

# MILITARY MUDDLING

THE CHESTNUT LODGE WARGAMES GROUP NEWSLETTER

Volume 2 Issue 12

September 1990

## EDITORIAL

This issue has something of an oriental flavour with articles on Jim Wallman's Japanese Committee game, a combat report from a North Vietnamese fighter pilot and details of a possible Chinese wargame weekend. Read on, then, and see how Chestnut Lodge plays the hottest games around!

I would like to devote most of this editorial, however, to Simon Shakewell's letter which appeared in the last issue. As I indicated in my very first editorial, I am a relative newcomer to CLWG and so Simon's letter, coming as it does from the grass roots of the club, was particularly welcome. Any club must reflect the wishes of its members and we must be careful not to fall into the trap of factionalism. It is thoroughly unhealthy if a few unrepresentative individuals hijack club time and resources for their own narrow ideological ends thus leaving the bulk of the membership dissatisfied. As Simon has indicated, this can only lead to a decline in the number of members who attend meetings.

I was pleased to see, therefore, Jim Wallman put on his WW2 STONK game at the 18th August meeting. Whilst there were fundamental flaws in the game structure - the players could not move the figures, and only rarely examine the tabletop model - for example, this was a valuable attempt to build a bridge between those who, like Jim, prefer a somewhat casual, 'unstructured' approach to their games and what I may call the backbone of the club, like Simon, who go for a more intellectually rigorous game.

Nevertheless CLWG has always aimed to be a 'broad church' in its approach to the hobby. As editor my role is to ensure that every type of wargaming receives its appropriate degree of support and I am indebted to Simon for the suggestions he has made. Accordingly I am making a number of changes to *Military Muddling*.

a) Each issue will contain at least one article on modelling, uniforms, figures and similar topics. It is essential, I feel, that all of us do our best to keep up to date in these crucial areas of our hobby;

b) If there is enough support I will allocate space to a Competition Results page. Obviously this is dependent on someone coming forward to organise a League;

c) Map Games and Committee Games will get their own feature entitled 'Talking Shop'. Space may be limited depending on how much of the key wargaming material comes in but I hope that 'Talking Shop' will get half a column, and possibly even a whole one, to itself each month.

As Games Organiser it's Brian Cameron's job to lay on the games that we all want. To that extent, therefore, he must share some of the blame for our falling membership. So, come on Brian; Jim's made an effort. Get your finger out and organise a proper game for a change!

ANDY GRAINGER

\* held over for lack of space.

## DEADLINES

October issue: 13th OCT, to appear on 20th October;

November issue: 10th NOV, to appear on 17th November.

## CONTRIBUTIONS

Basically, I will accept contributions in any format as long as I can actually read what you have to say. If they are short I am even prepared to take them over the telephone. It would help, however, if you could submit your contributions in single-spaced type in columns no more than 10.5 cm wide. Make sure you use a good quality ribbon.

I have no access to a photocopier so, if possible, please submit your material in a 'camera-ready' format.

## NEWS

### CHINESE WARGAMES WEEKEND

I mentioned last month that I had received a letter from Duncan Head, a prominent member of the Society of Ancients about a proposed Chinese Wargames Weekend in the Spring of 1991. Here is a fuller extract from the letter:

"Would you be interested in taking part in a one- or two-day ancient and mediaeval Chinese wargaming event?..."

Not everybody who attends needs to have a game to present, but the event would only work if *some* of you do. You can bring a complete game for people to play, a partially-developed game to be worked on or playtested, or simply an idea for a game to be discussed...

I've spoken of 'ancient and mediaeval Chinese' games, but I don't intend to limit the scope too tightly. If you want to put on a Korean, Vietnamese or Tibetan game, or something dating after 1500 - Ming or early Manchu, say - then I, at least, won't object."

A suggested venue is the Education facility at the Tower of London.

