riding high with a string of victories and a recently captured oil field to his name, giving him 1,200 points. In fighting the campaign, you must think in strategic terms as well as tactical, and know when to hold back, and when to launch an all-out offensive.

Finally, we have also added Favoured Units to the campaign – call them 'heroes' if you will. They are our nod to both war films and some of the truly remarkable things that sometimes happen on the battlefield. As time goes on, your Favoured Units will become more experienced and will be able to pull off some amazing feats. An Air unit may become adept at flying while Overloaded, for example, literally filling every pylon with ordnance for little loss in agility, while an Armoured unit may gain the ability to order other Armoured units around, or perhaps it will start using Advanced Ammunition, making it a terrifying foe on the field. Some units can even pinch technology from other armies!

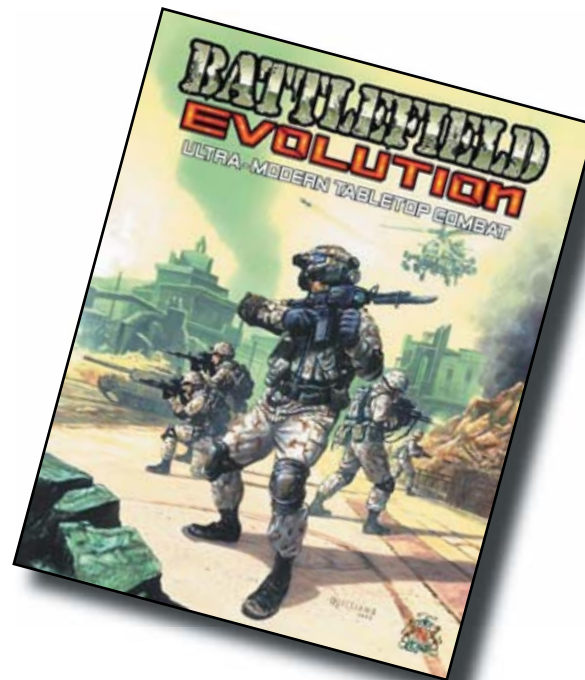
AND FINALLY. . .

The advanced rulebook winds up with a detailed article from our own Adrian Walters showing you, step by step, how to build urban terrain similar to our own downtown Kerakhstan (you will have seen it on our web site and previous issues of Signs & Portents).

We also have Contact at Qafir, a battle report featuring Ian's USMC against Nick's EFTE. I won't spoil things by telling you who won, but the report does go into some detail, so you can see exactly how the rules work.

The Battlefield Evolution advanced rulebook is one of the best looking books we have ever produced and is, coincidentally, the first produced by our very own UK-based printing facility, so we are eager to see what you all think of it! The rules it includes makes Battlefield Evolution everything we intended it to be, and we cannot wait to see what you all make of it when the next wave of new units are released.

See you on the frontline. . .



Hunting the “Beast”



Part Two

David Manley

New Mexico-class Battleship

The three ships of this class were an improved version of the earlier Nevada class. Construction began in 1915. All three ships were rebuilt between 1931 and 1934, with new superstructures, improved torpedo protection and new engines. These ships initially served in the Atlantic, but transferred to the Pacific after Pearl Harbor and spent the rest of the war fighting the Japanese.

Ships of this class: New Mexico, Idaho, Mississippi

Speed: 4”
Turning: 1
Target: 4+
Armour: 5+
Damage: 34/12
Crew: 58/20
Special Traits: Aircraft 3, Torpedo Belt
In Service: 1920

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
A Turret (3x 14 in)	36”	2	2	AP
B Turret (3x 14 in)	36”	2	2	AP
X Turret (3x 14 in)	36”	2	2	AP
Y Turret (3x 14 in)	36”	2	2	AP
Secondary Armament	8”	6	1	Weak
AAA	8”	5	-	(Mississippi has 7 AD)

Length: 624 ft.
Displacement: 36,157 tons
Speed: 22 kts.
Crew: 1,443



Wichita-class Cruiser

Wichita was the only ship of her class, essentially a "Brooklyn" class cruiser with three triple 8" turrets replacing the five triple 6" turrets of the Brooklyns. Wichita served in the Caribbean at the start of the war before transferring to Iceland, then to Scapa Flow. She was present at the bombardment of Casablanca before moving on to serve in the Pacific, where she spent the rest of the war.

Ships of this class: Wichita

Speed: 7"

Turning: 2

Target: 5+

Armour: 3+

Damage: 13/4

Crew: 35/11

Special Traits: Aircraft 4

In Service: 1938

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
A Turret (3 x 8 in)	32"	1	1	Twin-Linked
B Turret (3 x 8 in)	32"	1	1	Twin-Linked
X Turret (3 x 8 in)	32"	1	1	Twin-Linked
Secondary Armament	8"	2	1	Weak
AAA	8"	5	-	

Length: 608 ft.

Displacement: 12,207 tons

Speed: 32.5 kts.

Crew: 868



Benson/Gleaves-class Destroyer

Two classes of destroyer that were outwardly very similar, they were the last class of "small" US destroyer before the much larger "Fletcher" class joined the fleet. There were several variations in armament, most notably the removal of one bank of torpedo tubes and their replacement with increased AA armament.

Ships of this class: Benson, Mayo, Gleaves, Niblack, Gwin, Monssen, Meredith

Speed: 7"

Turning: 2

Target: 6+

Armour: 2+

Damage: 3/1

Crew: 9/3

Special Traits: Agile

In Service: 1939

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Secondary Armament	12"	1	1	Weak
AAA	7"	2	-	
Port/Starboard Torpedoes	-	-	5	4 AP, One-Shot
Depth Charges	3"	4	2	Slow-Loading

Length: 348 ft.

Displacement: 2,395 tons

Speed: 35 kts.

Crew: 208



Sims-class Destroyer

The forerunners of the Benson/Gleaves class, the Sims were generally regarded as unsuccessful and overweight. They were initially built with twelve torpedo tubes, but excessive topweight led to the removal of four tubes before the outbreak of war (the removed tubes were used on the first of the Atlanta class cruisers). Despite their obvious design problems the modified ships served in all theatres of the war with distinction.

Ships of this class: Sims, Hughes, Anderson, Hammann, Mustin, Russell, O'Brien, Walke, Morris, Roe, Wainwright, Buck

Speed: 7"

Turning: 2

Target: 6+

Armour: 2+

Damage: 3/1

Crew: 8/3

Special Traits: Agile

In Service: 1939

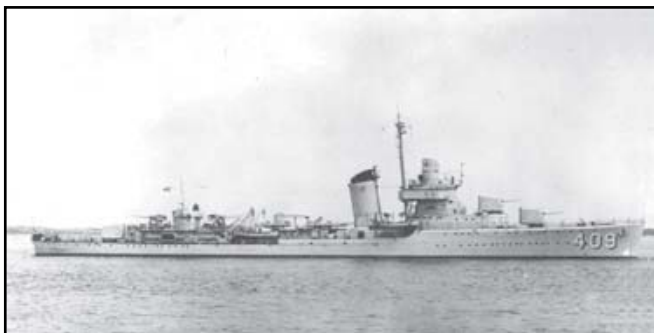
Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Secondary Armament	12"	1	1	Weak
AAA	7"	2	-	
Port/Starboard Torpedoes	-	4	4	AP, One-Shot
Depth Charges	3"	4	2	Slow-Loading

Length: 348 ft.

Displacement: 2,313 tons

Speed: 35 kts.

Crew: 192



Wickes-class Destroyer

The predecessors of the Clemson class destroyer, the Wickes class suffered from a less-than-desired cruising range, an issue that led to the design of the Clemsons. They also suffered from excessive wetness in heavy seas and machinery problems. Many were scrapped between the wars, but others were transferred to the RN under lend-lease, whilst some were sold for commercial duties and disarmed.

Speed: 7"

Turning: 2

Target: 6+

Armour: 2+

Damage: 3/1

Crew: 5/1

Special Traits: Agile

In Service: 1917

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Secondary Armament	8"	1	1	Weak
AAA	4"	1	-	
Port Torpedoes	-	3	4	AP, One-Shot
Starboard Torpedoes	-	3	4	AP, One-Shot
Depth Charges	1"	2	2	Slow-Loading

Length: 314 ft.

Displacement: 1,650 tons

Speed: 35 kts.

Crew: 130



Flower-class Corvette

The short, stubby “Flower” class corvette was the quintessential North Atlantic convoy escort, although they served all over the world. The Flowers were based on trawler hullforms and so displayed excellent seakeeping qualities. The combination of asdic and radar, combined with depth charges and a good hullform made them excellent U boat hunters during the worst battles of the North Atlantic campaign. Although designed for the Royal Navy they served with many Allied fleets, including the USN, Royal Canadian Navy and the Free French.

Speed: 4”

Turning: 3

Target: 6+

Armour: 2+

Damage: 3/1

Crew: 4/2

Special Traits: Agile, Sub Hunter, Radar

In Service: 1941+

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Secondary Armament	8”	1	1	Weak
AAA	5”	1	-	
Depth Charges	3”	8	3	Slow-Loading

Length: 205 ft.

Displacement: 950 tons

Speed: 16 kts.

Crew: 85

** Depth charge AD of 8 reflects the use of the “Hedgehog” ASW mortar



H-class Destroyer

The H Class destroyers were the latest in the line of Admiralty standard designs that started with the A class. Incremental changes led to a stream of constant improvement on a standard hullform. The H Class’ finest hour was the battle of Narvik, where many of the class saw action.

Speed: 7”

Turning: 2

Target: 6+

Armour: 2+

Damage: 3/1

Crew: 8/2

Special Traits: Agile

In Service: 1935

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Secondary Armament	12”	1	1	Weak
AAA	5”	1	-	
Port/Starboard Torpedoes	-	-	4	4 AP, One-Shot
Depth Charges	3”	8	3	Slow-Loading

Length: 323 ft.

Displacement: 2,095 tons

Speed: 36 kts.

Crew: 190

** Depth charge AD of 8 reflects the use of the “Hedgehog” ASW mortar



Aircraft Stats

Vickers Wellington

Nicknamed the Wimpy, the Wellington was a twin-engine bomber that saw a great deal of action in maritime duties and was, in fact, used on the first bombing raid made by the RAF during the war, against German shipping. Its channel-beam construction made the Wellington extremely durable and more than a few were able to return to base with gaping holes in their fuselages.

Type: Bomber
Speed: 11"
Target: 3+
Dodge: 6+
Dogfight: +0
Damage: 4
In Service: 1938

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Bombs	-	4	2	AP, One-Shot
Torpedoes	-	4	4	AP, One shot

The Wellington may carry bombs or torpedoes but not both at the same time.



Boeing B-17C Flying Fortress

One of the most famous and recognisable aircraft of the war, the B-17 developed a solid reputation as a day bomber. Early versions were less reliable and less heavily armed than later models, suffering heavy losses. These early experiences led to the improved E and F models, and then to the G, which shipped at least 13 (and sometimes more) heavy machine guns. The stats here represent the earlier C model.

Type: Bomber
Speed: 11"
Target: 3+
Dodge: 6+
Dogfight: +1
Damage: 3
In Service: 1938

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Bombs	-	6	2	AP, One-Shot

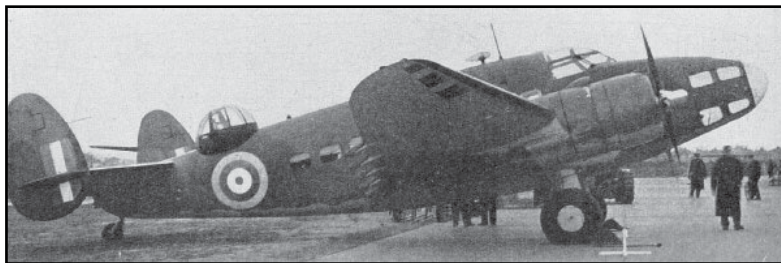


Lockheed Hudson

The Lockheed Hudson was an American-built light bomber and coastal reconnaissance aircraft built initially for the Royal Air Force shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War and primarily operated by the RAF thereafter. The Hudson served throughout the war, mainly with Coastal Command but also in transport and training roles as well as delivering agents into occupied France.

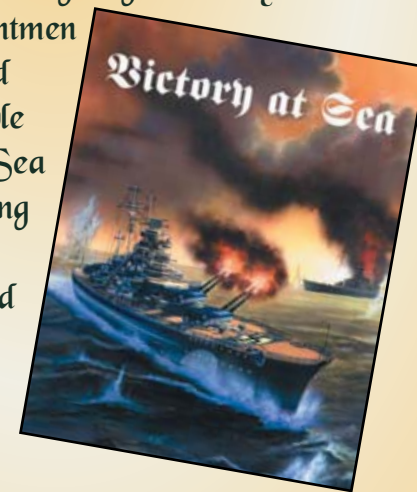
Type: Bomber
Speed: 11"
Target: 3+
Dodge: 6+
Dogfight: +0
Damage: 2
In Service: 1939

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Bombs	-	3	2	AP, One-Shot



Victory at Sea is the game of naval combat during the Second World War. Throughout 1939-45, the nations of the world duelled across the oceans of the world, only to discover the fundamental nature of naval warfare changing in the face of developing technologies. Now you can play out these confrontations on the tabletop with entire fleets drawn from the Royal Navy, US Navy, Kriegsmarine or any one of the many other nations featured in *Victory at Sea*.

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THE COMING OF THE FORTH

– PART ONE



A New Race is Coming in Starship Troopers

Matthew Sprange

The Forth are the latest race to enter the War of the Species that is catapulting the entire galaxy into ruin. Though physically weak, they have honed their vast intellects towards the construction of mighty fighting machines, vehicles that dominate the battlefield with powerful weaponry, creating lethal fire zones that even the toughest enemies will struggle to advance through.

With a society based upon a true democracy, every Forth has a vested interest in the future of his race, and a voice that is guaranteed to be heard. However, a new power is rising within their empire, a mysterious individual known as the Prophet, who preaches a return to the old ways of violence and tyranny, as an essential tool for survival. Vastly outnumbered by the Arachnids, and even the Federation and Hegemony, the Forth are slowly coming to embrace the teachings of the Prophet as they begin to strike out into alien space.

Fully upright, the Forth rarely grow more than two feet high, and stand upon a prehensile tail that allows them to slither along at great speeds, easily outpacing a human. A small ribcage, long thin arms and slender three talon hands make the Forth seem emaciated to human eyes, while their grey skin can give the impression that they are slimy to the touch, though their skin is actually quite tough and rubbery.

Their torsos are dominated by disproportionately large skulls, which can often make the Forth appear as if they are about to topple over due to the imbalance. However, this is where the strength of the Forth lies, for while they are physically much weaker than the average human, the cerebral and cognitive powers of the least members of their society can leave a human genius looking like a drooling idiot. SICON Military Intelligence scientists, on first examining a battle-scarred Forth body, first presumed them to be highly psychic, for it seemed incomprehensible to them that any race could have so large a brain that was not largely devoted to some extrasensory powers, let alone acknowledge that any race could be smarter than humans. However, no psychic activity has ever been witnessed within the Forth and



they themselves have always been suspicious of races that do display talents.

The mind of an average Forth leaves its weak body far behind as it soars intellectual heights. Many find it extremely easy to specialise in certain subjects and, as a race, the Forth have a strong propensity for engineering and theory of construction in many fields, from the sub-atomic to immense structures that dwarf anything conceived by SICON, and possibly matched only by the largest colonies built by the Arachnids. The Forth are also skilled in areas of philosophy, art and literature, though this is rarely seen by other races.

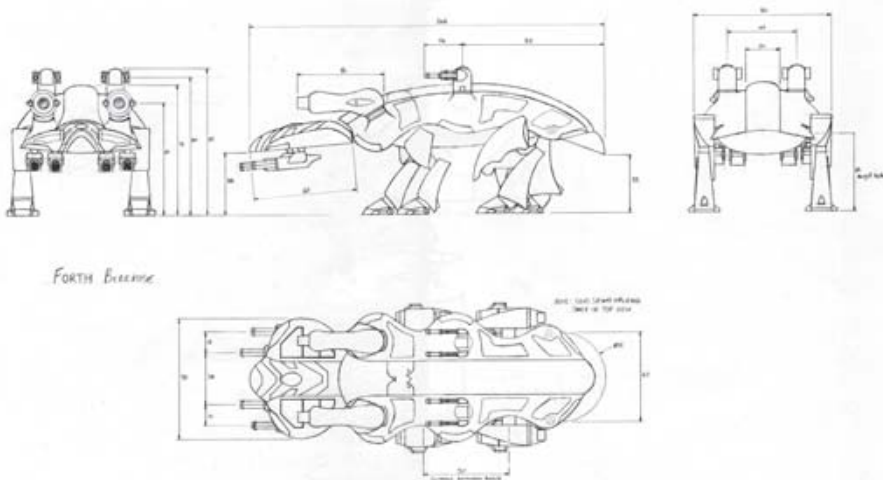
Technology to Serve

Though possessing weak bodies, the Forth quickly leapt beyond their limitations once they evolved into a technological society. The use of levers, pulleys and the wheel that characterised their development as a species soon gave way to industry as the Forth were able to construct massive machines that would allow the weakest of them to accomplish the greatest feats. Across their homeworld, chasms were soon crossed by immense bridges while dams, then fusion, then crystalline structures provided them with all the power they would ever need to fuel their growing civilisation.

Once technology became easily accessible to all Forth, the development of mobility machines became widespread, vehicles that either walked or flew, enabling the crewman to cross great distances easily and safely, and manipulate large weights with ease. Such machines rooted themselves within the society of the Forth, and few left the metal bodies until returning to their homes.

The homeworld of the Forth saw its surface rapidly covered with the marks of civilisation, as they created bigger and better functioning cities, probing the limits of nature and science as their great intellects drove them forward. While other races were still fighting great reptiles or terrifying mammals, the Forth were beginning to leave their homeworld to explore the nearby stars, on sophisticated craft that could harness the gravitational energies of the nearest sun to propel themselves at speeds far exceeding that of light.

Never interested in creating a huge empire that could dominate the galaxy, the Forth contented themselves with settling only on worlds that were of marked value. Though their homeworld strained under the requirements of any successful technological society, few among the Forth worried that they



Adrian Walters' design schematics for the Berekose Heavy Assault Fighting Machine

would eventually destroy their birthplace – there was always the faith that the combination of their minds and technology could solve any problem, from growing pollution to the quest for safe renewable energies. Strategic and resource heavy systems were therefore never a factor in the thinking of the Forth when they started to create colonies around new stars. Instead, they looked for worlds that could provide something genuinely new to them, be it previously unknown minerals, radically different forms of life or even environments of powerful atheistic beauty.

They were aware of the presence of other races, just emerging into technological adolescence just a few light years away, but the Forth abandoned any attempt to establish any meaningful contact after reviewing their neighbours discretely and at a distance. It was quickly concluded that none had anything to offer the Forth and some, like the humans, were too violent by nature to trust.

And so, the Forth retreated back into their small empire, content to manage their own affairs as they continued on their life paths to probe the inner mysteries of the cosmos.

A Society to Live For

The greatest achievement of Forth civilisation is not their technology nor their philosophy. Instead, it is the realisation that, properly educated, every

member of society has something to contribute and, this being the case, every member has a measured interest in the direction that society takes. This thinking permeates every aspect of Forth society.

This was not always so, and the Forth are painfully aware of their past, recorded as it is in exhaustive, redundant detail. Primitive Forth society was dominated by selfish individuality and violence, with the entire race bending its natural intellect to devising crueller and more effective ways of gaining personal power. Though physical clashes between individual Forth were common enough, applied thought generated lethal traps, irresistible ambushes and early engines of war that permitted just a few Forth to annihilate large numbers of their fellows in a quest for land, power and wealth.

According to Forth history, it took a single being on their southern continent, known only as the Prophet, to guide the entire race to a better way of existence. No longer would Forth fight Forth, no longer would their intellectual resources be squandered in meaningless destruction. There was a far richer life of discovery and accomplishment possible and through his teachings, the Prophet gave rise to the start of the Forth's technological society. Discarding primitive superstition, envy and desire, the Forth would not only be able to work together for the first time in their history, every member would be better off as a result – both materially and intellectually.

In its present form, the society of the Forth is geared simultaneously towards both the whole and the one. Linked by powerful computer systems that dwarf anything manufactured within the Federation, the Forth have achieved the closest thing to a universal consciousness that any race has achieved, except potentially the Arachnids. Their natural ability to absorb huge amounts of data, combined with information retrieval systems that effectively allow instantaneous communication between any Forth anywhere within their empire has permitted this race to not only overcome the natural barriers between individuals that plague other races, but also to funnel the best creative minds into the same endeavours. This means the Forth are capable of exploring and exploiting any new technology or universal discovery faster than other races, and also allows each Forth to directly influence the direction of the entire society, across the whole empire.

Though the United Citizens' Federation speaks of democracy, few humans can appreciate the government built by the Forth. Any Forth, at any time, can access information relevant to any area of their society. Huge amounts of data that would swamp a human mind are easily dissected by the Forth, analysed and then a conclusion reached.

With the powerful information systems available to any Forth, every member of their society can not only reach an informed decision about any problem they take an interest in, they can also add their own voice when a choice has to be made. From the funding of sanitation facilities of their own habitation block to directing the studies of the brightest scientists, every Forth can make a meaningful choice and so effect the world in which he lives. This is, in a sense, a true democracy.