If you are interested in the event then write to:

Duncan Head,  
Flat C  
24 Russell Street  
Reading  
Berks RG1 7XF

Tel: 0734 508502

### MAGNETIC STRIP

Magnetic sheets to A5 size are available from:  
M. Sawyer, 29 Windsor Drive, High Wycombe, Bucks HP13 6BJ

Sample piece (20mm x 40mm)	£0.50
0-10 A5 sheets (each)	£2.00
10-20 A5 sheets (each)	£1.75
20+ A5 sheets (each)	£1.50

Perhaps CLWG could club together for a bulk order and the toolboxes to go with the strip. Speak to our toy soldier expert, Brian Cameron, if you are interested.

## ACTIVITIES

The Club meets on the first Sunday and second or third Saturday of each month. The venues are normally open from 1pm to about 6pm but contact Jim Wallman if you want more time for your game.

NB: There are no Sunday meetings in August.

### Saturday Venue

Methodist Church Hall, Riggindale Road, Streatham SW16;

### Sunday Venue

Chestnut Lodge Youth Club, 48 Palace Road, Tulse Hill, SW2.

## CONTACTS

Admin & Membership:

Jim Wallman, 69 Gleneagle Road, Streatham, SW16 6AY

Tel: 081-677-5756.

Military Muddling Editor:

Andy Grainger, 13 Pelham Road, Wimbledon, SW19 1SU

Tel: 081-540-1558

Game Organiser:

Brian Cameron, 36 Barrow Road, Streatham, SW16

Tel: 081-677-3005

## MEMBERSHIP

Current paid-up membership stands at 13 members, who are:

Name	Paid Date
Brian Cameron	1 Oct 89
Dave Easton	1 May 90
Andy Grainger	1 Jan 90
John Harris	1 Jul 90
Owen Hinchcliffe	1 Oct 89
Peter Knowlden	23 Jun 90
Gordon McIlroy	4 Jun 90
John Merritt	23 Jun 90
Mukul Patel	1 Oct 89
Dave Rooke	1 Oct 89
John Seaton	7 Jan 90
Jim Wallman	1 Oct 89
Derek Young	1 Nov 89

If YOU ARE NOT on this list, and wish to remain a member, see Jim as soon as possible.

## COLUMN VERSUS LINE

The Military Muddling Letters Page  
Jim Wallman replies personally to Simon Satchwell:

I was gratified to read a letter from one of the Grass Roots members of the club - but I feel I must put finger to word processor to make a few salient points. First, toy soldiers games are basically Ok if you like that sort of thing, but I prefer games with a bit more stimulus - something to get my mental teeth into. Most of all we should ensure that our games are between like-minded intellectuals who have a deep knowledge of the period involved. Simon Shakewell is welcome to continue his sort of game - but I notice there is little evidence of his name on the list of future games - I don't want to be heavy here, but our constitution does say that members have to put on at least one game a year - come on Simon, be honest, when was the last time YOU put on a game? Let those that are without sin cast the first stone. As to the membership issue - well nobody's perfect!

## EXTRA GAME SAT 22 SEPT A MONTH IN COUNTRY

by Andy Grainger

This game is a three-cornered committee game played on a 1:50000 map of a District in South Vietnam. The three "committees" are:

- The battalion staff of 4th Bn / 13th Marines (up to 6 players),
- The South Vietnamese chief of Phong Dien District (up to 3 players),
- The shadow Communist Party Committee of Phong Dien District (up to 4 players).

Each Committee has its own objectives and, ideally, its own umpire (up to 4 umpires).

The subject of A MONTH IN COUNTRY is the arrival of a US Marine battalion into a province between Hue and Quang Tri. How will the new arrivals affect the conflict between the Government forces in Phong Dien District and the communists which has been spluttering along for more than twenty years now.

How will the Americans and the local South Vietnamese commanders get on? How will both the GVN authorities and the VC in the jungle react to the new factor in the equation?

If anyone is particularly interested in playing this game, particularly on the Viet Cong side, then it would be useful to hear from them in advance. Plenty of spaces will, however, be available for those who turn up on the day.

And now, especially for Simon and his friends, a real wargaming item... a figure review:

### EAGLE MINIATURES 25mm WARGAME FIGURES

Available from: J.D.W. Atkins, BDS,  
10 Manor Close, Minchinhampton, Gloucs.,  
GL6 9DG. Infantry 40p each (£3.50 for 10)  
plus 15% postage.