Fighting Machines

The two- and four-legged fighting machines of the Forth, now an increasingly common sight on the borders of alien races, are the quintessential form of the Forth military, each controlled by just a single pilot. Though hunter-killer teams are sometimes formed from Forth trained to fight outside their armoured walkers, taking the battle to enemies hiding in tight fitting structures and tunnels that their fighting machines cannot enter, few accept the task easily. The use of mobility machines on their own worlds has so ingrained itself into the psyche of the Forth that they literally feel naked without at least a ton of metal surrounding them.

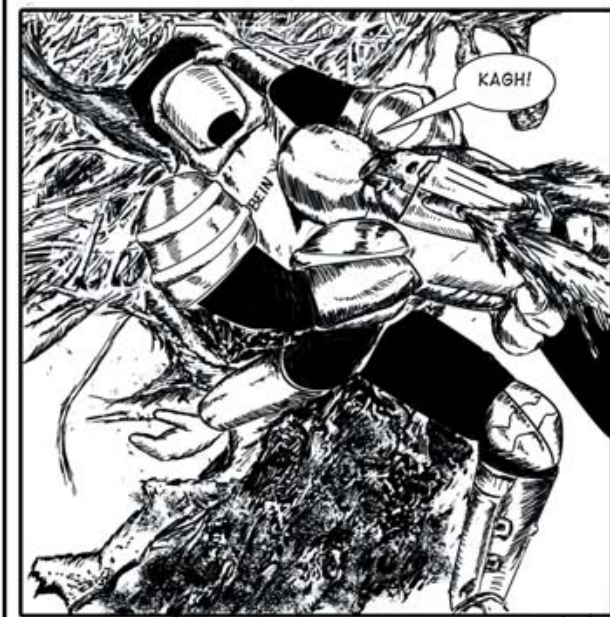
The main characteristics of the fighting machines of the Forth are similar to those of the Mobile Infantry's Marauders but there are some important differences. The cerebral powers of the Forth are fully utilised in their fighting machines, allowing them to analyse and process huge quantities of battlefield data that constantly streams through their cockpits. This in turn allows them to make effective decisions on the battlefield even when separated from their command systems.

Modularity is also a key feature. Though it is possible to transform, say, an Ape Marauder into a Bigfoot using their common components, it is a major refit requiring at least a week's work in a highly specialised facility. In comparison, any fighting machine of the Forth can mount a variety of different weapons and modules that will greatly affect its role on the battlefield, and a complete refit can take place in less than an hour, so long as at least one other fighting machine is present to aid in the procedure. This can often keep enemies on the backfoot, as a force dedicated to annihilating power suit troopers can quickly be reconfigured to take on a Marauder based force, often faster than the Mobile Infantry can bring reinforcements to the battlefield.



Extinction Protocol









LT, I CAN HOLD HIM HERE AND JUMP FOR AN EXIT WHEN YOU'RE CLEAR ---

--- BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO GO NOW!

HUT!

SIR, I WILL BLOW YOUR ASS UP!

I THOUGHT YOU INTEL FIELD GUYS WERE ALL *TELEPATHS*. I'M HOLDING AN M902-F FRAGMENTATION DEVICE WITH THE CAP DEPRESSED IN MY LEFT HAND. IF I RELAX MY THUMB, THE DEVICE WILL *DETONATE*. TAKE A GOOD LOOK AND TELL ME ---

--- AM I *BLUFFING*?

BLACKWELL, LISTEN UP ---

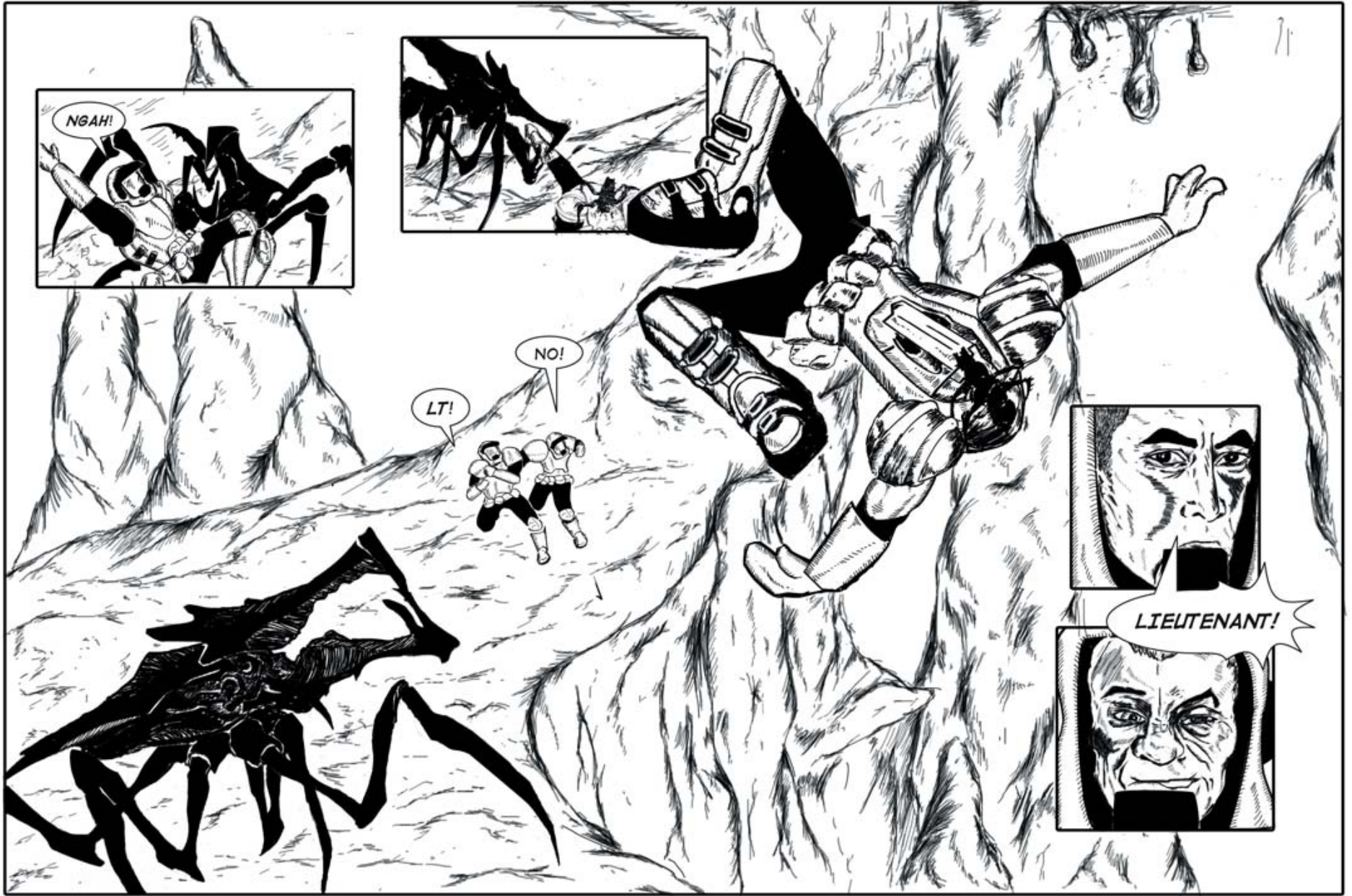
--- KEEP THE OFFICER BETWEEN YOUR BODY AND THE ENEMY. YOU'VE GOT THEIR *ATTENTION*, BUT YOU WON'T BE ATTACKED DIRECTLY WHILE YOU'VE *GOT* HIM.

THEY WANT US AS *SLAVES*, NOT *SNACKS*.

TWO FULL DAYS OF *PAPERWORK* EVERY TIME I DO THIS ---

--- BUT *GODDAMN*, I DO LOVE THE *FIREWORKS*.





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The Second Battle of Trafalgar



Settling an Old Score, Victory at Sea Style

Matthew Sprange & Ian Barstow

It has been quite some time since Ian and I have duked it out in a battle report, so we began discussing a possible Call to Arms game, perhaps the Drakh facing off against some of the new ISA miniatures we have (the Nolo'Tar and forthcoming Blue Star and Liandra). . .

However, I had spent some time labelling my French fleet used for Victory at Sea (the things we do in this hobby) and was thinking they are really due a decent outing at some point. As it happens, I have also been working on a new novel based around the Battle of Trafalgar (the sequel to Death Hulk, if anyone is interested. . .) and the two ideas seemed to merge. A new scenario was born, a wet turbot hefted in the direction of Ian's face, and the stage was set for another clash of cultures!

The Second Battle of Trafalgar (July 22nd, 1940)

When France fell to the Wehrmacht, elements of its fleet were scattered all over the world, and each had to make the decision whether to fight on, knowing their families were at the mercy of their enemy. Taking the battleship *HMS Nelson* and its attendant fleet, Admiral Nelson (no relation) was ordered south to meet with a large French fleet massing off Cadiz, with the intention of bringing it under his command and using the ships to bolster Britain's own defences. If the French could not be persuaded to join him, he had orders to sink the ships, lest they be taken by Germany and used against Britain.

However, the arrogant Nelson did not communicate his wishes very well and the French Admiral, Villeneuve, refused to surrender the sovereignty

of his fleet to the British. Simply hand over control of these powerful ships without another word? Unthinkable!

Setting course for his homeland, Villeneuve ignored the approaching British, until it became all too apparent what their intentions were. Consulting his charts, Villeneuve could not help but smile as the first shots rocked his ship. A chance for the Free French to shine was due, once more against the greatest navy in the world. The place where this battle was to take place? Cape Trafalgar. . .

Vive le Free French!

We agreed to a six point Battle level game without submarines or aircraft (to keep the battleship theme going, though I have to say the Free French may not have competed well with either), with a set up close to the formations used in the first Battle of Trafalgar – minus the Spanish.

So, what will six points get me? Well, I can tell you I was quickly regretting the decision not to buy the *Jean Bart* earlier this year, which left me with the *Richelieu* as a War level choice (two points gone), along with the *Dunkerque* and *Strasbourg* (both Battle level, another two points gone). A nice solid start, as the French battleships do have a lot going for them, and even the best of British will feel it when their big guns strike home. Another two Dunkerque-class ships might have rounded out things nicely but it would hardly have been a balanced fleet.

Instead, I grabbed three cruisers for my next Battle point, the *Algerie*, *Emile Bertain*, and the *Suffren*. I wanted to squeeze the *Jeanne d'Arc* in as well, as she is a lovely ship, but in this company simply gives too much away. To face the Royal Navy on anything like equal terms, we are going to need something that was intended to be more than a training ship. . .

That leaves one point, which I can split down into four Patrol choices to get some destroyers. Two Bourrasque-class and two Le Fantasque-class ships complete the fleet.

My basic plan is to continue sailing up the table at a fairly sedate pace, allowing the foolish British to speed straight into the teeth of my broadsides. I am going to be banking on Ian being his normal aggressive self and steam right in, attempting to emulate Nelson himself (he is going to be disappointed when I disallow the boarding rules he will no doubt brandish, written in orange crayon. . .).

The cruisers will keep pace alongside the battleships, screening the big girls with smoke if need be, fending destroyers off if not. My destroyers, on the other hand, will be sent to Ian's flanks, where they will launch torpedo strikes against the nastiest vessels he fields – probably a Queen Elizabeth-class, if he takes one. Or the *Hood*. I think he will be quite surprised by the pace of the Le Fantasques, especially if they are going at Flank Speed, and I may use them to get behind his fleet and surround him. They will, inevitably, die to lucky shots from Ian's ships, but I'll do what I can to avoid his secondary weapons, which may keep them in the game a little longer.

So, with both ships and a plan in hand, the Free French prepare to do battle once again, against an enemy older than Germany. . .

Fleet List

Richelieu
 Dunkerque
 Strasbourg
 Algerie
 Suffren
 Emile Bertain
 Le Fantasque
 Le Terrible
 Mistral
 Bourrasque

God Save the King!

'Arrogant Nelson' my backside! You can tell the dastardly Vichy blokes wrote that segment of the story. Obviously I am steadfast and stiff-upper lipped in the Noel Coward *stylee*. With the restrictions on carriers and subs, plus the feel of repeating the original battle, I decided to go for the big boys. Having taking a beating from Nick the Greek's British fleet on more than one occasion I decided to take a leaf out of his book and go for power.

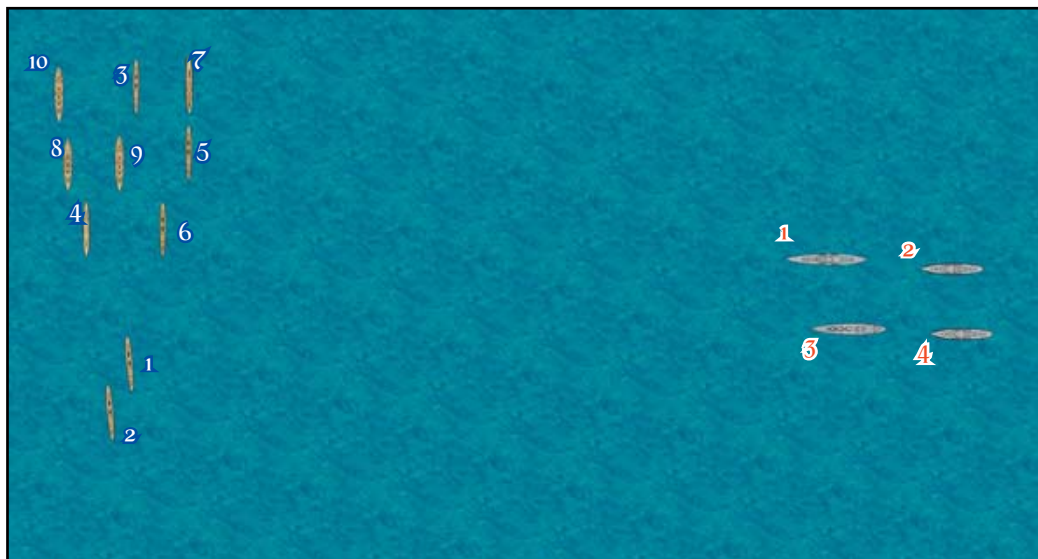
I suppose that Matt will be expecting to see the *Hood*, so just to be ornery I'm going with *Nelson* as my flagship. It seems appropriate somehow, and she packs a good punch. That's two points used up as she is War level, but with six points to use, I'm feeling extremely bold and aggressive, so I have decided on a second War level vessel, and looking down the list I like the look of *King George V*. Armoured decks, powerful armour and a huge number of Attack Dice in her turrets. This is a serious piece of kit, especially when you are expecting a shoot-out. Keeping the theme for maximum firepower I decided to take *Warspite* and *Valiant*, a pair of Queen Elizabeth-class battleships.

I did consider taking some destroyers for close-in torpedo support but looking through the French lists I'm expecting to see *Richelieu* and probably *Dunkerque*, meaning torpedo belts. I'm also not overly worried about enemy destroyers as all my ships have their own torpedo belts.

My plan is simple. I will deploy in two battle lines, just as in the original battle, with a War level ship at the head of each to hopefully soak up the initial damage. Matthew is a clever player and I expect him to use the accepted tactic of polishing off a ship before starting on the next. That probably means *Nelson* will suffer, because she has no armoured deck and is slightly weaker armour than *King George V*. That's a price I am willing to pay because the firepower of the remaining three should be too much for the French to handle – I hope!

Fleet List

HMS Nelson
 HMS King George V
 HMS Valiant
 HMS Warspite



Deployment

Turn One

Matthew

We deployed our forces in a kind of original-Battle-of-Trafalgar-kind-of-way, halted only as I made Ian swap the position of the *King George V* and *Nelson* around (obviously, *HMS Nelson* should be leading the northern column!). I have to admit, I was expecting to see one or two more battleships, perhaps the odd cruiser here and there, but Ian's decision to take two War level vessels obviously limited his choices!

Ian advanced slowly towards my line, and my battleships and cruisers held formation while the destroyers broke ranks and started their runs. The Bourrasques give a quick turn to take Ian's southern column, while the Le Fantasques both cranked up to flank speed to take the north.

Then, with the French taking the initiative, the big guns roared! Wanting to knock out a vessel fairly early, all my battleships concentrated their fire on *HMS Nelson*, as I knew it did not have an armoured deck, and would thus be vulnerable to plunging fire. The *Richelieu*, *Strasbourg* and *Dunkerque* all scored solid hits, with minor critical hits abounding. The *Nelson's* turbines suffered, slowing it down for the next turn at least, while savage hits from the *Dunkerque* caused fires to erupt from stem to stern. Roast, you English pig dogs! Ahem.

Map Key

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Le Fantastique | 1. HMS King George V |
| 2. Le Terrible | 2. HMS Warspite |
| 3. Emile Bertain | 3. HMS Nelson |
| 4. Suffren | 4. HMS Dauntant |
| 5. Mistral | |
| 6. Bourrasque | |
| 7. Algerie | |
| 8. Richelieu | |
| 9. Strasbourg | |
| 10. Dunkerque | |

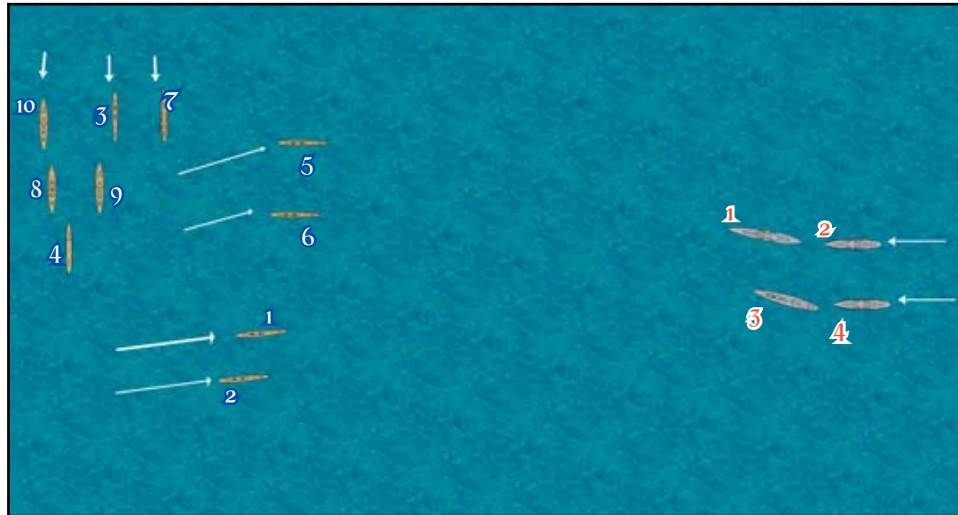
The cruisers turned out to be just out of range of the *Nelson*, and the *Algerie* had a pop at the *King George V*, but that too was just out of range. With water spouts erupting just in front of the English fleet, I knew they would move into range of even the

cruiser's guns for the next salvo. A turn after that, and my destroyers would be starting their torpedo runs (though, depressingly, I had already realised *all* of his ships had Torpedo Belts).

The return fire from the Royal Navy was muted, with the *Strasbourg* taking a couple of glancing blows from the *Nelson* and *King George V*, with the sum effect being to give the captain's poodle a slight limp. Ian began to wonder if approaching the French head on was the right idea when half of his guns



The British fleet advances!



Turn 1

could not fire – I must admit, I was hoping it would take him at least another turn to realise this. . .

Ian

Having deployed two very short battle lines my tactic was to grind forward at normal speed while hoping that my narrow frontage and powerful forward guns could damage the distant French and gain me an early advantage. I managed to lose the initiative which was a bit annoying, although with only four ships under my command Matthew is always going to have the tactical advantage of moving several ships after I have finished. This is often of considerable value in Victory at Sea and is another reason to select a few destroyers – they are a cheap way of adding ship numbers!

The French concentrated everything on *Nelson* which is a solid tactic as we have seen before, and the engines suffered a critical, slowing her down by one inch per turn. A second critical caused multiple fires as well. With only *Nelson* and *King George V* in range though my return firing was pretty poor, especially as *King George's* radar didn't pick up *Strasbourg* (more on radar to come) and the French ship suffered a mere 4 points of damage from the combined fire. Not exactly what I had been hoping for. About now I'm getting shades of what happened to my German fleet against Nick a couple of months ago. Hopefully not again!

Turn Two

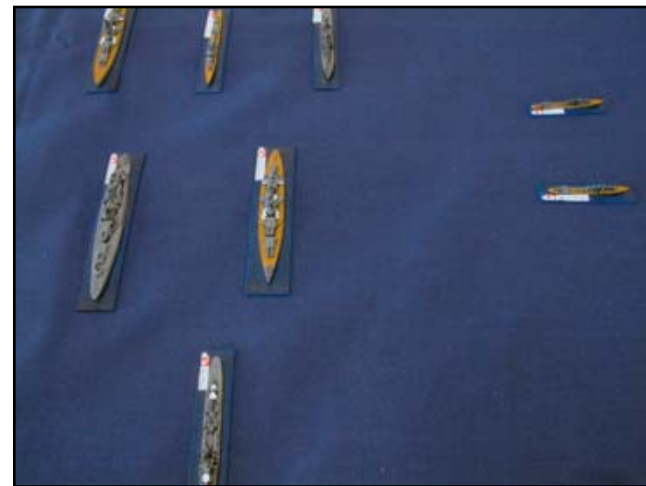
Matthew

By this time, Ian has started to turn some of his warships to bring more guns into play. The *Nelson* and *Richelieu* trade fire, with mixed results. The *Richelieu* sustains multiple hits but its armour almost completely resists 15 hits! The *Nelson*, however, suffers heavy damage and is left dead in the water. The *Strasbourg* and *Dunkerque* pile into the *Nelson* too, finally leaving it crippled, on fire and missing its A and Q turrets – result!