I received a sample figure of a British Flank Company Private of a Line Regiment in Peninsular War campaign dress from Jim Wallman, for review - but no details of its manufacturer or price, so I was unable to submit my comments to 'Military Muddling' until I had discovered this vital information from an advertisement in the current issue of 'Miniature Wargames'!

The figure, clearly identifiable as a Flank Company Private from his 'wings' and stove-pipe shako plate, is modelled charging with fixed bayonet, left foot forward, at the moment of lifting his right foot from the ground, wearing campaign overalls and full marching equipment. In this position, the figure measures approximately 28mm from the presumed top of his head to the rectangular base, and would, I imagine, be 30mm tall if standing at attention. Its anatomy is sturdy without the exaggerated 'chunkiness' that afflicts some figures in this scale and its position convincing. Apart from some 'flash' around the feet - particularly the raised heel of the right foot, where some carvings and cleaning will be required - the detail is crisply cast, but not 'heavy'. The rear flap or 'fall' on the shako, crossbelts, canteen and knapsack straps, pouch, cap and belt plates and musket sling are all sharp and clear. Unfortunately, the musket appears to lack a pan-cover: this is a noticeable omission on a figure which is otherwise so well detailed. My only other criticism is that the knapsack does not bulge sufficiently to suggest the heavy burden carried by the men throughout this period. Contemporary prints show the troops bowed underneath bulbous knapsacks which remind me of pictures of British soldiers 'yomping' in the Falkland Islands; this miniature private seems most unlikely to suffer what his historical counterparts called simply 'the pains' - the result of the constriction of the chest by the knapsack straps and crossbelts.

This is a pleasing figure, albeit in a very conventional pose, which would repay careful cleaning and painting. If you use 25mm scale figures, Eagle Miniatures range seems good value.

Arthur Harman

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Sat 15 Sept;

BATTLE OF BRITAIN ANNIVERSARY MEGAGAME by Andy Grainger.  
This game will involve about 80-90 people and will take place at Westminster School, Victoria from 9am. You should already have received your briefing about the game, but if not then please contact Andy Grainger.

Sat 22 Sept;

A MONTH IN COUNTRY by Andy Grainger.  
(See separate announcement)

Sat 7 OCT

Vietnam Helicopter Game by Dave Tapsell (Provisional).

Sat 20 OCT

DREAMS OF EMPIRE - a strategic/political Napoleonic game set at national level. Each country will have a team of players running it representing Head of State, diplomats and military. The timescale is such that a period of several years will be covered. The resources available to a country and how they are used will thus be important as will diplomacy between them. The military men will doubtless not be short of things to do. Campaigns will be resolved at Corps and Fleet level. In addition to France, Britain, Russia, Austria and Prussia the two neglected powers of Spain and Turkey will be represented. Brian Cameron and Bernard Ganley (this is another 'invitation game' to non-members).

Sun 21 OCT

SELWG OPEN DAY : Participation game at SELWG. Subject will be a tactical level WW2 tank game.

Sat 3 NOV

FINAL FRONTIER 3 - Yet another Star Trek Megagame - this time with a different set-up.

Sun 4 NOV

ALCHEMY v PLUCK - a map game of the First Crusade by Brian Cameron.

Sat 17 NOV

Fantasy Game - The Assault on Warlock Mountain. A radically new large-scale fantasy role-playing game - this will test out the mechanisms for a possible fantasy megagame to be held next year.

Sun 2 DEC

Nothing yet.

Sat 15 DEC

COMING IN BY THE WINDOWS, a Wars of the Roses game by Brian Cameron.

## 1991 FUTURE GAMES LIST

Scheduled games on offer so far. Note that there are a number of members who have not offered their game yet.

1991

SUN 6 JAN	"Masada shall not fall again", committee game (Oh No!) set in 1970 Israel by Terry Martin.
SAT 19 JAN	Pacific carriers game by Colin Watts.
SAT 16 MAR	English Civil War map game (groan!) by Brian Cameron
SAT 20 APR	SALUTE wargames show. Most CLWG members will want to turn up.
MAY 1991	BLOOD & THUNDER 2 - The Pirate Megagame by Jim Wallman.
SEPT 1991	August 1914 megagame by Brian Cameron, covering the Eastern Front and political aspects as well as the Western Front.