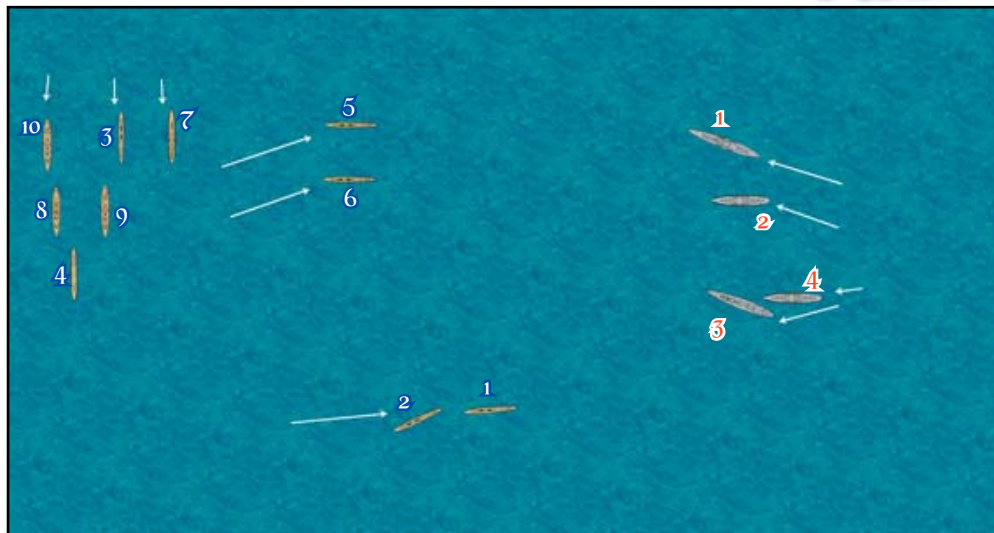
Other ships take fire from the English fleet, but most survive the onslaught with barely a few scratches. The *Strasbourg* is not so lucky, and takes damage from the *King George V*, also leaving it dead in the water.

Ian

Knowing that we were all in range I began turning *Nelson* and *King George V* to starboard, in order to bring all guns to bear, while *Warspite* and *Valiant* continued straight ahead – I suspected all French fire would continue against *Nelson* meaning my smaller battleships had a chance of getting into close range relatively unmolested. I did have one eye on the hovering destroyers, which were moving at a very rapid rate, making them impossible to hit. I



French destroyers peel off for their attack runs



Turn 2

wasn't overly worried about their torpedoes though, thanks to the already-mentioned torpedo belts.

The French tactics look pretty straightforward. Matthew appears to be maintaining a steady formation of his warships keeping their distance while the destroyers prepare for high speed torpedo runs. My plan is to wait for the destroyers to get close and then position my ships so they will have to slow down to make their torpedo runs and then sink them with secondary gun fire, or Nelson's forward-firing torpedoes.

Having lost the initiative again *Nelson* had to endure more fire before engaging, and having been left dead in the water she unloaded a full broadside into *Richelieu*, inflicting enough hits for 15 Damage Dice – this ought to be good! Or not. Only two points of damage and an unconfirmed critical hit made me think about an early change of dice. This was not good. I knew that without *Richelieu* the French would be under-gunned, but at this rate I wouldn't have a fleet left by the time she was crippled. I wasn't certain that the rest of the fleet were in range of her though, so I decided to spread out my firing in the hope of inflicting a lucky critical. To some degree this worked, and *Srasbourg*, *Suffren* and *Algerie* all took limited damage, with both *Srasbourg* and *Suffren* sustaining serious engine criticals.

However, with *Nelson* now crippled and down to one working turret, the advantage lies with the French.

Turn Three

Matthew

The destroyers begin their run, but only *Le Fantasque* looses torpedoes, at the crippled *Nelson*. The *Richelieu*, seeing the *Nelson* begin to flounder, lines up a perfect broadside on the *Warspite*. A hideous amount of firepower is unleashed, creating multiple explosions, and leaving *Warspite's* props damaged.

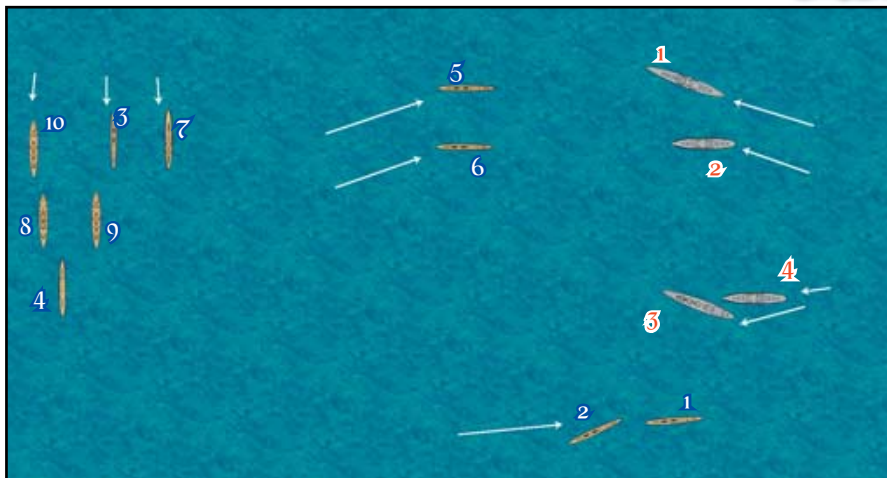
Suffren suffers heavy damage from *Valiant* and is finished off by *Warspite* but the rest of the fleet remains relatively unscathed. At the end of the turn, *Le Fantasque's* torpedoes plough into *Nelson*, reducing it to a single point of damage! However, *Le Fantasque* pays the price, as *Valiant* blows it out of the water with a well aimed main gun.

Ian

With all vessels in range, all my ships made the turn to starboard, although not one passed the attempted Come About checks that would have turned them more quickly. Firing was overall pretty poor once more, with the battered *Nelson* scratching *Srasbourg* and *Le Fantasque* (actually doing more damage crippled than she did before, but let's not go into that) before *Valiant*



Fast and deadly French destroyers bear down on *Nelson* and *Valiant*



Turn 3

crippled *Suffren* and sank *Le Fantasque*, and *Warspite* finished off *Suffren*. *King George* again barely scratched *Richelieu* which was by now looking practically impervious to fire!

The dreaded *Richelieu* took the opportunity to turn her fire on *Warspite*, inflicting far too much damage for my comfort. Not crippled yet, but well on the way. Right now it was clear that unless I could get my firing together things would soon get out of hand.

Turn Four

Matthew

Ian closes formation between *King George V* and *Warspite*, ruining my plan to send my Bourrasques right down the middle of them, chucking out torpedoes left and right. However, the destroyers all line up for their torpedo runs, and there are plenty of fish in the water by the end of the turn.

King George V lines up on *Richelieu* to unleash a terrible onslaught but, once again, the French battleships take the strain (15 hits again, but this time, no damage!). In reply, *Richelieu* continues to wear *Warspite* down, but the twist in the turn comes when *Dunkerque* opens up on *Warspite* too. In one salvo, *Warspite* is crippled, loses three turrets and has its Torpedo Belt cracked – just as the torpedoes from the *Mistral* plough into its flank.

The *Warspite* is holed and quickly sinks, though the torpedo attacks on *Valiant* and *King George V* cause minor damage.

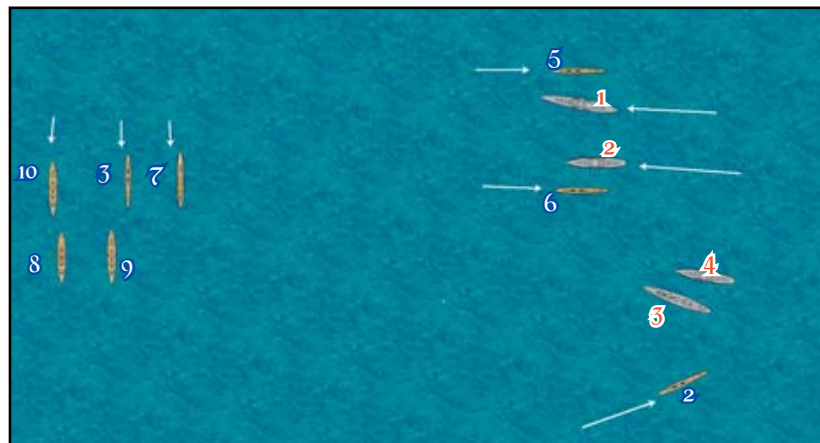
Elsewhere, the French fleet takes steady but minor damage, with the *Richelieu* suffering damage to its turbines. The *Nelson* is targeted by the *Strasbourg* and is consumed by an almighty explosion (if this were *A Call to Arms*, we would have been rolling for extra damage on many ships!

By this time, I am fairly confident. It is evident that the English cannot shoot straight, and they use cotton wool for ammunition. With two English warships at the bottom of the ocean for one cruiser and one destroyer, optimism abounds.

Ian

Frankly this isn't going well. At least I won the initiative for the first time! Seeing the approaching destroyers I closed *King George V* and *Warspite* right up to ruin Matt's attempt to steam between them and riddle me with torpedoes. Other than that we stuck with the plan, such as it was, which was to shoot the French a lot...

Finally this turn *Richelieu* took some proper damage. Between *Valiant*, *Warspite* and *King George V* she took 13 points of damage and three critical hits, spread amongst weapons, engines and crew, although none too serious, unfortunately. That said, *King George* put enough firepower into *Richelieu* to sink her, but when 15 damage dice bounce off you know you are in for a hard day at the office.



Turn 4

Nelson, despite her battered state fired a salvo into *Strasbourg* which left her dead in the water with a major engine critical, although the return fire finally sank my brave flagship. All the surviving French destroyers took damage, although none was sunk, meaning plenty of torpedoes were in the water.

Unfortunately for *Warspite* she became the new target of choice for Matthew and having been crippled by gunfire, she was left wide open to torpedoes when her belts were destroyed. The consequences were predictable, and she joined *Nelson* at the bottom of the sea. Fifty percent losses in one round – pants.

Turn Five

Matthew

The *King George V* finally gets a radar lock on *Richelieu* (or, at least, the crew managed to find the On button), and the resulting accurate gun fire weakens *Richelieu*, causing fires. *Mistral* is sunk by *Valiant*, while the rest of the fleet begins to grind away at the English ship in revenge. No substantial damage is caused, but it at least begins to slow down.

Ian

As Matthew mentions, in between repeated failure to roll above ‘2’ for a radar lock and forgetting altogether for one turn, *King George V* hadn’t been

doing very well. Had I made a mistake taking the second War level vessel? It was beginning to look that way. The two fleets were essentially circling each other now, so it was a simple matter of picking targets and getting stuck in. We were well past subtlety!

Both my surviving battleships targeted *Richelieu* once more, determined now to crush her no matter what. There are a few signs of change, though. I have won the initiative twice running and for the first time French fire is desultory at best. The question is, can I capitalise on the opportunity or is it already too late? One thing is for certain, I am not retreating, regardless of losses. It’s all or nothing!

Turn Six

Matthew

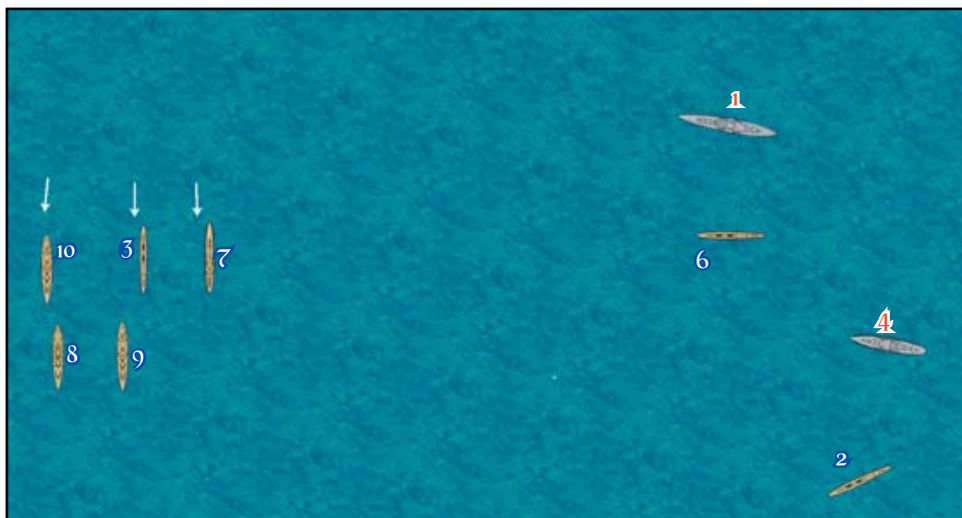
The *Valiant*’s shells bounce off *Richelieu* (I am beginning to seriously appreciate this ship’s armour!), but its secondary weapons account for *Bourrasque*. Fire between the two fleets intensifies as Ian concentrates on *Richelieu* while I work on *Valiant*.

We are both rewarded in a way. The *Richelieu* cripples *Valiant*, which is then sunk by *Strasbourg*. Meanwhile, *King George V* cripples *Richelieu* (though its armour still did sterling work). More worryingly, it destroys both turrets, revealing a critical weak point in the French idea of mounting all their guns in just two emplacements. It is not entirely clear what *Richelieu* intends to do for the rest of the battle. . .

Ian

More firing, although why *Valiant* bothered I don’t know as she completely missed *Richelieu* with all turrets. She did manage to sink *Bourrasque* with secondary fire but it’s hardly much in the way of compensation. *Valiant* then pays big time when concentrated French fire (again) first cripples and then sinks her. That leaves just one ship – the underachieving *King George V*. It was time for my supposedly best warship to pull her collective finger out and do some proper damage.

With some trepidation I looked at the possible targets. She could pick on one of the smaller Frenchies and try to cripple it in one turn, or she could continue the up-to-now futile



Turn 5



Turn 6

assault on *Richelieu*. I decided to stick with my failing plan, and rolled the dice. The result was all I could hope for. All but one gun hit and I picked up 18 damage dice with some glee. The result was startlingly impressive, with four threatened criticals and enough damage to cripple *Richelieu* instantly. All her turrets went, meaning she was useless in combat, but all the criticals failed to confirm! How critical (pardon the pun) would that turn out to be?

Turns Seven to Nine

Matthew

In this phase of the battle, I remain quietly confident. Though my big hitter, the *Richelieu*, has been made toothless, I still have two battleships, two cruisers and a destroyer on the table, to a single *King George V*. The downside is that the English ship is barely scratched, and my Dunkerque-class is not well-suited to this kind of duel.

The *Richelieu* manages to escape in turn seven, protected by the *Emile Bertain's* smoke screen until it limps off the table. The *Strasbourg* is less fortunate, and finally succumbs to sustained fire from the *King George V*.

My fleet starts to nibble away at the *King George V*, but its armour remains a big problem, though the cruisers do seem adept at getting lucky hits in. A potent shot hits its magazine, causing a fire and knocking its weapons out of commission, though sadly only for a single turn.

Ian

Hidden behind a smokescreen, Matthew wisely turns *Richelieu* and heads for safety, ensuring her escape and the preservation of some Victory Points. *King George V* has suddenly turned fortune on its head, and now can't put a foot wrong. I have won every initiative round since turn 3, the radar now operates properly and the French are looking scared as their shells bounce from her armoured deck.

During this phase of the battle *Strasbourg* is crippled and then sunk, and *Dunkerque* takes 13 damage and suffers a 'Secondary Explosions' critical hit to her vital systems. Is it possible that the one ship that looked like it couldn't hit a barn door going to turn the tide of battle?

Turns Ten to Thirteen

Matthew

At this point, I realise I should have withdrawn a while ago, as the *Dunkerque* is soon sent to the bottom of the ocean as well.

In return, I have managed to bring the *King George V* to within a few points of being crippled, but it is not enough, and certainly not worth the sacrifice of two Battle level ships – really, I should have retreated them at the same time as the *Richelieu*, instead of hoping for the lucky hits (which they never got).



Turn 7



The battered Richelieu flees for safety behind a cloud of smoke

The cruisers were more successful and, I kid you not, ended up doing more damage to *King George V* than the battleships! They finished the game at flank speed, disengaging from battle, while the lone destroyer, *Le Terrible*, also steams away in the opposite direction.

Ian

Suddenly the French are making for the sidelines, fleeing for port. *Dunkerque* perishes on turn 11 and the remainder go to flank speed and run for cover. Strangely because I was so focussed on not running myself it didn't cross my mind that Matthew might cut his losses.

King George V isn't even crippled, although she was within one point of it at the end. Even so she would have dealt with the French cruisers in all likelihood, and Matthew knew it.

So the Second Battle of Trafalgar was over, with the British once more in possession of the field... erm, sea. Time to work out the Victory Points.

The Result

Matt: 57

Ian: 57

Draw!

Merde!

So close! And it started so well! Right up until the final phases of the battle I thought I had this one in the bag, as the Free French concentrated their fire efficiently and steadily sunk one British ship after another. However, the *King George V* proved too tough a nut to crack for a fleet that had already sustained a moderate amount of damage.

If I had retreated my fleet with the *Richelieu*, things might have been different. If I had concentrated in the *King George V* first, instead of the *Nelson*, things might have been different. If, if, if. . .

It is worth mentioning something about our dice throws in this game. I can honestly say that we had a pretty even spread of critical hits throughout the game – however, they always seemed to come down on my side, leaving Ian to wonder which dice gods he had managed to annoy. You can see a few times in the battle report where he unleashed very accurate fire, only to have fifteen-odd Damage Dice turned aside by armour – statistically, he should have done a little better earlier on, though it would be a coin toss as to whether this would have had a big effect on the outcome (just don't ask Ian to throw the coin – it will land on its edge today).

Anyway, the Free French are stymied today, but they will be back. With even more sneaky plans. . .

Rule Britannia!

Incredibly, after such a poor start it was a draw, and a moral victory for the British to boot. We had driven the French off and no doubt *King George* would be blockading them in port while she awaited reinforcements.

I'm pretty pleased with the end result, needless to say, and I was within one point of crippling *Richelieu* the shot before she wrecked *Valiant*. If that had happened with the same loss of turrets then *Valiant* would have remained a force in the battle and I suspect I would have won decisively. Such are the vagaries of battle and the narrow line between victory and defeat.

It was a very exciting battle to fight and it shows that you should never give up as long as you have at least one big hitter left in your ranks!

Monty's Modification Module

Giving your Grizzly and Cougar Exosuits a 'magnetic personality'

Darell C. Phillips

In deciding to build a force of Exosuit models for my games of Starship Troopers, I decided to modify them. I'm not talking about changing their appearance though, as I believe these models are some of the most striking models (pun intended) in Mongoose Publishing's arsenal in the Mobile Infantry. Designed to fit in between the Power Suits and the Marauders, the Grizzly and Cougar Exosuits (according to the Mobile Infantry Army Book) *are the most heavily armed and armoured machines for their size*. Offered to their customers as if pulled directly from the pages of the classic Hugo award-winning novel, Mongoose Publishing is itself preparing for a combat drop of its own soon with the release of Starship Troopers Evolution. So follow along trooper and let's go take that big 'ant hill' over there, even if it's *just* for the nice view it'll give us at the *top!*

In choosing how many boxes of Exosuits to use, I gave consideration to the TO&E, or the Table of Organization and Equipment. I wanted it to show a balanced force, as if I was *not* going to modify my models to be able to carry all of the possible combinations that I knew they would be able to field after my 'magnet mod'.

I reviewed several of Mongoose Publishing's various rules on the subject of Exosuits, picking up some of the Role-playing material, even though this project was for the "thrill of tabletop battle". It made for great background material and made me feel more familiar with the topic. I felt as though I could climb into that suit, after a bit of reading. The Mobile Infantry Army Book had some very helpful statements regarding squad and platoon structure. The authors were very forgiving as to allow for both the flexibility of wartime demands (and casualties) and for the equal demands upon the wallets of the customers (and their monetary casualties as well). Thus, a force can be large or it can be built up from just a few boxes of models and still become an effective force on the war table. Thus, don't worry too much about

being forced by a modest purchase of a few boxes into only being able to call your new troops "squads". You can just as easily 'promote' your fresh trooper models into a platoon designation due to the flexible unit descriptions. Besides, it's fun to say those 'bigger' unit names when describing your force to the Bug player *across* the table from you before a battle. Just don't forget to switch to the *smaller* unit descriptions when telling others of the stories of your *lost* battles (haw, haw). It will diminish the victory in their eyes, and he won't even know you did it to him. Oh, and for you Bug players who are fiendishly smiling as you read this, I have a few words I wish to send to you—*"Enhanced Rupture!"*



The Army Book states that *“An Exosuit platoon in the Starship Troopers miniatures game contains one or more Exosuit Squads and a commanding Exosuit Lieutenant...”* and *“Your Exosuit platoon may include up to two Exosuit squads for each officer in the platoon. You must include a minimum of one squad in the platoon.”* What this means of course is that you can have a *squad* with four models or you can have a *platoon* with four models. It’s all your decision, and depends just how much you wish to push out your own personal armoured chest plate of course!