## DEWA PREFECTURE

Offside Report by Andy Grainger

This was a committee game set in 16th century Japan by Jim Wallman. This article does not purport to be a complete description, or even impression of the game but seeks simply to record the most distinctive features of it.

Dewa Prefecture comprised the two provinces of Uzen and Ugo. They were ruled by the Lords of the MOGAMI and AKITA clans respectively. AKITA YOSHIGUE, leader of the AKITA clan had also been appointed Governor of the whole area. Hence he had a little more status, but rather less wealth and power than MOGAMI TORUKUMI, the younger and somewhat aggressive leader of the MOGAMI clan.

The Game represents the Council of War called by AKITA YOSHIGUE to discuss what steps are to be taken, if any, to defend the Prefecture against UESUGI, warlord of the the neighbouring province, who is making threatening gestures on the borders (sound familiar)? The two leaders, and their followers, meet in AKITA's castle at Kubota.

Although the agenda placed before the committee concerned familiar issues - the mobilising and deploying of troops - the style in which they were discussed was not. Jim wanted the debate to be conducted in a Japanese style.

Two main ingredients were used to give the debate the correct atmosphere - status and conduct.

Naturally neither concept was particularly simple, there being four areas in which players had a different status - Rank, status within the Clan, martial status and, finally, wealth. Thus AKITA, as Governor of the Prefecture, has the highest rank - and so chaired the Council, and was head of his clan but might have to defer on military subjects to a samurai who had, for example, killed lots of enemies in personal combat.

Having grasped some idea of our status we examined the way in which the Council might be conducted. Viewers of Kurosawa's film Kagemusha may have a better idea of this.

The Council is not a free-for-all but a formal debate in which the participants speak in a particular order. Here is an extract from the briefing:

"a) Each member, starting with the most junior, is given the opportunity to make a suggestion or propose a course of action. Each member of the Council has a chance to speak.

b) When everyone has spoken, the leading lord makes a point or raises another subject, indicating that another round of comment is acceptable. If he has enough input he will issue his instructions without further details.

c) No council member of lower status may interrupt a member of higher status. If a member of lower status is talking when a higher member interrupts, the lower status member must immediately stop speaking.

d) Direct argument is not permitted. All comments are directed to the lord of the highest status. Cross-conversations represent one of the most severe breaches of etiquette."

As indicated above status can vary according to the topic under discussion. Additionally the lord may forgive interruptions by, for example, aged clan retainers given the Japanese respect for age.

Jim observed the debate and awarded, or deducted, KATSU points for the players' performances within their role.

Further atmosphere was generated by the Council members sitting cross-legged on the floor although the leading lords had comfy chairs. KATSU points were lost by those people who kept moving around!

This game demonstrated that it was possible to inject atmosphere into a period with which the players were unfamiliar by the design of rules to govern their conduct, and a victory points system (the KATSU points) by which they could measure their performance at the end. Written briefings were issued and time was also spent going through them to ensure that everyone knew what was expected of them before the debate started.

I understand that Jim was, to some extent, inspired by a report I had given him of an Arab Committee game set in the Crusades in which a similar method was used. On that occasion the 'chairman', who sat cross-legged on a table set a pecking order, literally, by periodically handing round a bowl of sweetmeats to participants in the order in which they were allowed to speak!

Dewa Prefecture was a game with a difference, and a thoroughly enjoyable one. I think everyone else enjoyed it too - even if they did get preoccupied at times with leg cramps.

The Cast

AKITA YOSHISUE; Lord of UGO province, Governor of DEWA Prefecture; Andy Grainger

MOGAMI TORUKUMI; Lord of UZEN Province; Dave Tapsell

ENDO HACHIMAKI; Venerable and trusted samurai; a virtuoso performance by John Harris

ONODERA ICHINARA; Vassal to the AKITA clan; John Merritt

NAGATORO MICHUYUKI; General of the MOGAMI clan; Mukul Patel

SHIBA YOSHISATO; Vassal of the MOGAMI clan; Owen Hinchcliffe