I ended up deciding on a compromise and used two boxes of Cougar Exosuits and three boxes of Grizzly Exosuits. This gave me two squads of six models each that were formed into a platoon and one squad of five that I just called a platoon because I had something special in mind for them anyway that would “make them mighty”. I pulled my officers from the five boxes worth of figures, but remember that Mongoose offers single models that can be either additional single troopers or become your officer cadre. I then took advantage of the flexible language regarding the Mobile Infantry Captain- *“Your army may include a single Mobile Infantry Captain, as long as the army includes at least two platoons (and is therefore considered a company level).”* There are other rules, but I can let you readers look them up; that is if you haven’t already committed them to memory. My force of three platoons is more than enough to draw the attention of a good Captain, so therefore I have five boxes of pewter parts and the makings of an Exosuit Company of the Mobile Infantry. Camp Arthur Currie, here I come! Yes, I’ve read the part of the rules that states that Exosuit troopers are drawn from veteran troops in the field. However, they didn’t say anything about not letting them participate in a “Back-to-Boot” tour to buck-up the new recruits of course!

In adding high-strength magnets to the Exosuit models, the first thing I want to let you in on is *how I cheated*, but just a bit! If you examine the weapons you’ll notice that they already have a countersunk disk-shaped recess of basically 1/8” or just over 3mm in diameter. By choosing a neodymium disk magnet size of 1/8” (.125”), I just saved myself (and maybe even *you*) a bit of tedious drilling on the weapons. It would have been easier if I had just stopped there, however I did end up talking myself into adding a second recessed magnet hole anyway. As I did not want to only have one contact point for the magnet mountings and have them spinning like tank turrets all over the place in illogical positions, I did end up getting a bit more tedious by added a second hole for mounting of magnets. You don’t want the strong magnetic fields to conflict, so make sure that you space them about where I show I placed mine. I still had to be very careful when gluing the second magnet in place that it didn’t jump over and lock itself onto its close

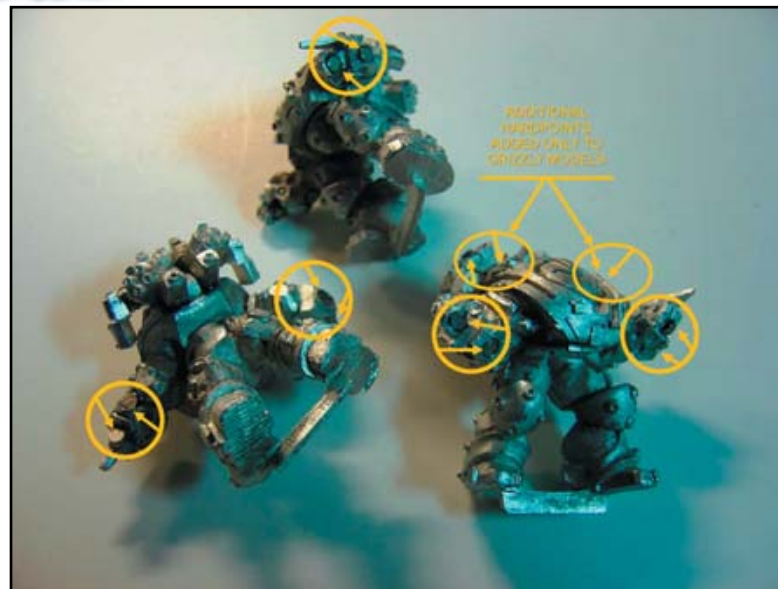
neighbour. I can’t say this enough- pick a polarity and stick to it throughout the project. Use one for the weapons and one for all of the troopers. You know what will happen if you mess this up! On the same subject, I did not decide to flip polarities between the pairs of magnets, although it did occur to me. As it turned out, I was very successful in keeping all of the magnets mounted properly. I’ll admit that there were a few times I found myself digging a magnet back out that had got itself glued in backwards.

Now as far as tools, I could have used a Dremel® drilling tool but since I’ve already admitted a few mistakes in gluing magnets I’ll say it didn’t occur to me at the time. What I did have was a cordless drill that was nearby and *that* certainly did occur to me. I don’t need to say things like “wear your eye protection” because I know that you do, right? I also don’t want to hear about drilling of any holes in one’s hands, either. Use a light duty drill press vise and protect the small pieces by using a cloth between the part and the bench vise. If you are smarter than me and use a Dremel® drill tool, use proper precautions as well. It doesn’t take a great deal of pressure to work with the pewter, as it drills nicely. Even use caution by the way with the drill shavings and dispose of them properly and safely.

For this project I obtained my magnets from kjmagnetics.com. For those that do not like to use credit cards on-line, or those without them but with PayPal accounts available to them for use, this online magnet store will accept that form of payment as an alternative. Because of my earlier frugality (aka cheating), I wanted a 1/8” powerful disk magnet, remember? I found what I wanted in item #D21. This is a 1/8” x 1/16” neodymium disk magnet. I picked a quantity of 250, priced at the time I purchased them at \$21.25 USD. Including S&H of \$5.00 USD my total cost was \$26.25 USD. This equated to just over an U.S. dime each, and was an affordable choice for my purposes. For those in the UK or elsewhere, a quick Google search on “Neodymium” should turn up local suppliers.

The Cougar models are rather easy to magnet-mod when compared to when I did the Grizzly models. First, the Cougar model only has a weapon carried on a single arm. I did indeed ‘waste’ some time and a few magnets and did both arms up just for the heck of it. Remember, some people are ‘lefties’ and we want to give equal weapons-holding opportunities now, don’t we? Anyway, once the Cougar arms were done and all of their Firestorms and Sixguns, I could then move onto the ‘main event’ of the project- the Grizzly Exosuit.

A study of the Grizzly Exosuit model was what inspired me to do this project, if you must know. I thought, by countersinking ND disk magnets into the arms and Atlas Rigs and all of the weapons, I could mount and switch weapons into combinations that would make Dizzy Flores, well, dizzy! There are two carried weapons on this model consisting of three choices- pairs of Sixgun Rotary Cannons, Firestorm Missile Systems or Themic Lances, or any combination of the three. If that wasn't enough, in order to use the Close Combat mode the model could mount either or both of the weapons on (can I say it?) *magnetic* grapples placed upon the Atlas Rig in order to free the trooper's arms for hand-to-hand (er, hand-to-pincer?) close combat. Officially I suppose in game play, the model cannot use one weapon 'holstered' to the Atlas Rig while still holding the other weapon and displaying itself for CC status- but wait! Yes, perhaps if the gun was jammed the trooper could use it to either parry claw strikes with, to club the lucky Bug with or use it to disable its mandibles by artfully propping the weapon up into position while skilfully dodging both flailing claws and at least one stabbing long leg; Or maybe not. Like I said, both weapons can be holstered in order to free the hands for Close Combat. In modifying the Grizzly model's Atlas Rig, I had to snip the weapon tab off by using small side cutters, since they were not going to permanently hold a weapon in CC mode. I then needed to drill a recess in fact into the same spot so that I could insert a glued magnet to serve as the point of contact for the rear part of the weapon. In order to get a good position placement for any holstered weapons, I decided that I needed



to mount a second magnet at the same distance that separated the forward weapon magnet from its rearward neighbour. In order to reduce the chance of having to lose magnets that might break away from any super-glued surface locations, I felt I needed to countersink a flush-mounted and glued magnet beneath the exposed one that was going to be above the suit's upper surface. This meant that for each 'holstered' position on the Atlas Rig, I needed to use one magnet that was flush-mounted under the original pin location (that I had cut off), plus two more that were stacked, but only showing one exposed magnet. I'm referring to the position that would be in front of the Atlas Rig, on the surface curve of the suit. I made sure that this magnet-mounting hole was the same distance of about 7-8mm that I had decided to separate the pairs of magnets by. I felt that having the magnetic attraction in addition to the super-glue might help to keep the exposed and above-surface magnets from getting knocked off in gaming use. Thus, counting both arms of the Grizzly Exosuit model (two each of two arms for four magnets) and the Atlas Rig 'holster' positions (two each of three for six magnets), I used ten magnets per Grizzly model (!). But we're not finished yet. Three pairs of weapons of two magnets each then adds up to be twelve additional magnets, for a grand total for each of my nine Grizzly Exosuits of twenty-two magnets. The Cougars absorbed far less, for even with me doing both arms the figures themselves only needed thirty-two magnets for eight Cougars. The single weapons all by themselves took a total of sixteen magnets. I also ended up with extra leftover weapons, as you would normally do with these



models, that counted up to be twenty-three weapons for forty-six additional magnets. If I did my math correct, I used 292 total magnets on seventeen models and on all of their weapons. With some being curious about what I said above that I originally bought 250 1/8" magnets, why didn't I run out? Ah, remember that I have done many projects using magnets and I had some of the correct sizing to finish the project (lucky for me!). Even if you have to buy a larger quantity than the 250 I mentioned, I'm sure that you will find a way to use them as they hold model building roofs on quite well. They are superb at allowing antennas and similar things on models to be attached and detached easily for transport, storage, and to anticipate any flailing gamer's arms when they come into "hand-to-hand" range with carefully-built models of yours. I don't know why I think of the phrase "*Enhanced Rupture!*" when that happens...

While this article was primarily intended to detail my efforts using small magnets with various weapon options, I feel the need to spend a few lines of text explaining my painting method. While there are many ways of painting and finishing gaming figures, I tend to shy away from the time-intensive ones such as detail shading and dry-brushing. What I've used for many years (I can say *decades* now, wow!) is my "Q&D" method (yes, read that as 'quick & dirty'). I like to generally use Cel-Vinyl® Vinyl Acrylic Copolymer. It's water-based and has over 700 colours and tints that you can access. It was made for decades (there's that word again- man I feel old!) for the animation

industry well before electronic computers. I'm very glad that they are still producing their fine paint for hobbyists to use. Applied at first, many of the colours I use appear to be pastel, but that's because they *are* and that doesn't frighten me away from using them. What I then do is to use various mixtures of artists acrylic inks in both full strength and various levels of watered-down amounts. Whether I water the ink down depends upon the original colour, usually with the lighter inks left with their full potency and the darker colours thinned down and extended with water. I would either call this 'ink-washing' or even just 'antiquing' of the base colours, but it saves a lot of time, patience and gives a good effect. Of course after a full measure of drying time, I applied several coats of matte varnish (I like Krylon as it seems to be affordable and a good product).

I also want to mention that I tried something 'new' to me in the priming of the pewter models on this project. I've been in this hobby a long time, and while I even have an *extremely* fine artist in my Mother who has used it in her work over the years, it had not ever occurred to me to use artists acrylic gesso as a figure primer for pewter models. I was tipped onto the idea recently from a hobby forum (TMP, in fact) and I hand-brushed it on (I thinned it down about a third with rubbing alcohol). While at first looking as if I'd ruined the surface, I was told to wait until it dried. I did, and was rewarded with a finely detailed layer with an acrylic base with which to paint upon. This does go to show that even 'old dogs' can still learn a new trick or two, heh. I would however experiment on an old pewter mini, to see the results first. I would recommend this before doing a large project in order to be comfortable with the process, but this base-coating method does have its merits.

In conclusion, in using two boxes of Cougars to mostly represent corporal, NCO & officer cadre, I then gathered up my firepower projection in three supporting boxes of Grizzly Exosuits. This made up a collection of seventeen Exosuit models that I decided I had enough models of to then form into a Company-level force...

"*Now wait just a minute*", you are saying? "Seventeen



troopers is hardly enough for a decently-sized platoon. “*What tells you that you can create a Company-strength force from a few squads?*” Well, the rules can, I suppose. First off, there is plenty of background material from past issues of Signs & Portents, and the published rules. The Mobile Infantry Army Book is a wealth of information on the building of squads, platoons, and yes even a company. The original published rules state that “*While the organisation is very stratified, the truth of the Mobile Infantry where its troop roster is concerned is a different story altogether. Attrition, personnel shifts and other internal issues keep all but the most fortunate units from being fully staffed. In general, the listings... are accurate only on paper. Beyond that, the organisation can vary greatly...*” Where the Army Book gives some ground on force levels is where it mentions that “*...company level forces are always worth a minimum of 2,000 points. Any army which contains two or more platoons is considered company level, regardless of how many platoons it actually has...*”

My company has therefore *seen a lot of action*. It has taken a beating, but it has dealt back Bug casualties in the thousands; enough to get the company’s regimental distinctive unit insignia to actually become something that has been pounded into the memories of the Brain Bug caste it has encountered. This has been officially recorded in Military Intelligence interrogation records, and is the first documented case of a regimental device being so recognised by a *non-human*. This did not happen though without a heavy payment being tendered for its efforts and Alpha Company of the 2nd Infantry Regiment of the 3rd Mobile Infantry Division has all of its receipts!

I therefore present you with:

Company A, 2nd Infantry Regiment of the 3rd Mobile Infantry Division!

One of the lessons learned from the Klendathu Invasion was how mentally unprepared the recruits were, given that the upper levels of SICON command as well as elements of Military Intelligence were not “sufficiently battle-minded”. To help correct this deficiency, an effort was made to copy some of the successful methods of some of the founding military structures of old Earth. While some of the competing belligerent forces of one of the old wars called “World War Two” (and how quaint that description seems today!) risked their most valuable personnel until they were *totally* used up in the field (and lost with all of their experience), the ones that wore the global term of “The Allies” did something different than their enemies did. They would rotate a portion of their most experienced soldiers back to the training grounds where the new and inexperienced recruits could benefit from the soldiers and pilots that had proven their mettle.

It was thought then by the new leadership that if for no other reason than to show that they had come through the “Meat Grinder” alive, touring active-duty veterans might inspire untested recruits to be better prepared for the fight that was coming than were those that had come through “Boot” in the past. The recruits, or “boots” as they were still sometimes called, were told that they each had an equal chance at being fitted for an Exosuit, but it was only the uncommon trooper that was given the opportunity. The boots learned that the Exosuit was not just issued randomly, and the long-lived old boot joke was revealed that many had fallen for when first going through basic. A particularly overconfident recruit would be told that he or she could request a form “section-ATE-M4A1, stroke 2” which they were told was a request to be entered into the elite ranks of the Exosuit forces.

Henceforth, that particular bit of boot camp “hazing” would end, and there would be no more “special” lines forming over at the combat knife throwing range. While not actually teaching any boot camp trainees advanced Exosuit tactics, a “pep talk” by front-line highly experienced and seasoned troopers that had begun their service at the very camp they were visiting had been proven to boost morale in the recruits and had given them a renewed commitment, even if the smarter boots amongst them all had noticed the small numbers of these battle-hardened troops that passed review. It seemed as if those individual boots became driven to learn to excel and to survive long enough to get the chance to see the Cougar or Grizzly Exosuit from the inside-looking-out.

The recruits at Camp Currie and the other camps were always eager to catch a glimpse of the Exosuit “tour” nicknamed by the Exosuit troopers themselves as “Back-to-Boot”. It is thus only during these boot camp morale tours that there will be photos taken of the ultimate “Boot Camp Contradiction” of Exosuit platoons in parade-ground review units. These were only taken for the internal use of the seasoned Exosuit troops, wanting a souvenir photo in remembrance of a time long ago perhaps of an earlier boot camp experience where they might have fallen for the joke of being told to request a form “section-ATE-M4A1, stroke 2”. It seems that a small number of these photos have slipped out and sometimes are seen as evidence that there *indeed* is a special elite boot –group of Exosuit boot trainees. Thus, the ‘joke’ didn’t end, and has now only grown with use. This just proves then, that life can be its own teacher and experience is earned.

Photographed on the Iowa training field of Camp Arthur Currie and standing in a formation of three squads is Alpha Company of the 2/3 Mobile Infantry Division. Adopting a bold phrase used by an old Earth air force unit, this



Company although incorporating various mixed MOS units, operates at a level of experience even above what is expected of an Exosuit force of the Mobile Infantry. Where many light troopers have adopted a motto made famous by Rasczak's Roughnecks (later, Rico's Roughnecks) of *"Death From Above"*, the 3rd MID has adopted *"In Your Face from Outer Space"* as its official motto. The following is a short bio of the three surviving Platoon/Squad leaders.

Capt. Stewart has lost most of his Company headquarters unit in previous battles, but has not requested replacements. It seems that he is one of the "hands-on" types, and has taken direct control of one of his three squads. Capt. Jeffery "Jeb" Stewart let it be known that he favoured "the smell of burning Bugs in the morning", so his personal squad became adept at the use of the Firestorm Missile System. Capt. Stewart excels in fast, accurate direction of fire and has had SICON military intelligence training. Not one to be impressed by the Fleet's "glassing" of Bug masses from their relative safety in the sky, "Stewart's Stormbringers" (as they were to be so named) do it 'up close and personal' and sometimes make use of the M-998A1 Pee-Wee atomic warhead.

2nd squad, 1st platoon, Alpha Company or "Grissom's Gunslingers" is headed up by Sergeant Major Glenn "Gus" or "Gunny" Grissom. "Gunny" Grissom prefers to disassemble his targets with his dual sixgun rotary

cannons. He has inspired his charges to specialize in the use of this deadly weapon, and every member of the squad is so armed. If the name of Gus Grissom sounds a little familiar to readers, it is because a distant relative of SMG Glenn Grissom was one of the early space pioneers of Earth's past. "Gus" as he is called only by close friends with higher rank or just "Gunny" by his squad has a "True Grit" and "Can-Do!" quality that makes him an irreplaceable asset to Capt. Stewart. In fact, "Gunny" Grissom was allowed a special waiver to keep the 3rd platoon's nickname of "Grissom's Gunslingers" active, even though the Gunny was now filling the "open" spot of squad leader for the 2nd squad of Captain Stewart's 1st platoon. The Gunny used to be a buck sergeant in his brother's 3rd platoon. Currently, Alpha Company has no active 3rd platoon...

1st squad, 2nd platoon, Alpha Company or more commonly named "King's K'nights" ("Knights" pronounced with a non-silent "K"!), is one of the Mobile Infantry's squads that is also considered as a platoon in its own right. Lt. Arthur Lancelot King ("It's not my fault!" he is often heard to say) is a very experienced Mobile Infantry officer, and has mastered the skill to direct fast and accurate fire down upon his squad's enemies. With specific and specialized training, his squad has been cross-trained in the use of the powerful and deadly Thermic Lance. Some say that the ghost of Merlin himself follows and protects the 2nd platoon of Alpha Company. As if cast-on by a horrific and powerful spell, some of the Bug swarms facing "King's



K'nights" have totally and completely vaporised under the devastating fire of just three Grizzly-suited troopers armed with twin Thermic Lances.

Some without seeing it say it must be a jest and just another MI urban legend but if you are an Arachnid Host that happens to be charging these lance-wielding "knights", it will most-likely be your last joust. Someone (rumours say it was an old fortune teller on the back-side of Zegama Beach that tourists seldom saw) once told Lt. King of the curiosity that the name of the Grizzly suit was named for a bear. "Of course anyone knows that" she is reported to have said, "but interestingly enough one possible historical source of the word *Arthur* was Welsh for "bear-man." Curious thing, that. Yet another etymology links the name Arthur to the star Arcturus, Lt. King was told. The word Arcturus is in classical Latin, and would have been Arturus in the Late Latin of the 5th – 6th century. Arcturus has been called the "Guardian of the Bear" and is near Ursa Major as viewed from Earth. Ursa Major is also called the "Great Bear constellation". If the man we know as Arthur had used Arturus or Artur-os as his alias, its meaning would have been easily understood by both the Romano-British and native British alike; *a stout bear-like defender against the invaders*. The strangeness of this story does not end with this prophetic description of the current Arachnid threat. It ends with the knowledge that the main R&D locale and the first prototypes delivered to SICON originated at the Federation research and proving grounds on Arcturus III. The curious link between Arthur and Arcturus can only add to the legend that is growing around Lt. Arthur King and his



Grizzly-suited and lance-wielding armoured "knights". Guard them well, Merlin!

In working with these gaming miniatures, I did quite a lot of handling of the parts. I cleaned them and I drilled small holes in them. I super-glued the torsos and the arms into various aesthetic positions, and I primed them. I did even more handling of them when I applied my choice of paints. I even made up individual shoulder-ranked insignia decals for them, and handled the models more as I carefully applied those decals to give each model a bit more of a personal identity within the collection. Then I ink-washed them before finally sealing them with a clear matte finish. I did a bit more turning over of the models in my hands when I sprinkled silica sand and grey-tinted hobby sand onto the bases that I had just coated with transparent acrylic as a bonding agent to complete the model bases. During all of this, I thought about how the game came to be, and especially about what these particular gaming models were made to represent. These were designed as the "tribute" models, the ones made to more closely resemble the suits of the original novel by Robert A. Heinlein. I found it curious to realise that I was completing my Exosuit model project during the year that was also going to mark the centennial birthday of Robert A. Heinlein. I will be looking forward to the release of the upcoming Starship Troopers Evolution rules as well, to see how my new Mobile Infantry assets will perform under fire. In closing, I'd like to dedicate this project to Robert Anson Heinlein, born July 7, 1907.

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